EIGHT ENLIGHTENMENT THINKERS

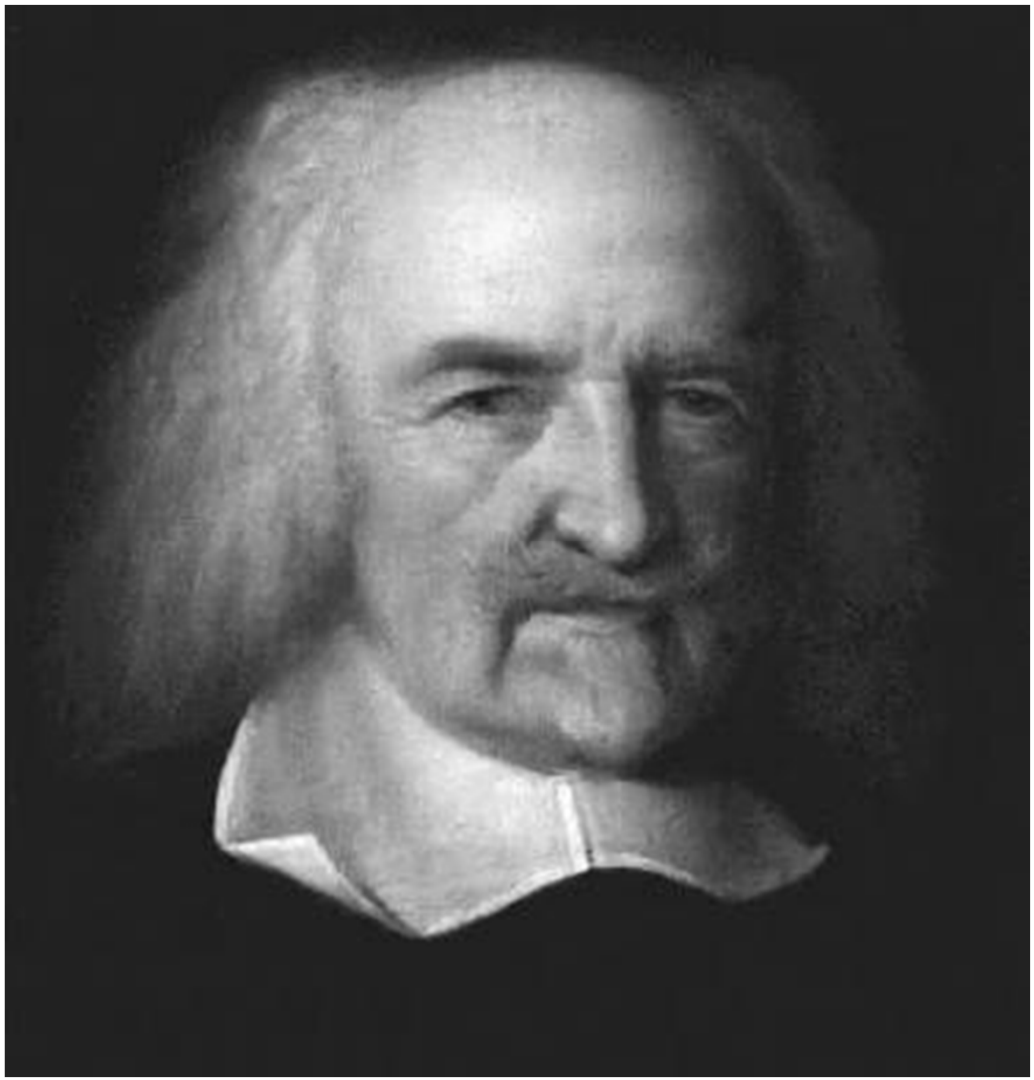
1. Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679)
2. John Locke (1632 – 1704)
3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778)
4. Baron de Montesquieu (1689 – 1755)
5. Voltaire (1694 – 1778)
6. Denis Diderot (1713 – 1784)
7. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 – 1797)
8. Adam Smith (1723 – 1790)

THOMAS HOBBES

- In nature, people were cruel, greedy and selfish. They would fight, rob, and oppress one another.

- To escape this people would enter into a **social contract**: they would give up their freedom in return for the safety and order of an organized society.

- Therefore, Hobbes believed that a powerful government like an absolute monarchy was best for society – it would impose order and compel obedience. It would also be able to suppress rebellion.



Hobbes #2

- His most famous work was called ***Leviathan.***
- Hobbes has been used to justify absolute power in government.
- His view of human nature was negative, or pessimistic. Life without laws and controls would be *"solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."*

Hobbes #3 - Quotes

- A man's conscience and his judgment is the same thing; and as the judgment, so also the conscience, may be erroneous.
- Curiosity is the lust of the mind.
- In the state of nature profit is the measure of right.
- Not believing in force is the same as not believing in gravitation.
- Leisure is the Mother of Philosophy.

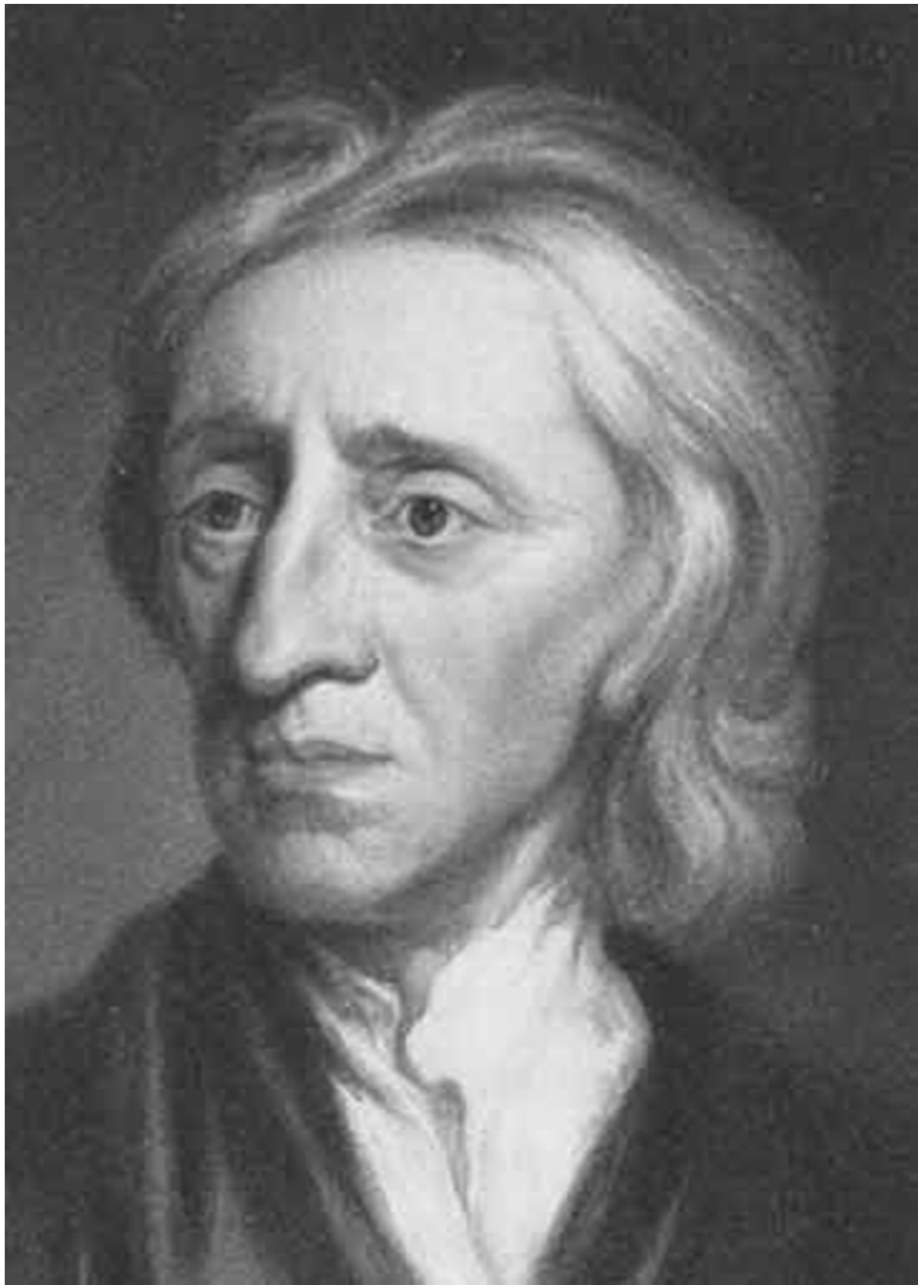
JOHN LOCKE

- Believed in natural laws and **natural rights**.

- At birth, the mind is a *tabula rasa*, a blank tablet. Everything we know comes from the experience of the senses – *empiricism.*

- We are born with rights because they are a part of nature, of our very existence – they come from god.

- At birth, people have the right to life, liberty, and property.



Locke #2

- Most famous works are the *Two Treatises on Government*.
- Rulers / governments have an obligation, a responsibility, to protect the natural rights of the people it governs.
- If a government fails in its obligation to protect natural rights, the people have the right to overthrow that government.
- The best government is one which is accepted by all of the people and which has **limited power** (Locke liked the English monarchy where laws limited the power of the king).

Locke #3

- Locke's ideas influenced Thomas Jefferson more than anything else when Jefferson wrote the US *Declaration of Independence* in 1776.

- Locke justified revolution in the eyes of the Founding Fathers.

- Locke also influenced later revolutions in France (1789) and in many other places in the world in the 19th Century.

Locke #4 - Quotes

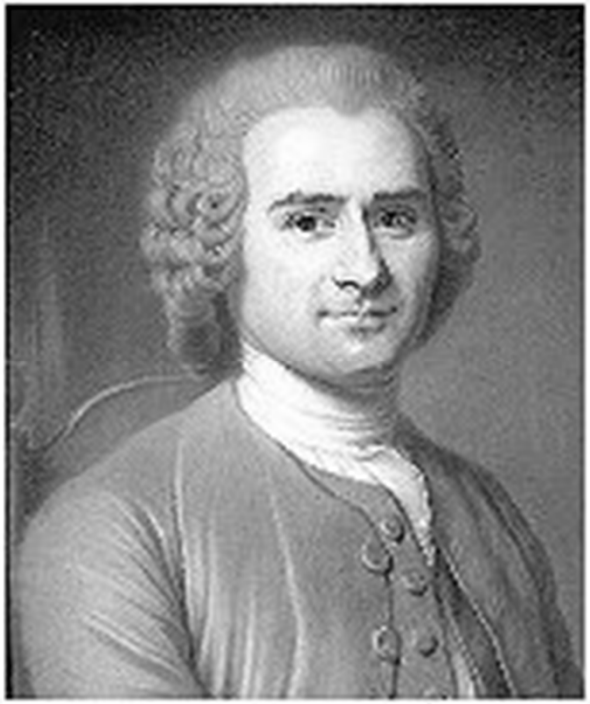
- No man's knowledge here can go beyond his experience.
- All mankind... being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions.
- I have always thought the actions of men the best interpreters of their thoughts.
- The reason why men enter into society is the preservation of their property.

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

- People are basically good but become corrupted by society (like the absolute monarchy in France).

- For Rousseau, the ***social contract*** was the path to freedom: people should do what is best for their community.

- The ***general will*** (of the people) should direct the state toward the common good. Hence, the good of the community is more important than individual interests.



DU CONTRAT
SOCIAL;
OU
PRINCIPES
DU DROIT
POLITIQUE.

Par J. J. ROUSSEAU, Citoyen de Geneve.

Tabula rasa
Homines leges. Anacharsis.

Edition Tome Courante, à laquelle on a ajouté une Lettre de l'Auteur au seul Ami que lui reste dans le monde.

A AMSTERDAM,
Chez MARC-MICHEL REY.

M. DCC. LXII.

Rousseau #2

- His most famous work was *The Social Contract*.
- JJR questioned authority - absolute monarchy and religion.
- JJR was passionate, he hated political and economic oppression.
- Influenced later revolutionaries, both middle class and socialist.

Rousseau #3 - Quotes

- Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.
- Force does not constitute right... obedience is due only to legitimate powers.
- Free people, remember this maxim: we may acquire liberty, but it is never recovered if it is once lost.
- Gratitude is a duty which ought to be paid, but which none have a right to expect.
- It is unnatural for a majority to rule, for a majority can seldom be organized and united for specific action, and a minority can.

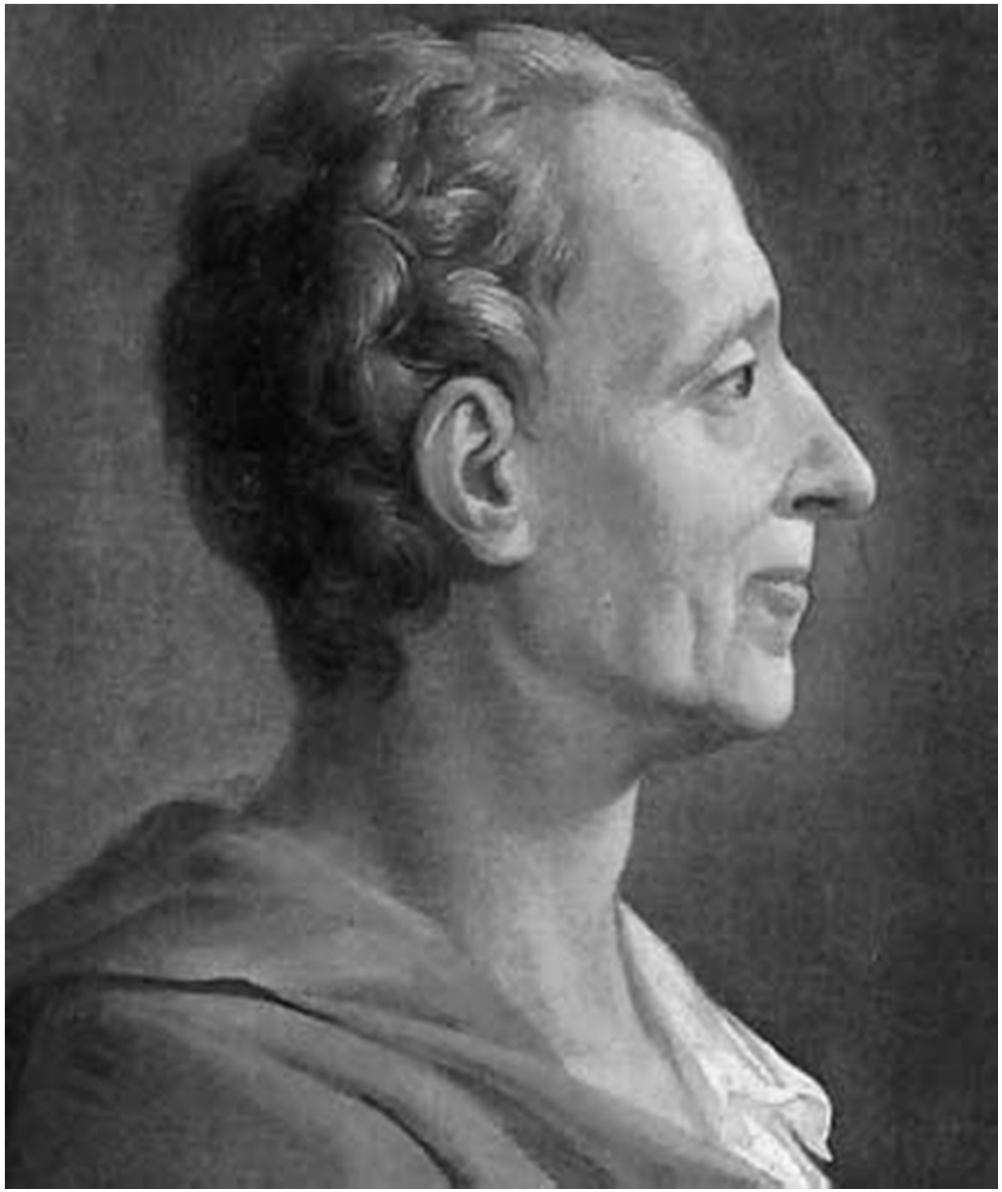
MONTESQUIEU

- He strongly criticized absolute monarchy and was a voice for democracy.

- **Separation of Powers -** the best way to protect liberty was to divide the powers of government into three branches: legislative; executive; and judicial.

- **Checks and Balances –** each branch of government should check (limit) the power of the other two branches. Thus, power would be balanced (even) and no one branch would be too powerful.

- Montesquieu studied the history of governments and cultures all over the world.



Montesquieu #2

- His first book, *The Persian Letters*, ridiculed the absolute monarchy and social classes in France. He also wrote *The Spirit of the Laws*.

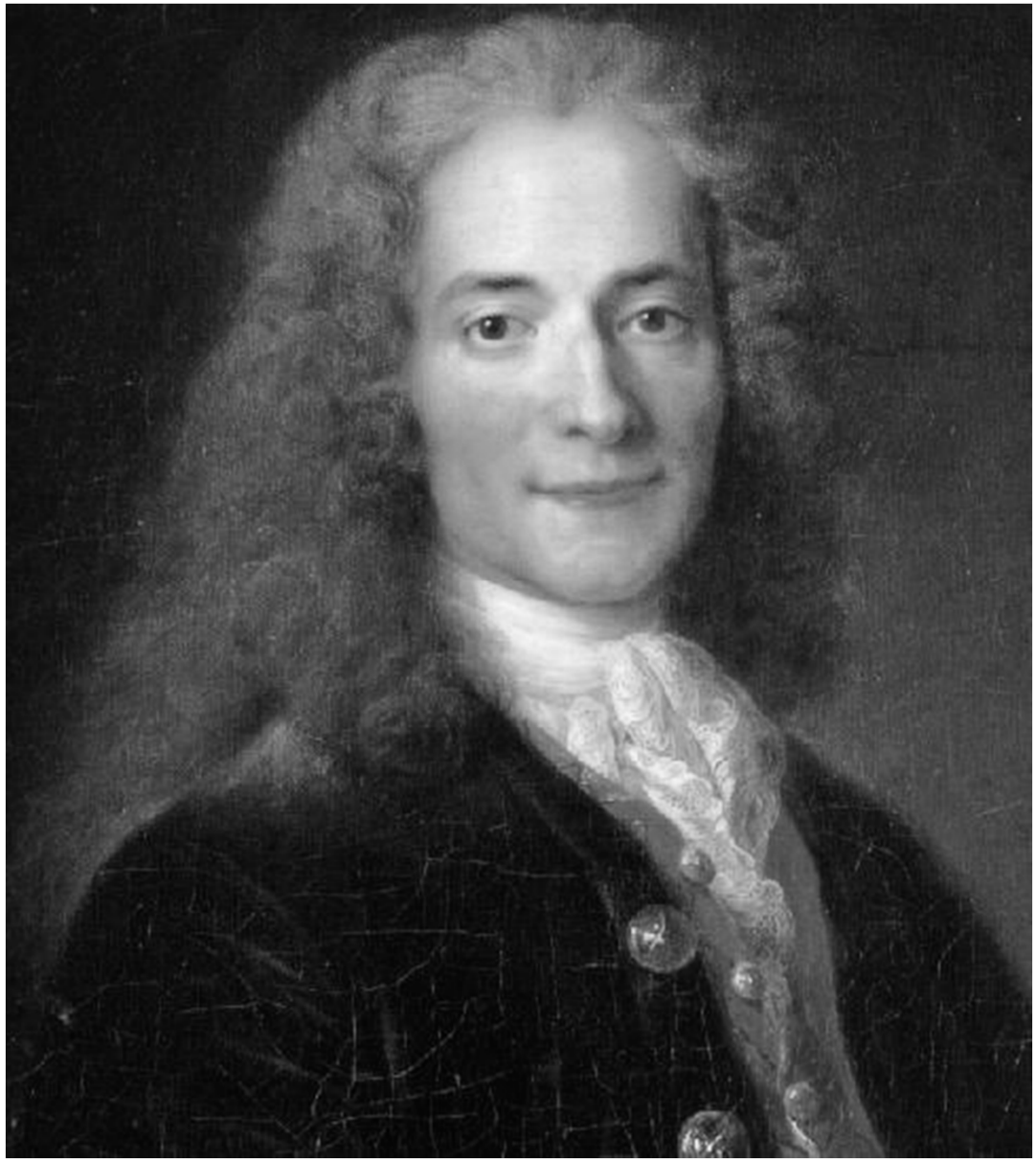
- Montesquieu's 'separation of powers' and 'checks and balances' greatly influenced James Madison and the other framers of the US Constitution. These ideas are at the core of American government to this day.

Montesquieu #3 – Quotes

- The spirit of moderation should also be the spirit of the lawgiver.
- Useless laws weaken the necessary laws.
- The sublimity of administration consists in knowing the proper degree of power that should be exerted on different occasions.
- To love to read is to exchange hours of ennui for hours of delight. I have never known any distress that an hour's reading did not relieve.

VOLTAIRE

- Advocated freedom of thought, speech, politics, and religion.
- Fought against intolerance, injustice, inequality, ignorance, and superstition.
- Attacked idle aristocrats, corrupt government officials, religious prejudice, and the slave trade.
- He often had to express his views indirectly through fictional characters because he lived in an absolute monarchy in France.



Voltaire #2

- Wrote the famous novel *Candide*
- Voltaire often used a razor sharp humor and cutting sarcasm in his writings.
- He was imprisoned in the *Bastille* in Paris and exiled because of his attacks on the French government and the Catholic Church.
- Voltaire's books were outlawed, even burned, by the authorities.

Voltaire #3 - Quotes

- My trade is to say what I think.
- I do not agree with a word you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it.
- As long as people believe in absurdities they will continue to commit atrocities.
- Every man is guilty of all the good he did not do.
- God is a comedian, playing to an audience too afraid to laugh.
- He who thinks himself wise, O heavens, is a great fool.

DENIS DIDEROT

- This *philosophe* worked 25 years to produce (edit) a 28 volume *Encyclopedia* – the first one.

- The *Encyclopedia* was not just a collection of articles on human knowledge, it was intended to change the way people thought. Montesquieu, Voltaire, and others wrote articles.

- About 20,000 copies were printed between 1751 and 1789 despite efforts to ban the *Encyclopedia*.



Diderot #2

- Articles in the *Encyclopedia* supported freedom of expression and education for all people.
- The divine-right theory (of monarchy) was criticized along with traditional religions.
- The French king said the *Encyclopedia* was an attack on public morals.
- The pope threatened to excommunicate Catholics who bought or read the *Encyclopedia.*

Diderot #3 - Quotes

- There is only one passion, the passion for happiness.
- Every man has his dignity. I'm willing to forget mine, but at my own discretion and not when someone else tells me to.
- We swallow greedily any lie that flatters us, but we sip only little by little at a truth we find bitter.
- From fanaticism to barbarism is only one step.

Diderot #4 – Quotes ii

- When science, art, literature, and philosophy are simply the manifestation of personality they are on a level where glorious and dazzling achievements are possible, which can make a man's name live for thousands of years.

- If you want me to believe in God, you must make me touch him.

- Man will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT

- She argued that women had not been included in the *Enlightenment* slogan “free and equal.” Women had been excluded from the social contract.

- Her arguments were often met with scorn, even from some ‘enlightened’ men.

- Wollstonecraft and Catherine Macaulay were British feminists. The most famous French feminist was Germaine de Stael.



Mary Wollstonecraft #2

- She wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* in 1792.
- Wollstonecraft believed in equal education for girls and boys. Only education could give women the knowledge to participate equally with men in public life.
- She did argue that a woman's first duty was to be a good mother. But, a woman could also decide on her own what was in her interest without depending on her husband.

Mary Wollstonecraft #3 - Quotes

- If women be educated for dependence; that is, to act according to the will of another fallible being, and submit, right or wrong, to power, where are we to stop?

- The divine right of husbands, like the divine right of kings, may, it is hoped, in this enlightened age, be contested without danger.

- Let not men then in the pride of power, use the same arguments that tyrannic kings and venal ministers have used, and fallaciously assert that women ought to be subjected because she has always been so.

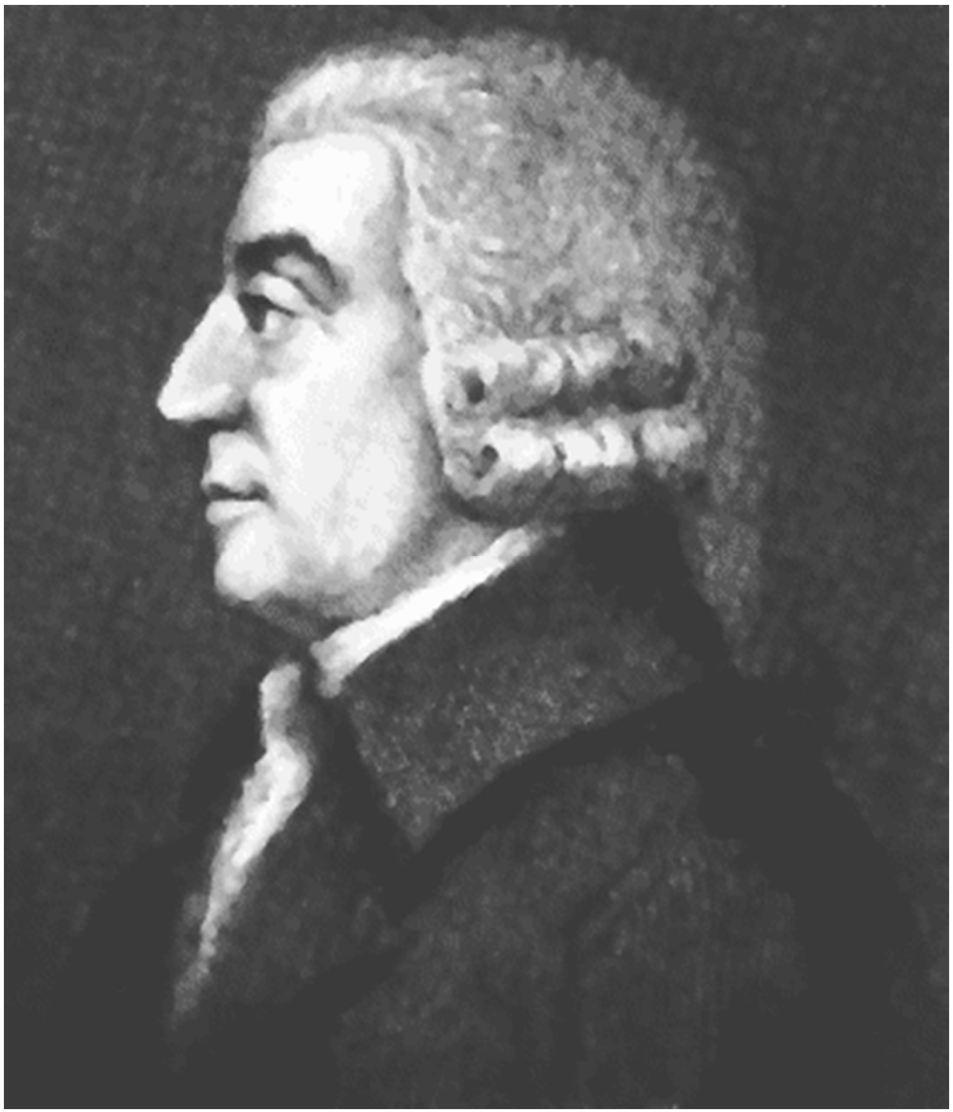
- Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience. Virtue can only flourish among equals.

ADAM SMITH

- Smith was a Scottish economist who has been called the "father of capitalism."

- He was an advocate of *laissez faire* (French for 'let do,' 'let go,' 'let pass.' – often referred to as 'hands off.').

- *Laissez faire* was a theory of the 'natural' laws of economics: business should operate with little or no government interference.



Adam Smith #2

- He wrote *The Wealth of Nations*.
- Smith argued the free market of supply and demand should drive economies. The hidden hand of competition was the only regulation an economy needed.
- Wherever there was demand for goods or services, suppliers would compete with each other to meet that demand in order to make profit.
- Smith did believe that government had a duty to protect society and to provide justice and public works.

Adam Smith #3 - Quotes

- The rich ... divide with the poor the produce of all their improvements. They are led by an invisible hand to make nearly the same distribution of the necessaries of life which would have been made, had the earth been divided into equal proportions among all its inhabitants.

- It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.

- The propensity to truck, barter and exchange one thing for another is common to all men, and to be found in no other race of animals. No dog exchanges bones with another.