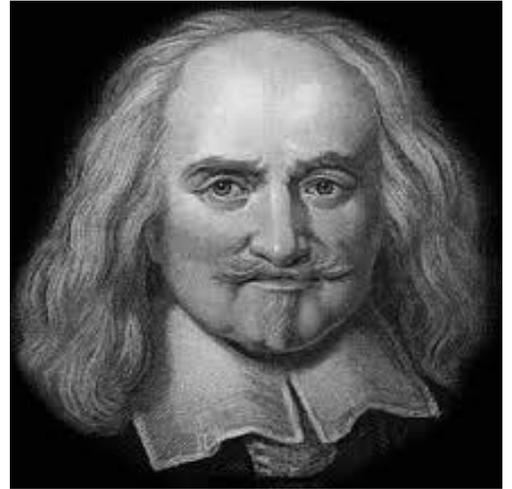


THOMAS HOBBS

Thomas Hobbes based his theories on government on the belief that man was basically greedy, selfish, and cruel. In his book, *Leviathan*, Hobbes stated that life would be a state of constant warfare without a strong government to control man's natural impulses. He believed people would enter into a **social contract** to escape from this. In the social contract, people would exchange most of their freedoms for the safety of organized society. Once people entered into this contract, there was no release. Hobbes did not believe in revolutions, and supported the idea of absolute monarchs.



PRIMARY SOURCE:

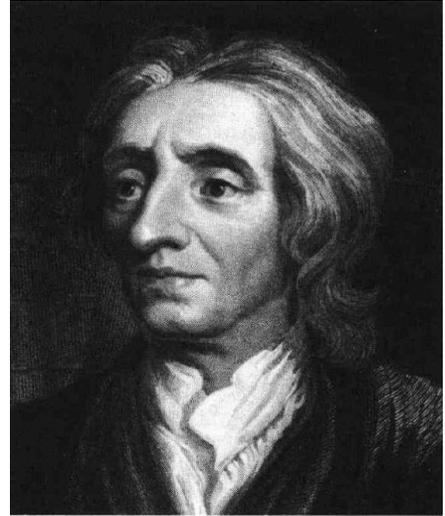
"...as if every man should say to every man, I authorize and give up my right of governing my selfe, to this Man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition that thou give thy right to him, and authorize all his actions in like manner"

Questions:

1. What was Hobbes's most famous work?
2. What were his major beliefs?
3. How are his ideas different than other Enlightenment thinkers?
4. According to the primary source, what should men give up?

JOHN LOCKE

Locke based his theories on assessment of human nature. However, Locke believed that people could be reasonable and moral. In his book, *Two Treatises of Government*, Locke explained that all men have **natural rights**, which are life, liberty, and property, and that the purpose of government was to protect these rights. Furthermore, Locke stated that if government did not protect these rights, and became abusive, then the people had a right to **revolution**. Locke supported a limited government that protected people's natural rights.



PRIMARY SOURCE:

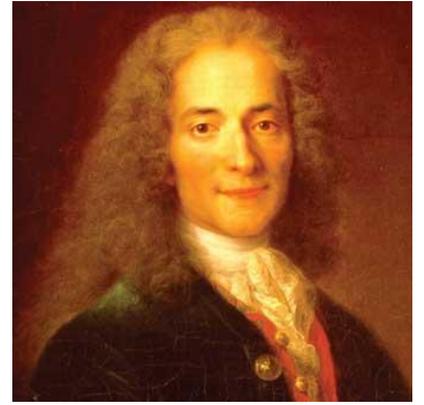
“...we must consider the state that all people are in naturally... People in this state do not have to ask permission to act...The natural state is also one of equality in which all power and jurisdiction is reciprocal and no one has more than another. It is evident that all human beings – as creatures belonging to the same species and rank and born indiscriminately with all the same natural advantages and faculties – are equal amongst themselves.”

Questions:

1. What was Locke's most famous work?
2. What were his major beliefs?
3. According to this primary source, what is the natural state of mankind?
4. How did Locke influence the formation of the U.S. government?

VOLTAIRE

Voltaire was a French intellectual who wrote, *Candide*, and lectured about freedom of speech. He believed freedom of speech was the best weapon against bad government. He also spoke about the corruption of the French government, and the intolerance of the Catholic Church.



PRIMARY SOURCES:

“Let the punishments of criminals be useful. A hanged man is good for nothing; a man condemned to public works still serves the country, and is a living lesson.”

“I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it.”

“Think for yourself and let others enjoy the privilege of doing so, too.”

Questions:

1. What was Voltaire's most famous work?
2. What were his major beliefs?
3. According to these primary sources, what do you think was most important to Voltaire?
4. How did Voltaire influence the formation of the U.S. government?

BARON DE MONTESQUIEU

Baron de Montesquieu was an Enlightenment thinker from France who wrote a book called, *The Spirit of the Laws* in 1748. In his book, Montesquieu describes what he considered to be the best government. He stated that the government should divide itself according to its powers, creating a **judicial, executive, and legislative** branch. Montesquieu explained that under this system each branch would **check and balance** the others, which would help protect the people's liberty.



PRIMARY SOURCE:

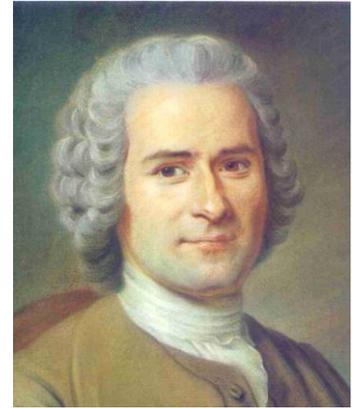
“When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person...there can be no liberty; because apprehensions may arise, lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws, to execute them in a tyrannical manner. Again, there is no liberty, if the judiciary power be not separated from the legislative and executive. Were it joined with the legislative, the life and liberty of the subject would be exposed to arbitrary control; for the judge would be then the legislator. Were it joined to the executive power, the judge might behave with violence and oppression.”

Questions:

1. What was Montesquieu's most famous work?
2. What were his major beliefs?
3. According to this primary source, what would happen if the branches of the government were united?
4. How did Montesquieu influence the formation of the U.S. government?

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Rousseau wrote a book called, *The Social Contract*, where he stated that people were basically good, and that society, and its unequal distribution of wealth, were the cause of most problems. Rousseau believed that government should be run according to the will of the majority, which he called the **General Will**. He claimed that the General Will would always act in the best interest of the people.



For Rousseau, the natural moral state of human beings is to be compassionate; civilization has made us cruel, selfish, and bloodthirsty.

PRIMARY SOURCE:

“The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying, ‘This is mine,’ and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of society. Humanity would have been spared infinite crimes, wars, homicides, murders, if only someone had ripped up the fences or filled in the ditches and said, ‘Do not listen to this pretender! You are eternally lost if you do not remember that the fruits of the earth are everyone’s property and that the land is no-one’s property!’”

Questions:

1. What was Rousseau’s most famous work?
2. What were his major beliefs?
3. According to this primary source, what is the biggest problem in society?
4. How did Rousseau influence the formation of the U.S. government?

