The Development of Democratic Ideas
Magna Carta-1215

• 1st document to limit power of English rulers
  – Kings and queens must obey the law too!
• Major step toward constitutional government
• Where? - England
Colonial Government – 1600s

• The governor of colony represented King
• Colonists voted for members of a legislature (assembly)
English Bill of Rights (1689)

• List of rights for the English citizens
• The Monarch (King and/or Queen) couldn’t raise taxes or build and army without Parliament approval.
• Where? England

Discuss: Today where can US citizens look to find rights that are given?
Enlightenment Thinkers Ideas

They argued that the laws of nature also applied to human life and society.
John Locke (England)

Viewpoints

- All humans have “natural rights”
  - Life
  - Liberty
  - Property
- In order to have their “natural rights” protected, humans give up certain freedoms to Government
- If gov’t does NOT protect your Rights, citizens can OVERTHROW it!!!
DISCUSS: When you go through airport security, what freedoms might you give up?

Which one of your “natural rights” is the government protecting?
Baron de Montesquieu (France)

Viewpoints

• Believed too much power in one place is dangerous for others

• Introduced “Separation of Powers” between branches of government

• Ex: England’s Government
  – King-enforced laws
  – Parliament-made laws
  – Judges-interpreted laws
• DISCUSS: In colonial government, assemblies controlled the salary of the governor. How is this an example of Montisqieu’s separation of power?
Viewpoints

• Humans will destroy themselves if they don’t give up some freedoms
• Humans create a “social contract” with government to protect themselves
Discuss: How are speed limits examples of the social contract?
Voltaire (France & England)

Viewpoints

• Believed in Civil Liberties
  – Trial by Jury of peers
  – Freedom of Religion
  – Freedom of Speech
DISCUSS: What might happen if Police Officers were the ones who determined the people they arrested guilty instead of judges or juries?
DISCUSS: Voltaire once said:

“I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your RIGHT to say it.”

What do you think he meant by that?
Mary Wollstonecraft (England and France)

• Viewpoints:
• Questioned many parts of European society including: the role of women and what is the proper way to rule
Wrote a book title *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*

- She believed that men and women are equal in their ability to reason. The only difference is the amount of education one receives.
- If given the same amount both men and women can achieve the same greatness
- “Humanism”
Discuss

• What does she mean by “It was only their lack of education that kept women in a state of “ignorance and slavish dependence.”

• Why is this important for us to remember today?
Adam Smith (Scotland)

- Deals with economic issues
- Says that an economy works best when people are allowed to make their own economic decisions without the involvement of the government “laissez faire” French for leave alone
Wrote a book titled: *A Wealth of Nations*

- Way for nations to become wealthy is to allow “free trade”
- He did NOT support mercantilism
- He argues that it is not the amount of wealth one has (gold and silver) but it is what one can actually buy with the wealth they have.
- Supports a government free trading system
Discuss

• Why would Smith support a free open trading system?

• Why does he not like Mercantilism?

• Is it still important today to have a free open trading system?

• Why?