

# The enlightenment



Enlightenment The new ideas that spread over Europe during the 18th century were truly a stepping-stone for the world as a whole. It seemed to start with philosophers with their aim towards forerunning change. Along with change comes the bond of philosophers, which banded together to reform religion, they also believed to apply rules of reason and common sense to nearly everything.

Some of these groundbreaking philosophers were Voltaire, Montesquieu, Diderot, and Kant. Because of England's newly founded high standard of living the people that paid most attention to these men were prosperous commercial and professional people in towns and cities. Voltaire was as innovative as any during this time period, living in France he created works like the *Letters on the English* he criticized abuses of French society and forced people to think and rethink at the world they are living in.

He, like many others at that time believed that human society should and could be changed for the better of society. Locke and Newton were forerunners of Enlightenment as well. They both believed in rationalizing nature and Locke encouraged humans to enter a world of *Tabula Rasa* which means, blank page. British Toleration and openness to change made England a place where change was bound to happen. Religious toleration was administered to everybody except the Unitarians, and even then they weren't prosecuted. Free speech prevailed throughout England while the authority of the monarch was limited, which all resulted in the people became loyal to their country. Print culture and the spread of knowledge was one of the most advanced inventions as far as I know.

Newspapers, journals, books, and pamphlets had achieved tremendous status among everyday life. ??? Printed word became the chief vehicle for communication of ideas and would remain so until the electronic revolution of our own day.??? Books at the time were inexpensive and over 14, 000-16, 000 encyclopedias were sold by 1789, their invention coming to life at 1751.