The Enlightenment and the American Revolution

(1707–1800)
“Women in the Enlightenment”
Primary Source Document 1

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“Women in the Enlightenment”

Primary Source Document 2

Section 1

Bell Work

FRANKLIN AT THE COURT OF FRANCE 1778

The Granger Collection, New York
Progress and Reason

Scientific progress convinced Europeans of the power of human reason.

If people used reason to find laws that governed the physical world, why not use reason to discover natural laws, or laws that governed human nature?

Thus, the Scientific Revolution led to another revolution in thinking, which came to be known as the Enlightenment.

Through the use of reason, people and governments could solve social, political, and economic problems.
Political Thinkers of the Enlightenment

- **Thomas Hobbes** believed people are naturally cruel, greedy, and selfish.
  - People entered into a *social contract*, in order to live in an organized society.
  - Only an absolute monarchy can ensure an orderly society.

- **John Locke** believed people are basically reasonable and moral.
  - People have certain *natural rights*.
  - A government has a duty to the people it governs. If a government fails, the people have the right to overthrow it.

- **Baron de Montesquieu** taught that the separation of powers is the best way to protect liberty.
  - Each branch of government should serve as a check on the others.
The Philosophes and Society

- Thinkers called *philosophes* believed that the use of reason could lead to reforms of government, law, and society.

- **Voltaire** defended the principle of freedom of speech.
  - Used wit to expose abuses and corruption.
  - Opposed the slave trade and religious prejudice.
  - Offended the French government and Catholic Church and was imprisoned and exiled.
The Philosophes and Society (cont.)

- **Rousseau** believed that people were basically good.
  - In 1762, in *The Social Contract*, he argued that government controls should be minimal and should only be imposed by a freely elected government.
  - Felt the good of the community should be placed above individual interests.

- **Denis Diderot** worked for 25 years to produce a 28-volume *Encyclopedia*.
  - Wanted “to change the general way of thinking” by explaining the new ideas on topics such as government, philosophy, and religion.
  - Denounced slavery, praised freedom of expression, and urged education for all.
  - Attacked divine right theory and traditional religions.
Mary Wollstonecraft argued that a woman should be able to decide what is in her own interest and should not be completely dependent on her husband.

- Accepted that a woman’s first duty was to be a good mother, however, she argued that women were being excluded from the social contract.
- Called for equal education for girls and boys.
- Only education could give women the tools they needed to participate equally with men in the public life.
- In 1792, published *Vindication of the Rights of Women*.
New Economic Thinking

Thinkers called **physiocrats** focused on economic reforms. Like the philosophes, physiocrats looked for natural laws to define a rational economic system.

Physiocrats rejected mercantilism in favor of a policy called **laissez faire**.

**Laissez faire** means allowing businesses to run with little or no government interference.

In *The Wealth of Nations*, **Adam Smith** argued that the free market should be allowed to regulate business activity. Smith supported laissez faire, but also believed that a government had a duty to protect society, administer justice, and provide public works.
Women and the Enlightenment

Written Source Document 1

From Jean-Jacques Rousseau

“In all that does not relate to sex, woman is man. She has the same organs, the same needs, the same faculties. The machine is constructed in the same manner, the parts are the same, the workings of the one are the same as the other, and the appearance of the two is similar. From whatever aspect one considers them, they differ only by degree.”

- In what way does Rousseau’s language here show him to be a true man of the Enlightenment?

- Do you think this effort to describe men and women using the metaphor of a machine is an effective way to explain the actual and relevant differences between men and women? Why or why not?
The Roles of Censorship and Salons

Government and church officials tried to protect the old order. To defend against the attacks of the Enlightenment, they used **censorship**, the restricting of access to ideas and information. They banned and burned books and imprisoned writers.

**Salons** were informal social gatherings where writers, artists, philosophes, and others exchanged ideas.
## Enlightened Despots

*Enlightened despots* were absolute rulers who used their power to bring about political and social change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FREDERICK THE GREAT, King of Prussia</th>
<th>CATHERINE THE GREAT, Tsarina of Russia</th>
<th>JOSEPH II, Hapsburg Emperor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exerted tight control over subjects, but saw himself as a “servant of the state.”</td>
<td>Was interested in Enlightenment ideas but intended to give up no power.</td>
<td>Most radical of enlightened despots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerated religious differences.</td>
<td>Made some limited reforms in law and government.</td>
<td>Granted toleration to Protestants and Jews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributed seeds and tools to peasants.</td>
<td>Granted nobles a charter of rights.</td>
<td>Ended censorship and tried to control the Catholic Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criticized the institution of serfdom.</td>
<td>Sold church property to build hospitals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Abolished serfdom.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Literature and the Arts

- In the 1600s and 1700s, the arts evolved to meet changing tastes.
- Literature developed new forms and a wide new audience.
- Middle class readers enjoyed stories about their own times.
- Great numbers of novels were written.
- Daniel Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe*, about a sailor shipwrecked on a tropical island.
- Samuel Richardson used letters to tell the story of a servant girl in *Pamela*.

Defoe's pamphleteering and political activities resulted in his arrest and placement in a pillory on July 31, 1703, principally on account of a pamphlet entitled *The Shortest-Way with the Dissenters; Or, Proposals for the Establishment of the Church*, purporting to argue for their extermination.
In the age of Louis XIV, courtly art and architecture were either in the Greek or Roman tradition or in a grand, complex style known as baroque, a style characterized by dynamic movement, overt emotion and self-confident rhetoric.

This style communicated religious themes in direct and emotional involvement.

The aristocracy also saw the dramatic style of Baroque architecture and art as a means of impressing visitors and expressing triumphant power and control.

Baroque palaces are built around an entrance of courts, grand staircases and reception rooms of sequentially increasing opulence.

Bernini's Ecstasy of St. Teresa.
Examples of Baroque Painting

Adoration by Peter Paul Rubens

Aeneas flees burning Troy, Federico Barocci, 1598
By the mid 1700s, artists and designers developed the **rococo** style, which was personal, elegant, and charming. In this style, artists gave up their symmetry and became increasingly ornate, florid, and playful.

This is a style of 18th century French art and interior design.

Rococo rooms were designed as total works of art with elegant and ornate furniture, small sculptures, ornamental mirrors, and tapestry complementing architecture, reliefs, and wall paintings.

It was largely supplanted by the Neoclassic style.

A Rococo interior in Gatchina.
Rococo Architecture

The Rococo Basilica at Ottobeuren (Bavaria): architectural spaces flow together and swarm with life
Antoine Watteau, *Pilgrimage on the Isle of Cythera* (1717, Louvre) captures the frivolity and sensuousness of Rococo painting.
Baroque Music

- New kinds of musical entertainment evolved, such as ballets and operas.
- Music followed ordered, structured forms.
- Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frederick Handel, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart were brilliant and influential composers of this time.
Lives of Peasants

- Peasant life varied across Europe. Peasant culture, based on centuries-old traditions, changed slowly.
- In Western Europe, serfdom had largely disappeared.
- Peasants worked their own plots of land, were tenants of large landowners, or worked as day laborers.
- In central and Eastern Europe, serfdom remained firmly rooted.
- Peasants owed labor services to their lords and could be bought and sold with the land.
"Nevertheless, so weak are their intellects, and so un-tuned are their organs to the voice of reason, that custom makes more absolute slaves of their senses than they can make of us. They are so accustomed to see things as they now are, that they cannot represent to themselves how they can be otherwise."

Sophia is speaking here about men. Why would a man who saw himself as an Enlightenment thinker have resented this way of describing his ideas?

What do you suppose Rousseau would have said about this passage?
Why Did Britain Rise to Global Power in the 1700s?

Location placed England in a position to control trade during the Renaissance.

In the 1700s, Britain was usually on the winning side in European conflicts.

England had developed a powerful navy, which could protect its growing empire and trade.

England offered a more favorable climate to business and commerce than did its European rivals.

The union of England and Scotland brought economic advantages to both lands.
Growth of Constitutional Government

In the century following the Glorious Revolution, three new political institutions arose in Britain:

1. Political parties emerged in England in the late 1600s. The first political parties, the Tories and the Whigs, represented small exclusive groups of wealthy men.

2. The cabinet system was a group of advisers to the prime minister. They were called the cabinet because they met in a small room.

3. The **Prime Minister** was the leader of the majority party in Parliament and in time the chief official of the British government.

The appearance of these institutions was part of the evolution of Britain’s **constitutional government**, that is a government whose power is defined and limited by law.
George III came to power anxious to reassert royal power. He wanted to end Whig domination, choose his own ministers, dissolve the cabinet system, and make Parliament follow his will.

Toward these ends, he:

- Gave parliamentary seats to his friends and supporters.
- Tried to force English colonists in North America to pay the costs of their own defense.

In 1775, George’s policies in North America triggered the American Revolution, which ended in a loss for Britain.
The 13 Colonies

- By the mid 1700s, the colonies were home to diverse religious and ethnic groups.

- The colonists felt entitled to the rights of English citizens, and their colonial assemblies exercised much control over local affairs.

- Although the ways of life between the colonists of New England and those in the south differed, the colonists shared common values, respect for individual enterprise, and an increasing sense of their own identity separate from that of Britain.
# Comparing British and Colonial Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th>American Colonies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>King</strong></td>
<td><strong>Governor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inherited executive power</td>
<td>• Appointed by and served the king but paid by the colonial legislature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parliament</strong></td>
<td><strong>Colonial Legislatives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>House of Lords</strong></td>
<td><strong>Upper House or Council</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aristocrats with inherited titles also inherited legislative power</td>
<td>• Appointed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Elected by men who held significant amounts of property</td>
<td>• Prominent colonists but without inherited titles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Less than 1/4 of British men qualified to vote</td>
<td><strong>Lower House or Assembly</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Elected by men who held property</td>
<td>• About 2/3 of colonial men qualified to vote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine

“Tis repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose that this Continent can long remain subject to any external power.”

- Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*

1. How did Paine’s statements affect the colonies and Britain?

2. How does Paine’s idea reflect those of the Enlightenment?
Growing Discontent

- After 1763, relations between Britain and the 13 colonies grew strained.

- George III wanted the colonists to help pay for the Seven Years’ War and troops still stationed along the frontier.

- “No taxation without representation.”

- The colonists protested that since they had no representation in Parliament, the British had no right to tax them.

- British troops fired on a crowd of colonists in the “Boston Massacre.”
Timeline of Events

- French and Indian War (1754-1763)
- Stamp Act (1765)
- Pontiac's Rebellion (1763-1764)
- Townshend Acts (1767)
- Boston Massacre (1770)
- Intolerable Acts (1774)
- Boston Tea Party (1773)
- First Continental Congress (1774)
Growing Discontent (cont.)

- Colonists protested by dumping British tea into Boston Harbor in the Boston Tea Party.

- Representatives from each colony met in a Continental Congress.

- War broke out between Britain and the colonists.

- The Second Continental Congress declared independence from Britain and issued the Declaration of Independence.

- The Declaration claimed that people had the right to “alter or to abolish” unjust governments.

- It also emphasized the principal of popular sovereignty, which states that all government power comes from the people.
The American Revolution in the East

- One third of Americans were Loyalists, who supported Britain.
- The Continental Congress had few military resources and little money to pay its soldiers.
- Their advantages were that they were fighting for independence and they were fighting on their own soil.
- The French alliance in 1777 was a turning point in the war.
- In 1781, the Treaty of Paris ended the war. Britain recognized the independence of the United States of America and accepted the new nation’ western frontier as the Mississippi River.
A New Constitution

The new constitution reflected the Enlightenment ideas of Locke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau.

- The framers of the Constitution saw government in terms of a social contract. They provided for an elective legislature and an elected president.

- The Constitution created a federal republic, with power divided between the federal government and the states.

- The federal government was separated among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Each branch was provided with checks and balances on the other branches.

- The Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, recognized that people had basic rights that the government must protect.

### Separation of Powers

**Executive Branch**
- (President)
  - Carries out laws
  - Proposes laws
  - Can veto laws
  - Negotiates foreign treaties
  - Serves as commander in chief of the armed forces
  - Appoints federal judges, ambassadors, and other high officials
  - Can grant pardons to federal offenders

**Legislative Branch**
- (Congress)
  - Passes laws
  - Can override President’s veto
  - Approves treaties and presidential appointments
  - Can impeach and remove President and other high officials
  - Creates lower federal courts
  - Appropriates money
  - Prints and coins money
  - Raises and supports the armed forces
  - Can declare war
  - Regulates foreign and interstate trade

**Judicial Branch**
- (Supreme Court and Other Federal Courts)
  - Interprets laws
  - Can declare laws unconstitutional
  - Can declare executive actions unconstitutional