Enlightenment Thinkers

Poster Project and Presentation

Thinker \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Your group will create a poster on an assigned Enlightenment thinker. The poster should introduce some important biographical information, the thinker’s philosophy and its relevance to American government. The required elements include:

1. Biographical Information
   1. Name of the Enlightenment philosopher
   2. Portrait
   3. Nationality
   4. Short Biography
2. Philosophy
   1. Major Work
   2. Key Ideas
   3. Important Quote
3. Relevance for American government

A suggested format is presented below, but you may organize it in a different way as long as it is clear. Be sure to include visual graphics to enhance communication—pictures or symbols.

Name  
Dates

Portrait Nationality

Biography

Major Work

Key Ideas

Important Quote

Relevance to American Government

**Please refer to the rubrics on the back to see what is expected of your poster and presentation.**

**This is a group grade, so make sure everybody is participating and ready to speak. If there are any issues within a group, please let me know.**

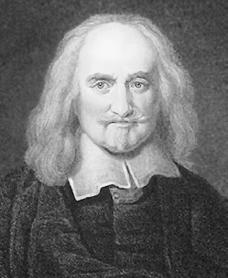
# Poster Rubric (20 Points)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Required Elements | The poster includes all required elements as well as additional information | All required elements are included on the poster | All but 1 of the required elements are included on the poster | Several required elements were missing |
| Content Accuracy | More than 4 accurate facts are displayed on the poster | 3-4 inaccurate facts are displayed on the poster | 1-2 inaccurate facts are displayed on the poster | All facts displayed on the poster are accurate |
| Attractive Presentation | The poster is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive | The poster is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy | The poster is attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness | The poster is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness |
| Grammar | There are more than 2 grammatical mistakes on the poster | There are 2 grammatical mistakes on the poster | There is 1 grammatical mistake on the poster | There are no grammatical mistakes on the poster |
| Graphics-Relevance | Graphics do not relate to the topic. | All graphics relate to the topic. | All graphics are related to the topic and most make it easier to understand. | All graphics are related to the topic and make it easier to understand. |

# Presentation Rubric (12 Points)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Preparation | Student does not seem at all prepared to present | Student is somewhat prepared, but itʼs clear that rehearsal was lacking | Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals | Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed |
| Presence | Often mumbles or cannot be understood. | Speaks clearly and distinctly most of the time .Is a bit hard to hear. | Stands up straight & establishes eye contact with everyone in the room. Speaks loud enough to be heard. | Stands up straight, looks relaxed & confident. Establishes eye contact with everyone in the room. Speaks loudly. |
| Collaboration | Rarely listens to, shares with, & supports the efforts of others in the group. Often is not a good team member. | Often listens to, shares with, & supports the efforts of others in the group but sometimes is not a good team member. | Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Does not cause “waves” in the group. | Almost always listens to, shares with, & supports the effort of others in the group. Tries to keep people working well together |

Thomas Hobbes

**Born: April 5, 1588 Westport, England   
Died: December 4, 1679 Hardwick Hall, England***English philosopher and political theorist*

The English philosopher and political theorist Thomas Hobbes was one of the central figures of political thought behind the British Empire. His major work, "Leviathan," published in 1651, expressed his idea that basic human motives are selfish.

## *Childhood*

Born prematurely on April 5, 1588, when his mother heard of the coming invasion of the Spanish Armada (a fleet of Spanish warships), Thomas Hobbes later reported that "my mother gave birth to twins: myself and fear." His father, also named Thomas Hobbes, was the vicar (a clergyman in charge of a church) of Westport near Malmesbury in Gloucestershire, England. After being involved in a fight with another clergyman outside his own church, the elder Thomas Hobbes was forced to flee to London, England, leaving his wife, two boys and a girl behind.

Thomas was then raised and educated by an uncle and studied at the local schools. By the age of six he was studying Latin and Greek. Also at this time, Hobbes became absorbed in the classic literature of ancient Greece. From 1603 to 1608 he studied at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was bored by the philosophy of Aristotelianism (studying the works of Aristotle, a fourth-century B.C.E. Greek philosopher).

## *Scholarly work*

The twenty-year-old future philosopher became a tutor to the Cavendish family, a well-known English family. This association provided him with a private library, foreign travel, and introductions to influential people. Hobbes learned to speak Italian and German and soon decided to devote his life to scholarly pursuits.

Hobbes, however, was slow in developing his thought—his first work, a translation of Greek historian Thucydides's (died c. 401 B.C.E. ) *History of the Peloponnesian Wars,* did not appear until 1629. Thucydides held that knowledge of the past was useful for determining correct action, and Hobbes said that he offered the translation during a period of civil unrest as a reminder that the ancients believed democracy (rule by the people) to be the least effective form of government.

In Hobbes's own estimation the most important intellectual event of his life occurred when he was forty. While waiting for a friend he wandered into a library and came across a copy of Euclid's (third century B.C.E. ) geometry. His interest in mathematics is reflected in his second work, *A Short Treatise on First Principles,* which presents a mechanical interpretation of sensation, as well as in his brief stint as mathematics tutor to Charles II (1630–1685).

For the rest of his long life Hobbes travelled and published many works. In France he met mathematicians René Descartes (1596–1650) and the Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655). In 1640 he wrote one of the sets of arguments to Descartes's *Meditations.*

Although born into the Elizabethan Age (c. 1550–1600; a time of great change in England), Hobbes outlived all of the major seventeenth-century thinkers. He became a sort of English icon and continued writing, offering new translations of Homer (an eighth-century B.C.E. Greek poet) in his eighties because he had "nothing else to do." When he was past ninety, he became involved in controversies with the Royal Society, an organization of scientists. He invited friends to suggest appropriate epitaphs (an inscription on a tombstone) and favored one that read "this is the true philosopher's stone." He died on December 4, 1679, at the age of ninety-one.

## *His philosophy*

The questions Hobbes posed to the world in the seventeenth century are still relevant today, and Hobbes still maintains a strong influence in the world of philosophy. He challenged the relationship between science and religion, and the natural limitations of political power.

The diverse intellectual paths of the seventeenth century, which are generically called modern classical philosophy, began by rejecting authorities of the past—especially Aristotle and his peers. Descartes, who founded the rationalist tradition, and Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626), who is considered the originator of modern empiricism (political theory regarding the British Empire), both sought new methods for achieving scientific knowledge and a clear conception of reality.

Hobbes was fascinated by the problem of sense perception, and he extended Galileo's (1564–1642) mechanical physics into an explanation of human cognition (process of learning). He believed the origin of all thought is sensation, which consists of mental images produced by the pressure of motion of external objects. Thus Hobbes anticipated later thought by explaining differences between the external object and the internal image. These sense images are extended by the power of memory and imagination. Understanding and reason, which distinguish men from other animals, are a product of our ability to use speech.

## *Political thought*

Hobbes explains the connection between nature, man, and society through the law of inertia ("bodies at rest tend to stay at rest; bodies in motion tend to stay in motion"). Thus man's desire to do what he wants is checked only by an equal and opposite need for security. Society "is but an artificial man" invented by man, so to understand politics one should merely consider himself as part of nature.

Such a reading is cold comfort as life before society is characterized by Hobbes, in a famous quotation, as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." The equality of human desire is matched by an economy of natural satisfactions. Men are addicted to power because gaining power is the only guarantee of living well. Such men live in a state of constant war, driven by competition and desire for the same goods. The important result of this view is man's natural right to seek self-preservation (protection of one's self) by any means. In this state of nature there is no value above self-interest because the absence of common power results in the absence of law and justice. But there is a second law of nature that men may surrender their individual will to the state. This "social contract" binds the individual to treat others as he expects to be treated by them.

In Hobbes's view the sovereign power of a commonwealth (England's power over its colonies) is absolute and not subject to the laws of its citizens. Obedience will remain as long as the sovereign (England) fulfills the social contract by protecting the rights of the individual. According to these laws Hobbes believed that rebellion is, by definition, unjust. However, should a revolution prove victorious, a new absolute sovereignty would rise up to take the place of the old one.

Selections from the *Leviathan*

# Human Equality:

Nature has made men so equal, in the faculties of the 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. . .

For such is the nature of men, that howsoever they may acknowledge many others to be more witty, or more eloquent, or more learned; yet they will hardly believe there be many so wise as themselves. . . .

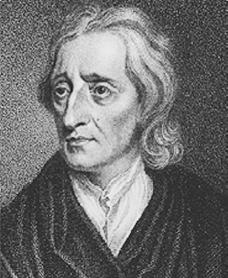
# The State of Nature:

From this equality of ability, arises equality of hope in the attaining of our ends. And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies. . . .

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. For “war” consists not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time, wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known.

In such condition there is no place for industry [meaning productive labor, not “industry” in modern sense of factories], because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building . . . no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and, which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

John Locke

**Born: August 29, 1632 Wrington, England   
Died: October 28, 1704 Oates, England***English philosopher and political theorist*

The English philosopher and political theorist John Locke (1632-1704) laid much of the groundwork for the Enlightenment and made central contributions to the development of liberalism. Trained in medicine, he was a key advocate of the empirical approaches of the Scientific Revolution. In his “Essay Concerning Human Understanding,” he advanced a theory of the self as a blank page, with knowledge and identity arising only from accumulated experience. His political theory of government by the consent of the governed as a means to protect “life, liberty and estate” deeply influenced the United States’ founding documents. His essays on religious tolerance provided an early model for the separation of church and state.

## *Early years and school*

John Locke was born in 1632 in Wrighton, Somerset. His father was a lawyer and small landowner who had fought on the Parliamentarian side during the English Civil War of the 1640s. Using his wartime connections, he placed his son in the elite Westminster School.

Between 1652 and 1667, John Locke was a student and then lecturer at Christ Church, Oxford, where he focused on the standard curriculum of logic, metaphysics and classics. He also studied medicine extensively and was an associate of Robert Hooke, Robert Boyle and other leading Oxford scientists.

## *John Locke and the Earl of Shaftesbury*

In 1666 Locke met the parliamentarian Anthony Ashley Cooper, later the first Earl of Shaftesbury. The two struck up a friendship that blossomed into full patronage, and a year later Locke was appointed physician to Shaftesbury’s household. That year he supervised a dangerous liver operation on Shaftesbury that likely saved his patron’s life.

For the next two decades, Locke’s fortunes were tied to Shaftesbury, who was first a leading minister to Charles II and then a founder of the opposing Whig party. Shaftesbury led the 1679 “exclusion” campaign to bar the Catholic duke of York (the future James II) from the royal succession. When that failed, Shaftesbury began to plot armed resistance and was forced to flee to Holland in 1682. Locke would follow his patron into exile a year later, returning only after the Glorious Revolution had placed the Protestant William III on the throne.

## *John Locke’s Publications and Final Years*

During his decades of service to Shaftesbury, John Locke had been writing. In the six years following his return to England he published all of his most significant works.

Locke’s “Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (1689) outlined a theory of human knowledge, identity and selfhood. To Locke, knowledge was not the discovery of anything either innate or outside of the individual, but simply the accumulation of “facts” derived from sensory experience. To discover truths beyond the realm of basic experience, Locke suggested an approach modeled on the rigorous methods of experimental science.

The “Two Treatises of Government” (1690) offered political theories developed and refined by Locke during his years at Shaftesbury’s side. Rejecting the divine right of kings, Locke said that societies form governments by mutual (and, in later generations, tacit) agreement. Thus, when a king loses the consent of the governed, a society may remove him—an approach quoted almost verbatim in Thomas Jefferson’s 1776 Declaration of Independence. The other central contribution of the *Second Treatise* is its assertion that government should merely protect property, which exists both prior to and independent of the state. In Locke’s terms, “property” refers not merely to material things or to land, but also to the ownership of the self — as such, all slavery and domination are not justifiable as outlined in the *Second Treatise*.

In his “Thoughts Concerning Education” (1693), Locke argued for a broadened syllabus and better treatment of students—ideas that were an enormous influence on Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s novel “Emile” (1762).

In three “Letters Concerning Toleration” (1689-92), Locke suggested that governments should respect freedom of religion except when the dissenting belief was a threat to public order. Atheists (whose oaths could not be trusted) and Catholics (who owed allegiance to an external ruler) were thus excluded from his scheme. Even within its limitations, Locke’s toleration did not argue that all (Protestant) beliefs were equally good or true, but simply that governments were not in a position to decide which one was correct.

Locke spent his final 14 years in Essex at the home of Sir Francis Masham and his wife, the philosopher Lady Damaris Cudworth Masham. He died there on October 24, 1704, as Lady Damaris read to him from the Psalms.

Selections from *Of Civil Government*

#### The State of Nature

To understand political power aright, we must consider what state all men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature; without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man. . . .

The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions… (and) when his own preservation comes not in competition, ought he, as much as he can, to preserve the rest of mankind, and may not, unless it be to do justice on an offender, take away, or impair the life, or what tends to the preservation of the life, the liberty, health, limb, or goods of another.

## *Reason*

Men living together according to reason, without a common superior on earth, with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature.

The only way whereby anyone divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on the bonds of civil society, is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community, for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any that are not of it.

For no government can have a right to obedience from a people who have not freely consented to it; which they can never be supposed to do, till either they are put in a full state of liberty to choose their government and governors, or at least till they have such standing laws, to which they have by themselves or their representatives given their free consent; and also till they are allowed their due property, which is so to be proprietors of what they have, that nobody can take away any part of it without their own consent, without which, men under any government are not in the state of freemen, but are direct slaves under the force of war.

# Declaration of Independence

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Charles de Secondat,   
Baron de Montesquieu

**Born: January 18, 1689 Bordeaux, France   
Died: February 10, 1755 Paris, France***French philosopher and satirist*

The French satirist (writer using sarcasm to communicate his message) and political and social philosopher Montesquieu was the first of the great French scholars associated with the Enlightenment (a philosophical movement in the eighteenth century that rejected traditional social and religious ideas by placing reason as the most important ideal).

## *Early life*

Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu was born on January 18, 1689, at the castle of La Brède near Bordeaux. His father, Jacques de Secondat, was a soldier with a long noble ancestry, and his mother, Marie Françoise de Pesnel, who died when Charles Louis was seven, was an heiress (a woman with a large monetary inheritance) who eventually brought the barony (title of baron) of La Brède to the Secondat family. As was customary the young Montesquieu spent the early years of his life among the peasants (poor working class) in the village of La Brède. The influence of this period remained with Charles Louis, showing itself in his deep attachment to the soil. Montesquieu was also born into a climate of discontent in France. King Louis XIV's (1638–1715) long reign was uncomfortable for the citizens of France. His unsuccessful wars and attempts to dictate religion and culture had a bad effect on France. Knowledge of this situation helps to explain some of Montesquieu's curiosity and his interest in societal rules and laws.

In 1700 Montesquieu was sent to the Oratorian Collège de Juilly, at Meaux, where he received a modern education. Returning to Bordeaux in 1705 to study law, he was admitted to practice before the Bordeaux Parlement (parliament) in 1708. The next five years were spent in Paris, France, continuing his studies. During this period he developed an intense dislike for the style of life in the capital, which he later expressed in his *Persian Letters.*

In 1715 Montesquieu married Jeanne de Lartigue, a Protestant (a member of the church that had left the rule of Roman Catholicism), who brought him a large dowry (sum of money given in marriage). He was also elected to the Academy of Bordeaux. The following year, on the death of his uncle Jean Baptiste, he inherited the barony of Montesquieu and the presidency of the Bordeaux Parlement.

## *Scholarly and literary career*

Montesquieu had no great enthusiasm for law as a profession. He was much more interested in the spirit that lay behind law. It is from this interest that his greatest work, *The Spirit of the Laws,* developed. To free himself in order to continue his scholarly interests, he sold his office as president of the Bordeaux Parlement in 1721. With his newly freed time he wrote the *Persian Letters.*

The *Persian Letters* was a fierce and bitingly critical view of European civilization and manners. The work takes the form of letters that three Persians (people from what is now Iran) traveling in Europe send to families and friends at home. Their letters are notes on what they see in the West. Montesquieu gave his travelers the foreign, commonsense understanding necessary to effectively criticize European (French) customs and institutions. Yet he also gave his Persians the weaknesses necessary to make his readers recognize in them their own weaknesses. All sides of European life were criticized. The message is that society lasts only on the basis of virtue and justice, which is rooted in the need of human cooperation and acceptance.

Although the *Letters* was published without his name, it was quickly recognized as the work of Montesquieu and won him the approval of the public and the displeasure of the governor, Cardinal André Fleury, who held up Montesquieu's introduction into the French Academy until 1728.

## *The Spirit of the Laws*

Montesquieu brought his search for the general laws active in society and history to its completion in his greatest work. Published in 1748, *The Spirit of the Laws* was an investigation of the environmental and social relationships that lie behind the laws of civilized society. Combining the traditions of customary law with those of the modern theories of natural law, Montesquieu redefined law as "the necessary relationships that derive [come] from the nature of things." Laws "must be adapted to each peoples."

*The Spirit of the Laws* helped to lay the basis of the eighteenth-century movement for constitutionalism (government run by established law), which ended in the Revolution of 1789 (1789–93; rise and revolt of the middle class against the failures of King Louis XVI and his royals, many of whom were killed by the guillotine, or chopping block). In this sense Montesquieu's most basic belief may be viewed as an attempt to state the necessity of law review. *The Spirit of the Laws* was immediately celebrated as one of the great works of French literature.

Following the completion of his work, Montesquieu, who was going blind, went into semiretirement at La Brède. He died on February 10, 1755, during a trip to Paris.

Selections from the *Spirit of the Laws* (1749)

# Of the Laws in General

Laws, in their most general meaning, are the necessary relations arising from the nature of things. In this sense, all beings have their laws, the Deity his laws, the material world its laws, the intelligences superior to man their laws, the beasts their laws, man his laws. . . .

Since we observe that the world, though formed by the motion of matter, and void of understanding, subsists through so long a succession of ages, its motions must certainly be directed by invariable laws. . . .

Law in general is human reason, inasmuch as it governs all the inhabitants of the earth; the political and civil laws of each nation ought to be only the particular cases in which human reason is applied.

They should be adapted in this manner to the people for whom they are framed, because it is most unlikely that the laws of one nation will suit another.

They should be relative to the nature and principle of each government. . . . They should be relative to the climate of each country, to the quality of its soil, to its situation and extent, to the principal occupation of the inhabitants, whether farmers, huntsmen, or shepherds: they should have a relation to the degree of liberty which the constitution will bear, to the religion of the inhabitants, to their manners, and customs . . . in all which different respects they ought to be considered.

# United States Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

constitution. A nation or state's fundamental set of laws

# Of Political Liberty and the Constitution of England

Political liberty is to be found only in moderate governments; and even in these it is not always found. It is there only when there is no abuse of power: but constant experience shows us that every man invested with power is apt to abuse it, and to carry his authority as far as it will go.

To prevent this abuse, it is necessary, from the very nature of things, that power should be a check to power.

The political liberty of the subject is a tranquility of mind arising from the opinion each person has of his safety. In order to have this liberty, it is requisite the government be so constituted as one man need not be afraid of another.

When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty. . .

Again, there is no liberty if the judiciary power be not separated from the legislative and executive.

In perusing the admirable treatise of Tacitus on the manners of the ancient German tribes, we find it is from that nation the English have borrowed the idea of their political government. This beautiful system was invented first in the woods. . . .

Neither do I pretend by this to undervalue other governments, nor to say that this extreme political liberty ought to give uneasiness to those who have only a moderate share of it. How should I have any such design; I who think that even the highest refinement of reason is not always desirable, and that mankind generally find their account better in mediums than in extremes?

# United States Constitution

Article. I.**Section. 1.**All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Article. II. **Section. 1.**The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America.

Article III. **Section. 1.**The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.

Jean Jacques Rousseau

**Born: June 28, 1712 Geneva, Switzerland   
Died: July 2, 1778 Ermenonville, France***French philosopher, author, and composer*

The Swiss-born [philosopher](http://www.notablebiographies.com/knowledge/Philosophy.html) (seeker of wisdom), author, [political theorist](http://www.notablebiographies.com/knowledge/List_of_political_philosophers.html) (one who forms an explanation or theory on a subject based on careful study), and composer (writer of music) Jean-Jacques Rousseau ranks as one of the greatest figures of the French Enlightenment, a period of great artistic awakening in France.

## *Early years*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was born to Suzanne Bernard and Isaac Rousseau on June 28, 1712, in Geneva, Switzerland. Nine days later his mother died. At the age of three, he was reading French novels with his father, and Jean-Jacques acquired his passion for music from his aunt. His father fled Geneva to avoid imprisonment when Jean-Jacques was ten. By the time he was thirteen, his formal education had ended and he was sent to work for a notary public (someone legally empowered to certify documents), but he was soon dismissed as fit only for watchmaking. Afterwards Rousseau spent three miserable years serving as a watchmaker, which he abandoned when he found himself unexpectedly locked out of the city by its closed gates. He faced the world with no money or belongings and no obvious talents.

Rousseau found himself on Palm Sunday, 1728, in Annecy, France, at the house of Louise Eleonore, Baronne de Warens. Rousseau lived under her roof off and on for thirteen years and was dominated by her influence. Charming and clever, a natural businesswoman, Madame de Warens was a woman who lived by her wits. She supported him and found him jobs, most of which he disliked. A friend, after examining the lad, informed her that he might aspire to become a village curé (priest) but nothing more. Still Rousseau read, studied, and thought. He pursued music and gave lessons, and for a time he worked as a tutor.

## *First publications and operas*

Rousseau's scheme for musical notation, published in 1743 as *Dissertation sur la musique moderne,* brought him neither fame nor fortune—only a fond letter from the Académie des Sciences. But his interest in music spurred him to write two operas— *Les Muses galantes* (1742) and *Le Devin du village* (1752)—and permitted him to write articles on music for Denis Diderot's (1713–1784) *Encyclopédie; the Lettre sur la musique française* (1753) and the *Dictionnaire de musique,* published in 1767.

From September 1743 until August 1744 Rousseau served as secretary to the French ambassador to Venice, Italy. He experienced at firsthand the stupidity and corruption (dishonesty and deception) involved in these offices. Rousseau spent the remaining years before his success with his first *Discours* in Paris, where he lived the poor lifestyle of a struggling intellectual.

In March 1745 Rousseau began an affair with Thérèse Le Vasseur. She was twenty-four years old, a maid at Rousseau's lodgings. She remained with him for the rest of his life—as mistress, housekeeper, mother of his children, and finally, in 1768, as his wife. They had five children—though some biographers have questioned whether any of them were Rousseau's. Apparently he regarded them as his own even though he assigned them to a hospital for abandoned children. Rousseau had no means to educate them, and he reasoned that they would be better raised as workers and peasants by the state.

By 1749 Rousseau had befriended the French philosopher Diderot. The publication of Diderot's *Lettre sur les aveugles* had resulted in his imprisonment at Vincennes, France. While walking to Vincennes to visit Diderot, Rousseau read an announcement of a prize being offered by the Dijon Academy for the best essay on the question, "Has progress of the arts and sciences contributed more to the corruption or to the purification of morals?" Rousseau won the prize of the Dijon Academy with his *Discours sur les sciences et les arts.* His famous "attack" on civilization called for sixty-eight articles defending the arts and sciences. Though he himself regarded this essay as "the weakest in argument and the poorest in harmony and proportion" of all his works, he nonetheless believed that it sounded one of his essential themes: the arts and sciences, instead of freeing men and increasing their happiness, had for the most part imprisoned men further.

## *Major works*

Rousseau's novel *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) attempted to portray in fiction the sufferings and tragedy that foolish education and restrictive social customs had among sensitive creatures. Rousseau's two other major writings— *L'émile ou de l'éducation* (1762) and *Du contrat social* (1762)—undertook the more difficult task of constructing an education and a social order that would enable men to be natural and free; that is, to enable men to recognize no bondage except the bondage of natural necessity. To be free in this sense, said Rousseau, was to be happy.

*La Nouvelle Héloïse* appeared in Paris in January 1761. Originally entitled *Lettres de deux amants, habitants d'une petite ville au pied des Alpes,* the work was structurally a novel in letters, after the fashion of the English author Samuel Richardson (1689–1761). The originality of the novel won it harsh reviews, but its sexual nature made it immensely popular with the public. It remained a best seller until the French Revolution in 1789, a massive uprising calling for political and social change throughout France.

The reputation of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* was nothing compared to the storm produced by *L'émile and Du contrat social.* Even today the ideas set forth in these works are revolutionary. Their expression, especially in *L'émile,* in a style both readable and alluring made them dangerous. *L'émile* was condemned (officially dissaproved of) by the Paris Parliament (the governing body) and heavily criticized by the archbishop of Paris. Both of the books were burned by the authorities in Geneva, Switzerland.

## *Exile and death*

Forced to flee from France, Rousseau sought refuge at Yverdon in the territory of Bern. There he was kicked out by the Bernese authorities and would spend the next few years seeking a safe place to live. Finally, British philosopher David Hume (1711–1776) helped Rousseau settle in Wotton, Derbyshire, England, in 1766. Hume managed to obtain from George III (1738–1820) a yearly pension (sum of money) for Rousseau. But Rousseau, falsely believing Hume to be in league with his Parisian and Genevan enemies, not only refused the pension but also openly broke with the philosopher.

Rousseau returned to France in June 1767 under the protection of the Prince de Conti. Wandering from place to place, he at last settled in 1770 in Paris. There he made a living, as he often had in the past, by copying music. By December 1770 the *Confessions,* upon which he had been working since 1766, was completed, and he gave readings from this work at various private homes. His last work, *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire,* begun in 1776 and unfinished at his death, records how Rousseau, an outcast from society, recaptured "serenity, tranquility, peace, even happiness."

In May 1778 Rousseau accepted Marquis de Giradin's hospitality at Ermenonville near Paris. There, with Thérèse at his bedside, he died on July 2, 1778, probably from uremia, a severe kidney disease. Rousseau was buried on the Île des Peupliers at Ermenonville. In October 1794 his remains were transferred to the Panthéon in Paris. Thérèse, surviving him by twenty-two years, died in 1801 at the age of eighty.

Selections from the *Social Contract* (1762)

Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains. Many a one believes himself the master of others, and yet he is a greater slave than they.

. . . [T]he social order is a sacred right which serves as a foundation for all others . . . now, as men cannot create any new forces, but only combine and direct those that exist, they have no other means of self-preservation than to form...a sum of forces which may overcome the resistance, to put them in action . . . and to make them work in concert.

This sum of forces can be produced only by the combination of man; but the strength and freedom of each man being the chief instruments of his preservation, how can he pledge them without injuring himself, and without neglecting the cares which he owes to himself? This difficulty, applied to my subject, may be expressed in these terms:

“To find a form of association which may defend and protect with the whole force of the community the person and property of all its members and by means of which each, coalescing with all, may nevertheless obey only himself, and remain as free as before. Such is the fundamental problem of which the social contract furnishes the solution.”

In short, each giving himself to all, gives himself to nobody. . .

We see from this formula that the act of association contains a reciprocal engagement between the public and individuals, and that every individual . . . is engaged in a double relation. . . .

. . . the social pact . . . includes this engagement . . . that whoever refuses to obey the general will shall be constrained to do so by the whole body; which means nothing else than that he shall be forced to be free. . . .

# United States Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Voltaire

**Born: November 21, 1694 Paris, France   
Died: May 30, 1778 Paris, France***French poet and philosopher*

The French poet, dramatist, historian, and philosopher Voltaire was an outspoken and aggressive enemy of every injustice but especially of religious intolerance (the refusal to accept or respect any differences).

## *Early years*

Voltaire was born as François Marie Arouet, perhaps on November 21, 1694, in Paris, France. He was the youngest of the three surviving children of François Arouet and Marie Marguerite Daumand, although Voltaire claimed to be the "bastard [born out of wedlock] of Rochebrune," a minor poet and songwriter. Voltaire's mother died when he was seven years old, and he developed a close relationship with his godfather, a free-thinker. His family belonged to the upper-middle-class, and young Voltaire was able to receive an excellent education. A clever child, Voltaire studied under the Jesuits at the Collège Louis-le-Grand from 1704 to 1711. He displayed an astonishing talent for poetry and developed a love of the theater and literature.

## *Emerging poet*

When Voltaire was drawn into the circle of the seventy-two-year-old poet Abbé de Chaulieu, his father packed him off to Caen, France. Hoping to stop his son's literary ambitions and to turn his mind to pursuing law, Arouet placed the youth as secretary to the French ambassador at The Hague, the seat of government in the Netherlands. Voltaire fell in love with a French refugee, Catherine Olympe Dunoyer, who was pretty but barely educated. Their marriage was stopped. Under the threat of a *lettre de cachet* (an official letter from a government calling for the arrest of a person) obtained by his father, Voltaire returned to Paris in 1713 and was contracted to a lawyer. He continued to write and he renewed his pleasure-loving acquaintances. In 1717 Voltaire was at first exiled (forced to leave) and then imprisoned in the Bastille, an enormous French prison, for writings that were offensive to powerful people.

As early as 1711, Voltaire, eager to test himself against Sophocles (c. 496–406 B.C.E. ) and Pierre Corneille (1606–1684), had written a first draft of *Oedipe.* On November 18, 1718, the revised (changed for improvement) play opened in Paris to a sensational success. The *Henriade,* begun in the Bastille and published in 1722, was Voltaire's attempt to compete against Virgil (70–19 B.C.E. ) and to give France an epic poem (a long poem centered around a legendary hero).

While Voltaire stayed in England (1726–1728) he was greatly honored; Alexander Pope (1688–1744), William Congreve (1670–1729), Horace Walpole (1717–1797), and Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1658–1751), praised him; and his works earned Voltaire one thousand pounds. Voltaire learned English by attending the theater daily, script in hand. He also absorbed English thought, especially that of John Locke (1632–1704) and Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727), and he saw the relationship between free government and creative business developments. More importantly, England suggested the relationship of wealth to freedom. The only protection, even for a brilliant poet, was wealth.

## *At Cirey and at court, 1729–1753*

Voltaire returned to France in 1729. One product of his English stay was the *Lettres anglaises* (1734), which have been called "the first bomb dropped on the Old Regime." Their explosive potential (something that shows future promise) included such remarks as, "It has taken centuries to do justice to humanity, to feel it was horrible that the many should sow and the few should reap." Written in the style of letters to a friend in France, the twenty-four "letters" were a clever and seductive (desirable) call for political, religious, and philosophic (having to do with knowledge) freedom; for the betterment of earthly life; for employing the method of Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626), Locke, and Newton; and generally for striving toward social progress.

Prior to 1753 Voltaire did not have a home; but for fifteen years following 1733 he had stayed in Cirey, France, in a château (country house) owned by Madame du Châtelet. While still living with her patient husband and son, Émilie made generous room for Voltaire. They were lovers; and they worked together intensely on physics and metaphysics, a philosophy which investigates the nature of reality.

Honored by a respectful correspondence with Frederick II of Prussia (1712–1786), Voltaire was then sent on diplomatic (having to do with international affairs) missions to Prussia. But Voltaire's new interest was his affair with his widowed niece, Madame Denis. This affair continued its passionate and stormy course to the last years of his life. Émilie, too, found solace in other lovers. The simple and peaceful time of Cirey ended with her death in 1749.

Voltaire then accepted Frederick's repeated invitation to live at court. He arrived at Potsdam (now in Germany) with Madame Denis in July 1750. First flattered by Frederick's hospitality, Voltaire then gradually became anxious, quarrelsome, and finally bored. He left, angry, in March 1753, having written in December 1752: "I am going to write for my instruction a little dictionary used by Kings. 'My friend' means 'my slave.'" Frederick took revenge by delaying permission for Voltaire's return to France, by putting him under a week's house arrest at the German border, and by seizing all his money.

## *Sage of Ferney, 1753–1778*

Voltaire's literary productivity did not slow down, although his concerns shifted as the years passed while at his estate in Ferney, France. He was best known as a poet until in 1751 *Le Siècle de Louis XIV* marked him also as a historian. Other historical works include *Histoire de Charles XII; Histoire de la Russie sous Pierre le Grand;* and the universal history, *Essai sur l'histoire générale et sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations,* published in 1756 but begun at Cirey. An extremely popular dramatist until 1760, he began to be outdone by competition from the plays of William Shakespeare (1564–1616) that he had introduced to France.

The philosophic *conte* (a short story about adventure) was a Voltaire invention. In addition to his famous *Candide* (1759), others of his stories in this style include *Micromégas, Vision de Babouc, Memnon, Zadig,* and *Jeannot et Colin.* In addition to the *Lettres Philosophiques* and the work on Newton (1642–1727), others of Voltaire's works considered philosophic are *Philosophie de l'histoire, Le Philosophe ignorant, Tout en Dieu, Dictionnaire philosophique portatif,* and *Traité de la métaphysique.* Voltaire's poetry includes—in addition to the *Henriade* —the philosophic poems *L'Homme, La Loi naturelle, and Le Désastre de Lisbonne,* as well as the famous *La Pucelle,* a delightfully naughty poem about Joan of Arc (1412–1431).

Always the champion of liberty, Voltaire in his later years became actively involved in securing justice for victims of persecution, or intense harassment. He became the "conscience of Europe." His activity in the Calas affair was typical. An unsuccessful and depressed young man had hanged himself in his Protestant father's home in Roman Catholic city of Toulouse, France. For two hundred years Toulouse had celebrated the massacre (cruel killings) of four thousand of its Huguenot inhabitants (French Protestants). When the rumor spread that the dead man had been about to abandon Protestantism, the family was seized and tried for murder. The father was tortured; a son was exiled (forced to leave); and the daughters were forcefully held in a convent (a house for nuns). Investigation assured Voltaire of their innocence, and from 1762 to 1765 he worked in their behalf. He employed "his friends, his purse, his pen, his credit" to move public opinion to the support of the Calas family. In 1765, Parliament declared the Calas family innocent.

Voltaire's influence continued to be felt after his death in Paris on May 30, 1778.

**Selections from A Treatise on Toleration (1763)**

# Virtue is Better than Science

The fewer dogmas, the fewer disputes; the fewer disputes, the fewer miseries: if this is not true, then I'm wrong.

Religion was instituted to make us happy in this life and in the other. What must we do to be happy in the life to come? Be just.

What must we do in order to be happy in this life, as far as the misery of our nature permits? Be indulgent.

It would be the height of folly to pretend to improve all men to the point that they think in a uniform manner about metaphysics. it would be easier to subjugate the entire universe through force of arms than to subjugate the minds of a single village. . . .

# **On Universal Tolerance**

It does not require great art, or magnificently trained eloquence, to prove that Christians should tolerate each other. I, however, am going further: I say that we should regard all men as our brothers. What? The Turk my brother? The Chinaman my brother? The Jew? The Siam? Yes, without doubt; are we not all children of the same father and creatures of the same God?

**Influence on the United States**

# Bill of Rights

**Amendment I**

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Cesare Beccaria

[](http://www.biography.com/people/cesare-beccaria-39630)**Born: March 15, 1738, Milan, Italy**

**Died: November 28, 1794, Milan, Italy**

*Italian criminologist, jurist, philosopher, and politician*

Cesare Beccaria was one of the greatest minds of the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century. His writings on criminology and economics were well ahead of their time.

## *Early Life*

Criminologist and economist Cesare Beccaria was born March 15, 1738, in Milan, Italy. His father was an aristocrat born of the Austrian Habsburg Empire, but earned only a modest income.

Cesare Beccaria received his primary education at a Jesuit school in Parma, Italy. He would later describe his early education as "fanatical" and oppressive of "the development of human feelings." Despite his frustration at school, Beccaria was an excellent math student. Following his education at the Jesuit school, Beccaria attended the University of Parma, where he received a law degree in 1758.

Even in his early life, Cesare Beccaria was prone to mood swings. He tended to vacillate between fits of anger and bursts of enthusiasm, often followed by periods of depression and lethargy. He was shy in social settings, but cherished his relationships with friends and family.

In 1760 Beccaria extended his family by proposing to Teresa Blasco. Teresa was just 16 years old, and her father strongly objected to the engagement. A year later, the couple eloped. In 1762 they welcomed a baby girl, the first of the couple’s three children.

Also among those people that Beccaria held particularly dear were his friends Pietro and Alessandro Verri. In collaboration with the Verri brothers, Beccaria formed an intellectual/literary society called "the academy of fists." In line with the principles of the Enlightenment, the society was dedicated to "waging relentless war against economic disorder, bureaucratic tyranny, religious narrow-mindedness, and intellectual pedantry." Its main goal was to promote economic, political and administrative reform.

To this effect, academy members encouraged Beccaria to read French and British writings on the Enlightenment, and to take a stab at writing himself. To fulfill his friends’ assignment, Beccaria composed his first published essay, "On Remedies for the Monetary Disorders of Milan in the Year 1762."

## *Criminal Justice*

Also spurred by his involvement in the "academy of fists" was Beccaria’s most famous and influential essay, "On Crimes and Punishments," published in 1764. "On Crimes and Punishments" is a thorough treatise exploring the topic of criminal justice. Because Beccaria’s ideas were critical of the legal system in place at the time, and were therefore likely to stir controversy, he chose to publish the essay anonymously -- for fear of government backlash.

In actuality, the treatise was extremely well-received. Catherine the Great publicly endorsed it, while thousands of miles away in the United States, founding fathers Thomas Jefferson and John Adams quoted it. Once it was clear that the government approved of his essay, Beccaria republished it, this time crediting himself as the author.

Three tenets served as the basis of Beccaria’s theories on criminal justice: free will, rational manner, and manipulability. According to Beccaria -- and most classical theorists -- free will enables people to make choices. Beccaria believed that people have a rational manner and apply it toward making choices that will help them achieve their own personal gratification.

In Beccaria’s interpretation, law exists to preserve the social contract and benefit society as a whole. But, because people act out of self-interest and their interest sometimes conflicts with societal laws, they commit crimes. The principle of manipulability refers to the predictable ways in which people act out of rational self-interest and might therefore be dissuaded from committing crimes if the punishment outweighs the benefits of the crime, rendering the crime an illogical choice.

In "On Crimes and Punishments," Beccaria identified a pressing need to reform the criminal justice system, citing the then-present system as barbaric and antiquated. He went on to discuss how specific laws should be determined, who should make them, what they should be like and whom they should benefit. He emphasized the need for adequate but just punishment, and went so far as to explain how the system should define the appropriate punishment for each type of crime.

Unlike few documents before it, "On Crimes and Punishments" sought to protect the rights of criminals as well as the rights of their victims. "On Crimes and Punishments" also assigned specific roles to the various members of the courts. The thorough treatise included a discussion of crime-prevention strategies.

## *Economics*

In addition to his fascination with criminal law, Cesare Beccaria was still drawn to the field of economics. In 1768, he was appointed the Chair in Public Economy and Commerce at the Palatine School in Milan. For the next two years, he also served as a lecturer there. Based on these lectures, Beccaria created an economic analysis entitled "Elements of Public Economy." In it he pioneered the discussion of such topics as division of labor. "Elements of Public Economy" was eventually published in 1804, a decade after Beccaria’s death.

Beccaria’s economics career also entailed serving on the Supreme Economic Council of Milan. This public position enabled him to strive for the same goal -- economic reform -- that he had set with "the academy of fists" so many years ago. While in office, Beccaria focused largely on the issues of public education and labor relations. He also created a report on the system of measures that led France to start using the metric system.

Beccaria’s career in economics was productive. His work in analysis helped paved the way for later theorists like Thomas Malthus. However, Beccaria failed to match the astronomical level of success he had previously achieved in the criminal justice field. While retaining his career in economics, in 1790 Beccaria served on a committee that promoted civil and criminal law reform in Lombardy, Italy.

## *Death and Legacy*

Near the end of his life, Beccaria was depressed by the excesses of the French Revolution and withdrew from his family and friends. He died on November 28, 1794, in his birthplace of Milan, Italy.

Following his death, talk of Beccaria spread to France and England. People speculated as to whether Beccaria’s lack of recent writing on criminal justice was evidence that he had been silenced by the British government. In fact, Beccaria, prone to periodic bouts of depression and misanthropy, had grown silent on his own.

A forerunner in criminology, Beccaria’s influence during his lifetime extended to shaping the rights listed in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. "On Crimes and Punishments" served as a guide to the founding fathers.

Beccaria’s theories, as expressed in his treatise "On Crimes and Punishments," have continued to play a role in recent times. Recent policies impacted by his theories include, but are not limited to, truth in sentencing, swift punishment and the abolishment of the death penalty in some U.S. states. While many of Beccaria’s theories are popular, some are still a source of heated controversy, even more than two centuries after the famed criminologist’s death.

Selections from *On Crimes and Punishments*

If we look into history we shall find that laws, which are, or ought to be, conventions between men in a state of freedom. have been, for the most part the work of the passions of a few, or the consequences of a fortuitous or temporary necessity; not dictated by a cool examiner of human nature, who knew how to collect in one point the actions of a multitude, and had this only end in view, the greatest happiness of the greatest number. . .

Every punishment which does not arise from absolute necessity, says the great Montesquieu, is tyrannical. A proposition which may be made more general thus: every act of authority of one man over another, for which there is not an absolute necessity, is tyrannical. . .

It is better to prevent crimes than to punish them. This is the ultimate end of every good legislation, which, to use the general terms for assessing the good and evils of life, is the art of leading men to the greatest possible happiness or to the least possible unhappiness. . .

Can the cries of a poor wretch turn back time and undo actions which have already been done?… The purpose of punishment, then, is nothing other than to dissuade the criminal from doing fresh harm… punishments and the method of inflicting them should be chosen that, mindful of the proportion between crime and punishment, will make the most effective and lasting impression on men’s minds and inflict the least torment on the body of the criminal.

# United States Constitution

**Amendment V**

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

**Amendment VI**

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

**Amendment VIII**

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.