

The Enlightenment

Answer the following in your notebook:

Explain to what extent you agree with the following:

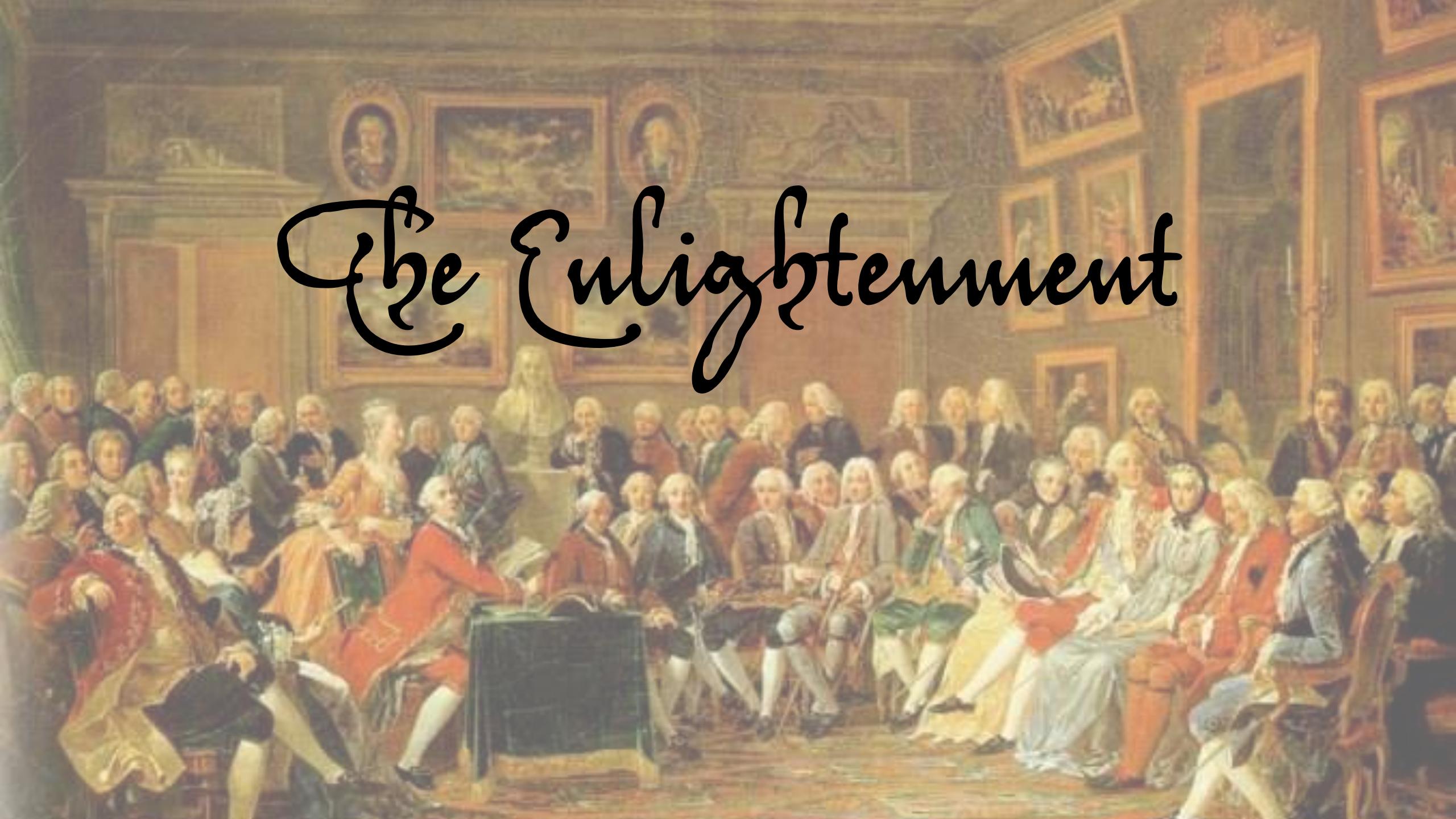
1. At heart people are generally rational and make well considered decisions.
2. The universe is governed by “natural laws” and humans have the capacity to understand these laws.
3. Humans can solve the problems that we face today.
4. Traditional views should be challenged and if found inadequate they should be discarded.
5. Religion and science are at odds with each other.

Several Key Thinkers You Must Know:

- Thomas **Hobbes**
- John **Locke**
- Charles de Secondat, Baron de **Montesquieu**
- Jean Jacques **Rousseau**
- **Voltaire**
- Denis **Diderot**
- Thomas **Jefferson**

In Pairs (or threes if need be):

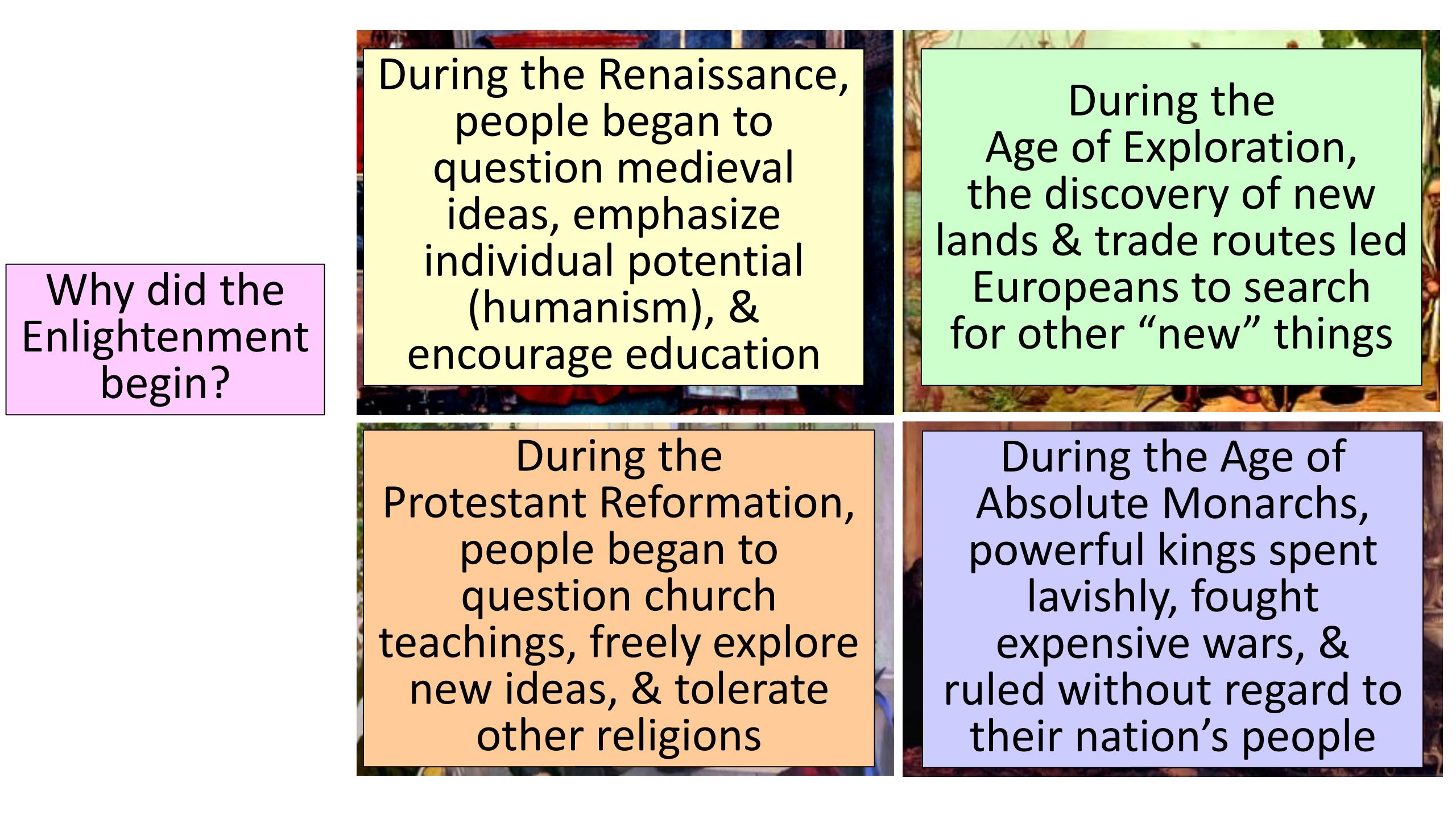
- Take about 10-15 minutes to read the two hand outs (Hobbes and Locke)
- Next **debate** the following topics and **record** your thoughts on paper (to turn in):
 1. *Why would the basic nature of humans be a topic of discussion?*
 2. *Why would this be important for developing a concept for an ideal form of government?*
 3. *How would these writers have come up with their point of view?*
 4. *How could Locke and Hobbes have come to such different conclusions?*

A painting depicting a large, formal assembly in an ornate hall. Numerous men and women in 18th-century attire are seated in rows, facing a speaker at a podium. The room is filled with framed portraits on the walls, suggesting a setting like the Royal Society's meeting room.

The Enlightenment

Basic Enlightenment Beliefs

- Belief that natural science and reason could explain all aspects of life
- Belief in man's intellect apart from God
- Faith in reason, not revelation
- **Deism:** the religious arm of the Enlightenment God as a cosmic clockmaker who created the universe and then stepped back and left it running like a clock
- Progress in society was possible if natural laws, and how they applied to society, could be understood
- Education was seen as a key towards helping society to progress



Why did the Enlightenment begin?

During the Renaissance, people began to question medieval ideas, emphasize individual potential (humanism), & encourage education

During the Age of Exploration, the discovery of new lands & trade routes led Europeans to search for other “new” things

During the Protestant Reformation, people began to question church teachings, freely explore new ideas, & tolerate other religions

During the Age of Absolute Monarchs, powerful kings spent lavishly, fought expensive wars, & ruled without regard to their nation’s people

Scientific Revolution to Age of Revolutions

Enlightenment and Revolution, 1550–1789

Scientific Revolution

- Heliocentric theory challenges geocentric theory.
- Mathematics and observation support heliocentric theory.
- Scientific method develops.
- Scientists make discoveries in many fields.

A new way of thinking about the world develops, based on observation and a willingness to question assumptions.

Enlightenment

- People try to apply the scientific approach to aspects of society.
- Political scientists propose new ideas about government.
- Philosophes advocate the use of reason to discover truths.
- Philosophes address social issues through reason.

Enlightenment writers challenge many accepted ideas about government and society.

Spread of Ideas

- Enlightenment ideas appeal to thinkers and artists across Europe.
- Salons help spread Enlightenment thinking.
- Ideas spread to literate middle class.
- Enlightened despots attempt reforms.

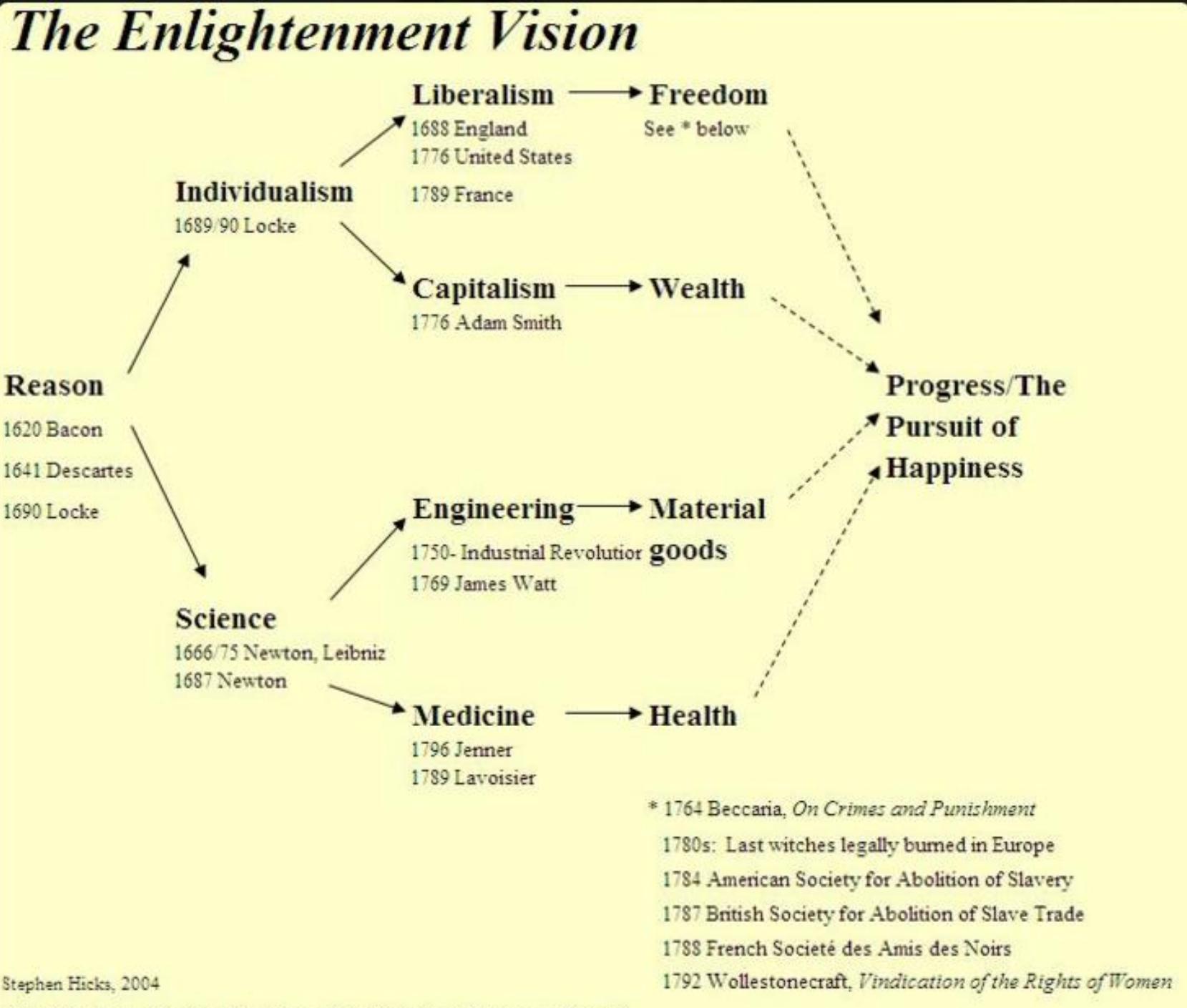
Enlightenment ideas sweep through European society and to colonial America.

American Revolution

- Enlightenment ideas influence colonists.
- Britain taxes colonists after French and Indian War.
- Colonists denounce taxation without representation.
- War begins in Lexington and Concord.

Colonists declare independence, defeat Britain, and establish republic.

The Interconnection of the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment Ideas



Salons and Coffeehouses

- As literacy expanded various groups formed to discuss new learning, philosophy, politics, poetry and the events of the day
- This could take place in a more public setting like the coffeehouses of Europe or a more private setting in a salon
- Coffeehouses also served as a location for economic transactions
- The Salons of France were critically important to the spread of Enlightenment ideas among the educated and elite of Paris
- Women played a critical role in the French salons and were nearly always the hostesses of these discussion forums



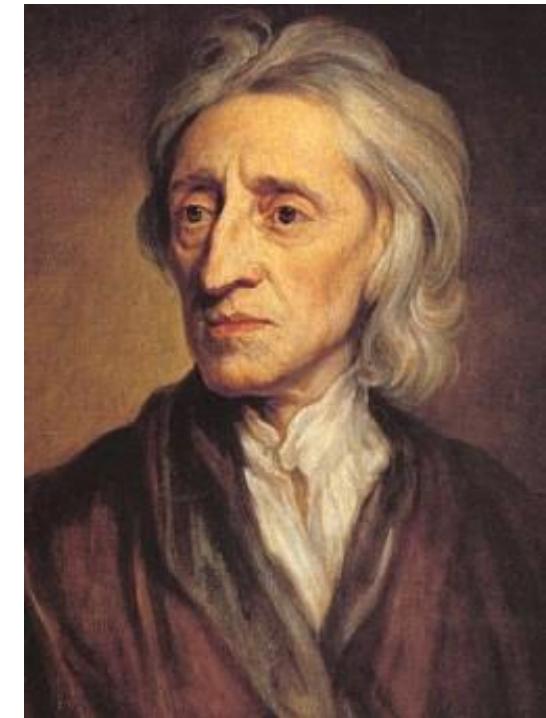
Role of Women in the Enlightenment

- Women contributed significantly to the Enlightenment
- Hosted Salons – especially prominent in Paris and around France (but spread to all Europe)
- Madame Pompadour – leading salon host during the reign of Louis XV
- Two Major Enlightenment Thinkers:
 - Olympe de Gouges
 - Mary Wollstonecraft



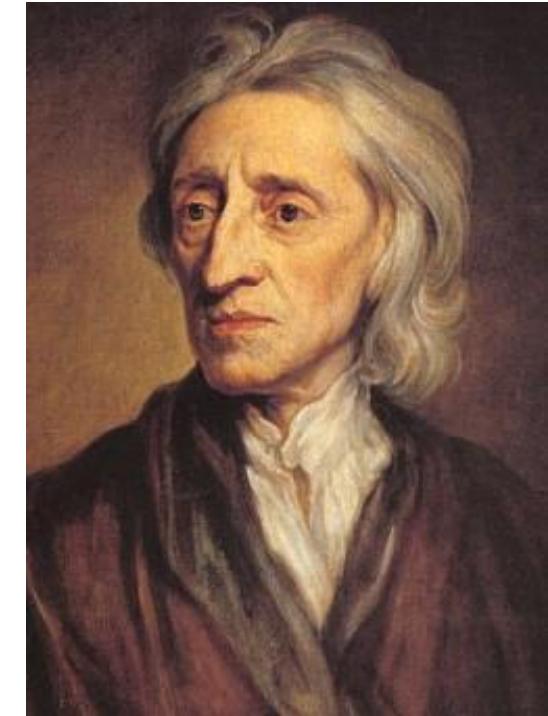
John Locke (1632-1704)

- *Two Treatises on Civil Government* (1690)
 - Philosophical defense for the “Glorious Revolution”
 - Humans in a state of nature: Locke believed humans are basically good but lack protection
- Governments provide rule of law but only through the consent of the governed.
- The purpose of government is to protect the “natural rights” of the people: life, liberty and property.
- Social contract: people agree to obey the government in return for protection of natural rights
- Right to rebellion: People have a right to abolish a government that doesn't protect natural rights.



John Locke (1632-1704)

- *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690)
 - Stressed the importance of environment on human development
 - **tabula rasa**: the human mind was born as a blank slate and registered input from the senses passively
- Locke saw all human knowledge as the result of sensory experiences (**Empiricism**)
- Rejected Descartes' view that all people are born with certain basic ideas and ways of thinking prebuilt into human nature
- Argued that education was critical for both personal growth and the progress of society



The Philosophes

- Notable 18th-century French thinkers
- Some were philosophers, but most were just educated people interested in and committed to fundamental reform in society.
- They popularized the Enlightenment
- Used their popularity and the ideas of the Enlightenment to examine society and propose new methods to address social ills
- Largely French, but they were quite well travelled so their influence spread globally
- By 1775, much of western Europe's educated elite had embraced the Enlightenment.



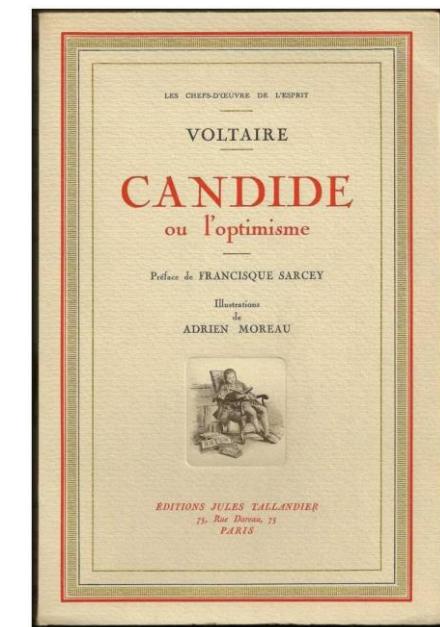
THE PHILOSOPHES

FRANCE	PRUSSIA	USA
Voltaire Diderot Montesquieu Rousseau	Kant SCOTLAND Smith	Jefferson Franklin Paine

Stolen from Tom Richey

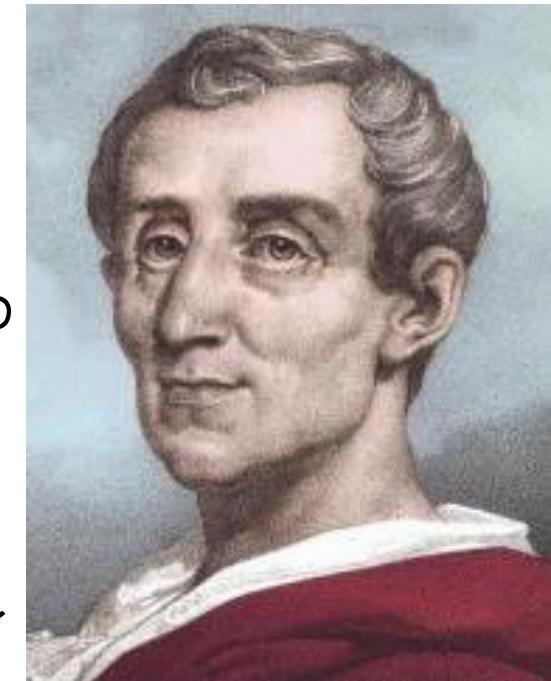
Voltaire (1694-1778)

- One of the most influential of Enlightenment philosophers
- Used sarcasm to ridiculed those with whom he disagreed
- Rejected traditional Catholic theology and was a deist, but fought for religious toleration
- His most famous quote against religious intolerance was “crush the infamous thing” (“**Ecrasez l'infâme**”)
- Saw human reason as the key to social progress
- His views influenced several “Enlightened Despots”
- Believed in equality before the law but not equality of classes
- His social criticism inspired a call for change, setting the stage for the French Revolution

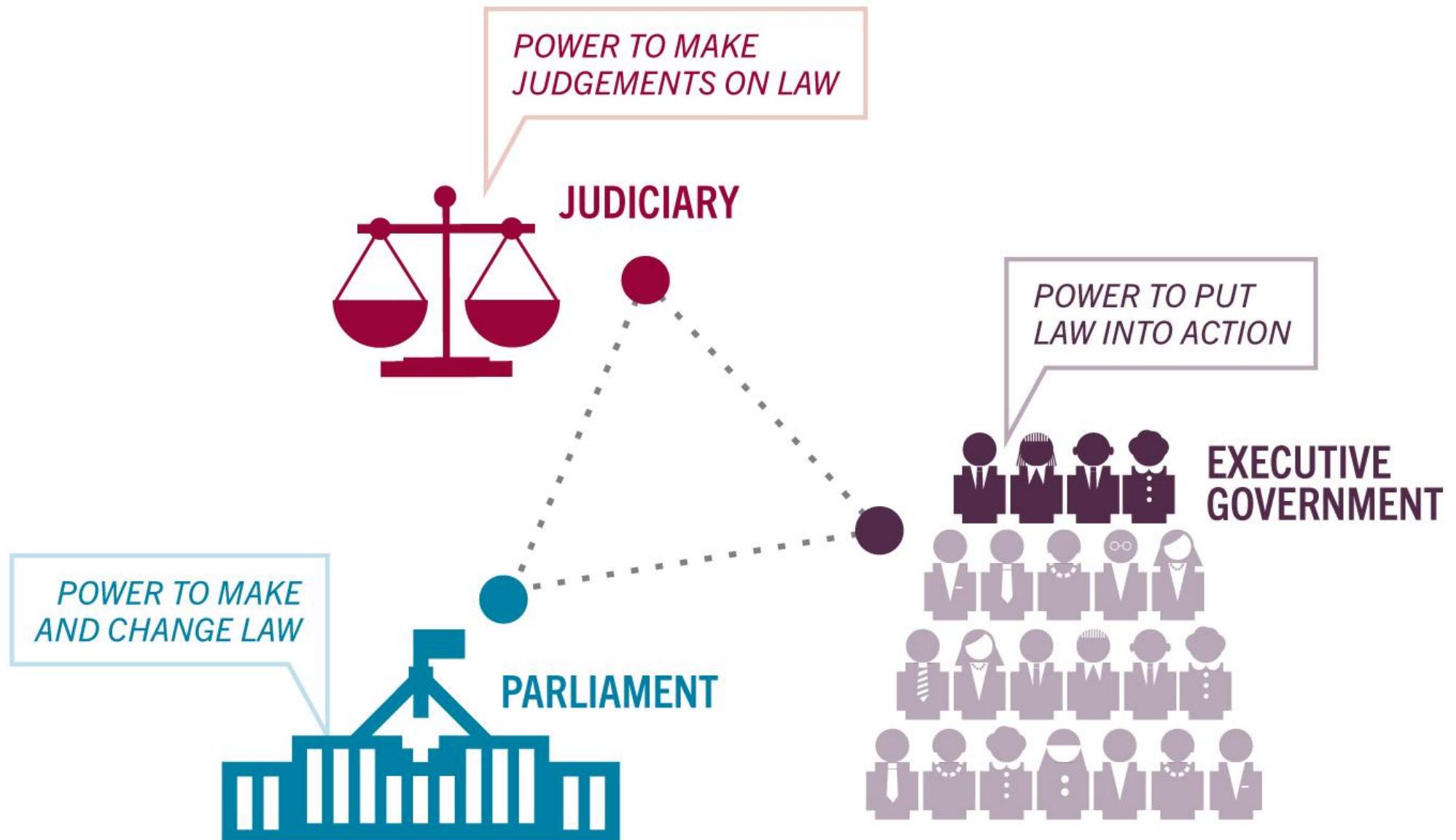


Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755)

- A French noble who hated the absolutism of Louis XIV
- **Spirit of the Laws** (1748): He called for the separation of powers in government into three branches (monarchy, nobility, and the rest of the population)
- Wanted to prevent tyranny and promote liberty
- The principle of checks and balances would ensure that no single branch of gov't became too powerful as the other two branches could check excess power
- He favored the British system
- He supported the 13 parlements in France as a check against the tyrannical absolute rule by the monarch
- Montesquieu's ideas had a significant impact on the U.S. Constitution and the French Revolution

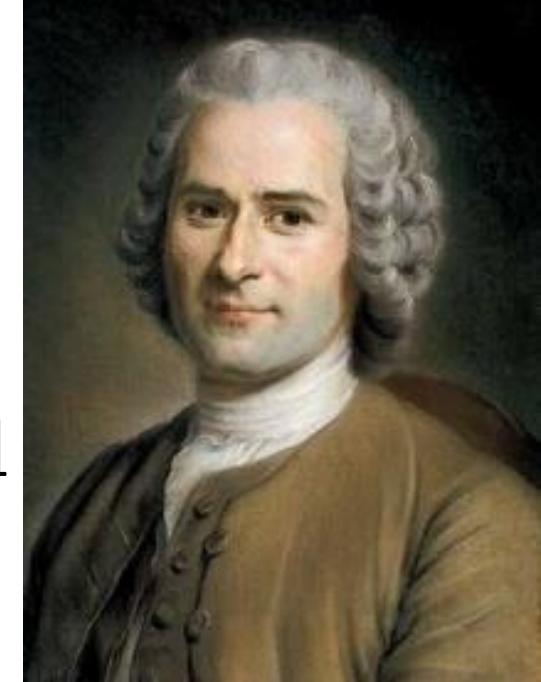


Separation of Powers



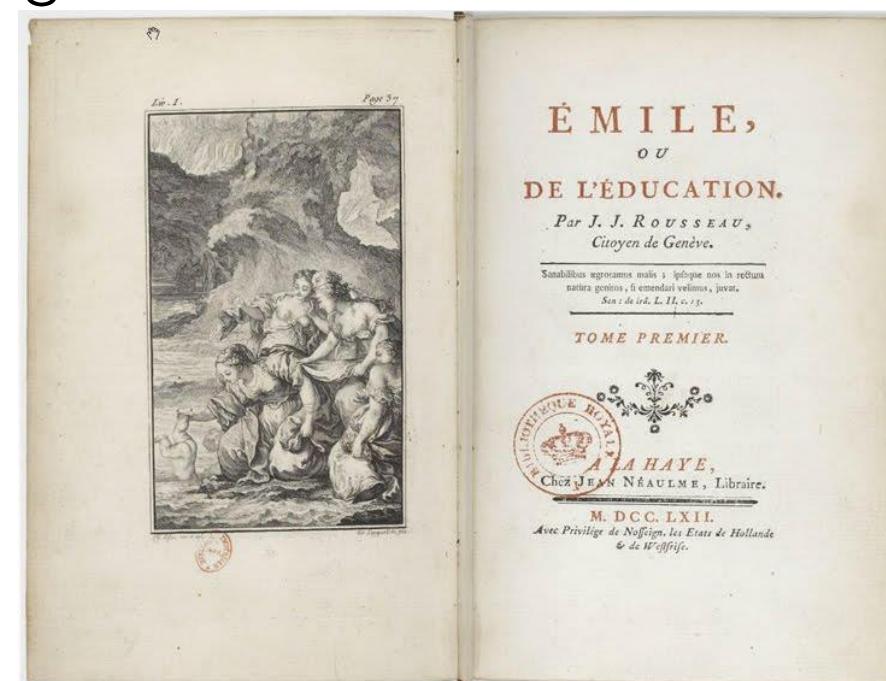
Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78)

- *Social Contract* (1762)
- Rousseau believed that man in a simpler state of nature was good—a “noble savage”—and was corrupted by civilization
- The emphasis society placed on property is the root cause of social injustice
- The **general will**, a consensus of the majority, should control a nation (Downside: minority viewpoints were not recognized)
- The ambiguous nature of “general will” was later manipulated by dictators to rationalize extreme nationalism and tyranny
- Rousseau is both a member of the Enlightenment but is also seen as a founder of the **Romantic movement**



Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78)

- Emile (1762)
- Supported progressive education; learning by doing; self-expression was encouraged.
- However, he argued against equality for women in society and in educational opportunity.
- Ironically, he left his 5 illegitimate children in an orphanage instead of educating them.



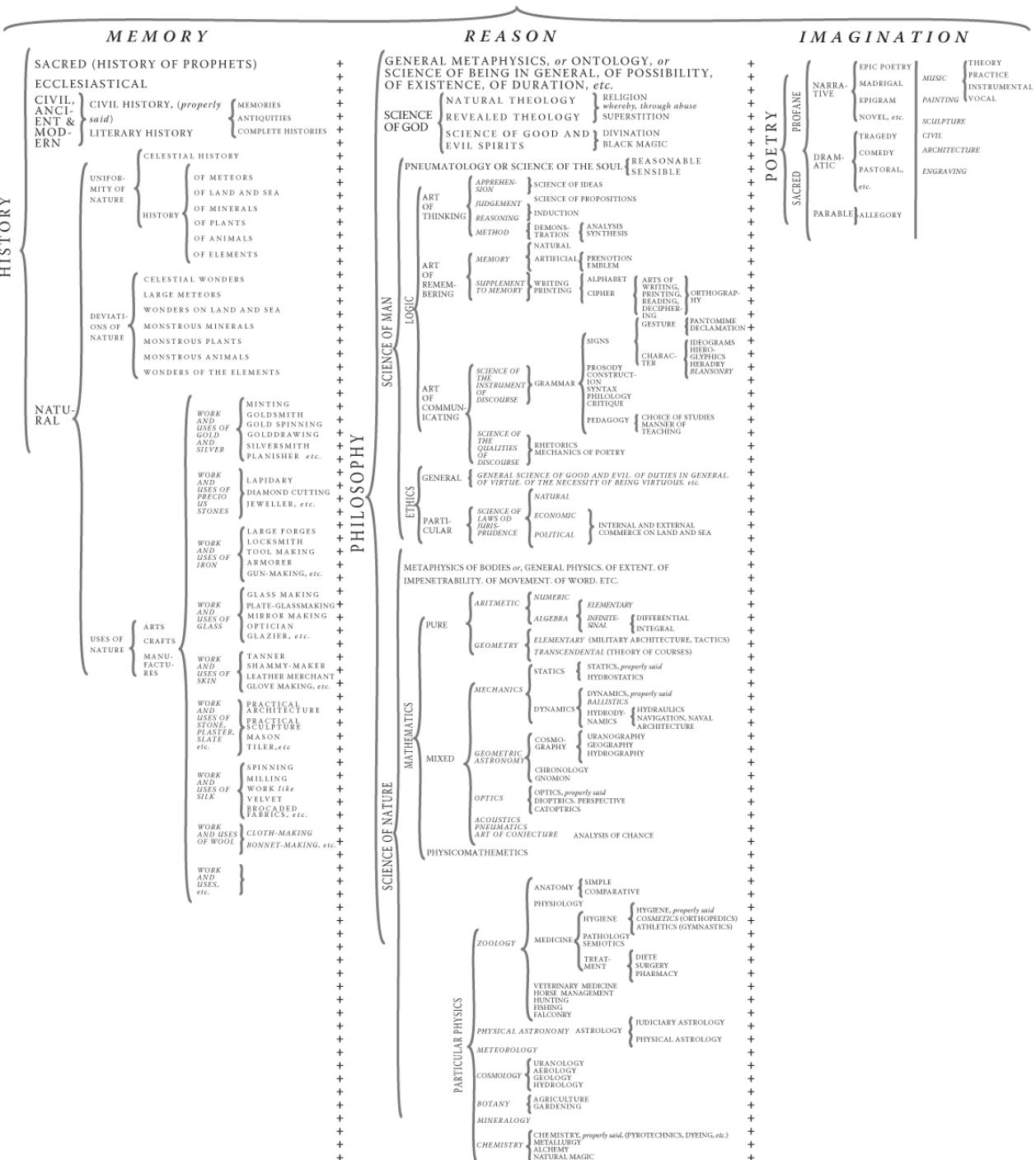
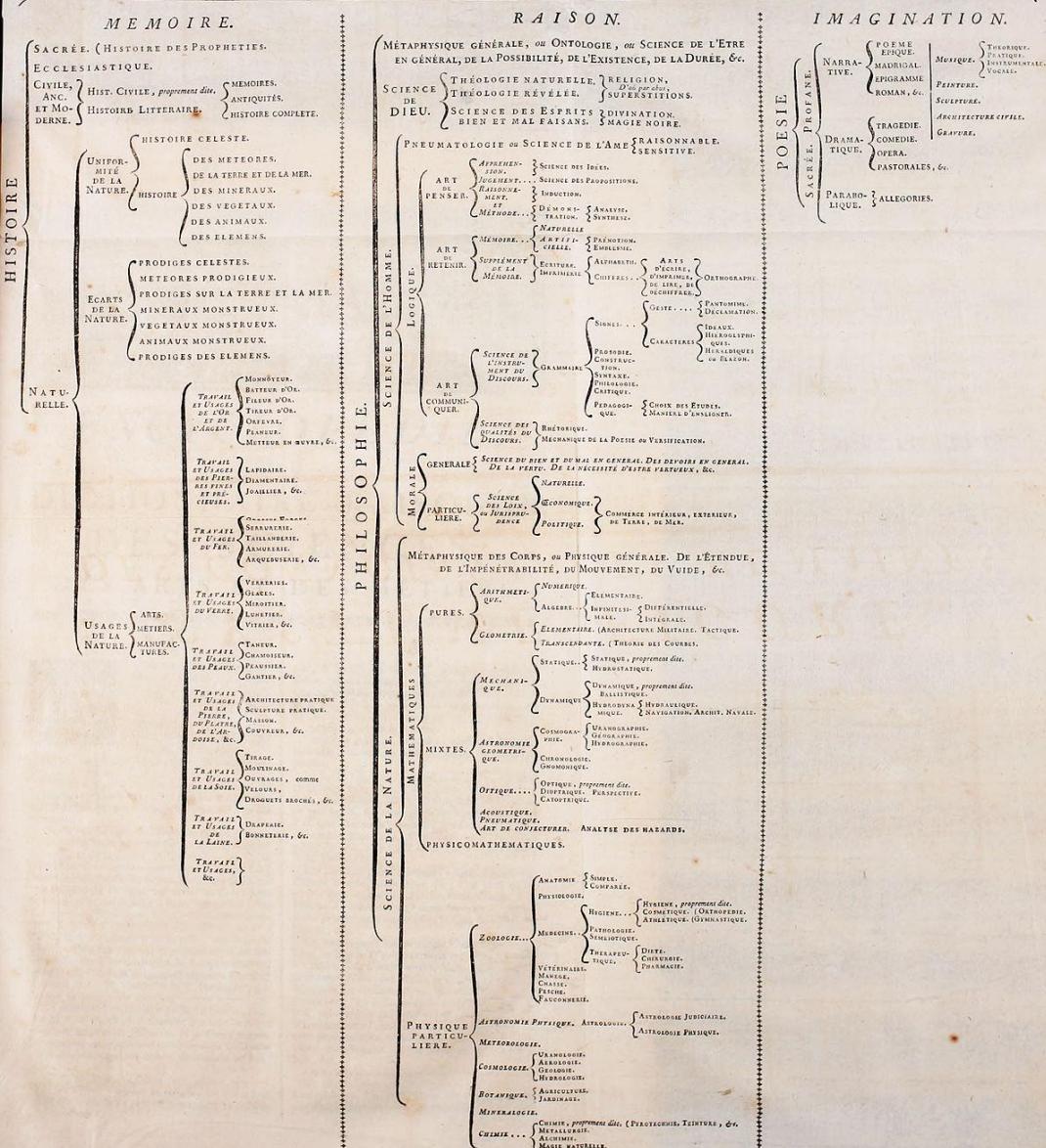
Denis Diderot (1713-1784)

- The Encyclopedia (completed in 1765)
- The multi-volume work organized all human knowledge; popularized views of the Philosophes
- It emphasized science and reason while criticizing religion, intolerance, injustice and tyranny
- Also compiled political and social critiques from various Enlightenment philosophers and authors
- Sought to teach people to think critically and objectively
- The Encyclopedia was banned in France; the pope placed it on the Index of Prohibited Books



* *S Y S T È M E FIGURE*
DES CONNOISSANCES HUMAINES.

ENTENDEMENT.



The Enlightenment and Economics

- The dominant economic system pre-19th century was **MERCANTILISM**
 - Economic growth is a zero sum game - if someone else wins you lose
 - Main Objective: hold on to more gold than other nations, this is achieved by having more exports than imports
- Enlightenment thinkers (the **Physiocrats**) began to question Mercantilism and its root ideas
 - Argued for less government involvement in the economy (Laissez-Faire)
- In 1776 **Adam Smith** published his **Wealth of Nations**
 - Landmark work in economic theory based on study and analysis of evidence
 - Government should limit its involvement in the economy
 - The economy will be guided by the “**Invisible Hand**”
 - By people pursuing their own self-interests and competing with each other everyone will benefit
 - Theory now known as **CAPITALISM**

People who
understand
Venn diagrams

People who don't
understand
Venn diagrams

KEY PHILOSOPHE IDEAS: Montesquieu and Rousseau

- A. Human society is governed by Natural Laws.
- B. These Natural Laws can be discovered by rational men.
- C. Human society can turn from traditional, authoritarian forms, and progress toward a more perfect government through rational thought.

Directions: Read the excerpts from Montesquieu and Rousseau. In pairs/threes compile of list of ways that these documents express these three ideas.

