I. Absolutism

- Much of the history of 17th and 18th century Europe is the history of the struggle for control between Great Britain and France.
  - Great Britain and France not only represented two different systems of government, with Britain being a constitutional monarchy and France an absolutist state.
  - There were several other differences
    - issue of religious freedom
    - the role of the gentry and nobility
    - the role of the army and navy
  - Moreover, France faced a constant threat from the Hapsburg countries around her:
    - Spain
    - the Spanish Netherlands
    - Milan in northern Italy
    - Luxembourg
    - and the Austrian empire (including the old Holy Roman Empire)
  - These foreign threats kept France busy until the war of Spanish Succession made Spain an ally, and finally broke the Hapsburg encirclement, leaving France free to try to dominate the continent and spurring on Great Britain to stop her at any cost.

- Idea of Divine Monarchy
  - Monarchs are God's chosen ones on earth
  - Ideas of James I of England -- discuss
  - the power of these monarchs was seen to be absolute (at least by the monarchs themselves)

- "L'état ç'est moi" -- Louis XIV as the absolute monarch
  - Louis XIV came to the throne in 1643 as a young boy (5 years old), firmly believing in the divine right of kings.
  - By the time he was in his early 20s, he had gained nearly absolute power as King of France
  - when asked about the limits of his power, Louis replied, "L'état ç'est moi" (I am the state)
  - As a result he continued the advancement of the French monarchy which had begun in earnest under Francis I.
  - To do this, he needed to domesticate the French nobility which had long squabbled with the French kings for dominance
    - He did this by building his palace at Versailles and obliging the nobility to come to him, instead of himself traveling around France to preserve order with his very presence
      - The palace cost him one-half year's royal revenue to build
      - The magnificent system of palaces and grounds at Versailles had numerous Sun emblems all around--which helped give Louis the nickname the "Sun King"
Here the nobility was crammed into tiny rooms, with little sanitation--even the drinking water froze at night in winter.

But all social and political advancement was at Versailles, and so they came.

Versailles is an example of the secular Baroque style of architecture, designed to overawe people with the monarch's strength and wealth.

as the Catholic church had desired to overawe when it created the Catholic Baroque a century before, and Americans would try to do with Washington, DC 150 years later.

Here at Versailles, the nobility wasted its time playing cards, engaging in dances, and spending money lavishly on fripperies.

Louis' idea was so successful in taming or defanging the French nobility, that the palace idea was adopted by other monarchs in Europe interested in creating a true absolutist state.

- from Peter the Great of Russia to the Hapsburgs in Vienna, monarchs tried to imitate Louis' court at Versailles.

To pay for all this, Louis employed Jean-Baptiste Colbert, his chief financial minister, to vigorously pursue a policy of mercantilism to increase the wealth and power of the state.

- Although Colbert did not invent the theory, he used it to provide Louis with the robust economy his plans demanded.
- The wealth of a nation according to the 18th century was based on the nation's gold supply, and to acquire more gold, a country would need a favorable balance of trade (selling more overseas than it bought), making the country more self sufficient.
- High tariffs were used to keep out foreign competition, colonies were sought to produce what France could not, and a powerful merchant marine was constructed to ferry goods back and forth across the seas.
- All this, however, presented a direct threat to Great Britain, who had already staked out the position as premier force of the sea and who, since the Navigation Acts, had employed mercantilism to produce the thriving British economy.

Revocation of the Edict of Nantes

- Colbert's success with the French economy was undone by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.
  - The Edict of Nantes had been passed during the wars of religion and had guaranteed religious toleration for the French Protestants, known as Huguenots.
  - Despite the edict, these Protestants had been the victims of government harassment throughout the 17th century, but even more so after 1679 when Louis decreed there would be but one law and one religion--his Catholicism.
- When the Edict of Nantes was revoked, 300,000 Frenchmen left, carrying with them their skills, their money, and their hatred of Louis XIV and absolutism, feeding into the ears of British Anglicans the thought that...
Catholics once in power, like James II, could not be trusted to preserve religious toleration (which had repercussions in the British government)

- Louis XIV and the French military
  - The Sun King was not content with mere economic domination of the Europe
  - To further dominate the continent, Louis improved his army
    - Now the army would be employed directly by the king, not the nobles whom he distrusted, and the officers would be French even though many of the men would be mercenaries
    - He found a way to feed the army rather than have it live off the land, so the French armies rarely plundered the countryside, although to avoid doing so they sacrificed valuable speed as they dragged their supply wagons behind them
    - Louis even built a hospital for the injured soldiers, called Les Invalides, in Paris, on the premise that soldiers who knew they would be cared for would fight more energetically
    - But the area of most advance was artillery and engineers where one actually had to know what one was doing, and it is here that the sons of the middle class and lowest of the low nobility rose rapidly, the most famous example being Napoleon in the next century
  - But the army was huge, never falling below 200,000 and at full fighting strength it was 400,000, all of whom would have to be paid as mercenaries, fed and housed, creating a huge drain on French tax receipts
  - Louis' army does not live up to expectations--The War of Spanish Succession
    - During the War of Spanish Succession, 1701-13, this huge army failed to distinguish itself and France lost the war.
      - As part of his drive to break out of his Hapsburg encirclement, Louis schemed to have a relative of his named to the Spanish throne when the insane and ailing Spanish king died
      - This robbed Austria of a throne she believed belonged to the family and would have secured peace along the Pyrenees to give France one area she would not have to worry about Hapsburg attack
      - Thus, the war pitted France and Spain against Austria and Great Britain, who saw the opportunity to damage France by supporting Austrian claims
    - England continually organized coalitions to keep first France (and later Germany in the 20th century) from dominating Europe, and here she fought with Austria, but in a few years she dropped Austria as an ally and embraced Prussia
      - France lost the war because the army was poorly financed and badly equipped (despite the money that Louis poured
into it), and France was also hurt by the terrible famine of 1709

- John Churchill led the armies of the English coalition to a resounding victory at Blenheim in 1704, whereupon a grateful nation built him Blenheim palace outside Oxford, and made him the Duke of Marlborough
- The war ended with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which was less of a victory than Britain had won on the battlefield
  - Philip, Louis' relative, became king of Spain on the condition that the Spanish and French crowns were never united
  - But France was obliged to give up Newfoundland which Britain would then use as a staging area for the later war on Canada, and Spain gave up Gibraltar, the only entrance into or exit from the Mediterranean until the creation of the Suez canal in 1869
- This war (which was far different than the 30 Years War) was fought as were most 18th century wars, by professional armies, not the masses as would occur later in the French revolution
  - thus, most people were involved in the war only indirectly
  - As a result of the war, the long-standing rivalry between France and Spain was replaced by a strong Spanish-French alliance, and the two most powerful countries in Europe, France and Great Britain, struggled for the control of the continent.

  - Impact of Louis XIV on France
    - Louis XIV died in 1715
      - He had unified France as she had never been before, but he left her demoralized and debilitated by costly wars which he lost
      - He also sold many offices, thus exempting more people from taxation and raising the tax rates on those still left in the system, those who were least able to pay
      - In the long run, he may have discredited absolutism
      - Indeed, the later Seven Years war displayed French weakness to the rest of the world, showing France would need more than mere political and administrative reform--and thus helped usher in the French revolution.

- The Seven Years War (1756-1763)
  - By the middle of the 18th century, England moved to neutralize France as a dominant force on the European continent.
    - To this end, she subsidized allies in Europe, first Austria and then Prussia, to keep France busy fighting in Europe while she concentrated on conquering colonies overseas and destroying French commerce
    - Thus, Britain was able to put 40,000 troops in the New World when the French could not, and France divided her energies playing power politics in Europe while competing with the British overseas.
France was primarily a land power while Britain relied on her navy. By 1750, British warships outnumbered the French by two to one.

In 1759, when French ships tried to leave port, they were decimated by the British. Moreover, in trying to have it all, France further bankrupted herself, eventually bringing on the revolution.

The Seven Years War (1756-63), known in our country as the French and Indian war, saw new alliances, with Britain and Prussia against France and Austria, showing again that alliances in Europe are almost always temporary and designed to achieve certain limited goals

- William Pitt the Elder gave Britain her new war strategy, funneling money to Prussia while Britain concentrated on preventing French men and supplies from reaching overseas possessions
- Well-equipped British armies thus could conquer isolated, poorly fed, and rarely paid French garrisons

As a result of this war, England won Canada and India, while France lost her possessions on mainland North America including the area east of the Mississippi, an area which would help to provoke the American revolution.

Moreover, England had beaten France decisively, and for the first time in a long time was able to devote herself to her American colonies, whom she discovered had been evading taxes and basically doing things on their own.

Thus the century of benign neglect came to an abrupt end and paved the way for the American revolution.

II. The Glorious Revolution and English Constitutionalism

- The Stuarts and their problems
  - James I
    - Elizabeth I was succeeded by James I (the first Stuart) in 1603, who was very different than she had been
      - Elizabeth had had the effect of absolutism, but James insisted on the theory as well
      - James was the son of the executed Mary, Queen of Scots, and was sick of the rebellious Scottish nobles he had had to deal with before coming to England
    - The large debt Elizabeth had created to defend English interests was not prudently paid off, and instead James squandered money on lavish court's and personal favorites, especially his homosexual lovers
      - When Parliament protested his failure to pay up the debt, he tore up their petition and lectured them on the rights of the king
        - The House of Commons James was dealing with, however, was very different from the one Henry VIII had terrorized into passing the Reformation a century earlier
        - The members had grown rich on the sale of monasteries and were enjoying the new wealth of the commercial revolution
James made enemies of these commercial classes by granting monopolies (such as the Virginia Company and the British East Indies Company) to his favorites.

With new agricultural technology, the land's yield improved, so even the landed aristocracy was better off and less likely to be pushed around.

- **Religious issues**
  - In religion, the Stuarts were high church (very similar to the Catholic church) and went against the wishes of a growing number of Puritans in England.
  - Moreover, John Calvin's virtues of hard work, thrift and sobriety (which many Puritans subscribed to) were being flaunted by James at every turn.
  - The Archbishop of Canterbury further infuriated Puritan sensibilities when he tried to impose the elaborate architecture and ritual of the Baroque style.
  - James, however, viewed Puritans who would not agree with him as potential traitors.
  - Finally, in foreign policy, James flirted with Catholic sovereigns, especially the Spanish, in opposition to the policy of containment practiced by the Tudors.

- **Charles I**
  - When Charles I (1625-49) came to the throne, he, like all the Stuarts, believed in absolute royal power, but he lacked the two things necessary to carry out his desires.
    - One was a royal bureaucracy appointed by him.
    - And the other was a standing army to make his will felt.
  - As a result he immediately had difficulties with Parliament.
    - In 1628, the king was obliged to sign the Petitions of Rights which denied the king the right to tax without Parliamentary consent, imprison a freeman without just cause or to quarter troops in private homes.
    - No sooner had Charles signed this, however, than he dismissed Parliament to rule England without calling the Parliament for 11 years, from 1629-40.
    - During this time he raised money by illegal means, such as collecting obsolete feudal laws and fines, forcing loans from his subjects and even forcing the rich to apply for knighthoods and then charging them for the privilege.

- **The Short Parliament**
  - Eventually, in the spring of 1640, Charles had to call Parliament back to raise money for war in Scotland against the Scots who objected to having the Anglican Book of Common Prayer foisted on them.
  - This parliament was hostile to more taxes for the king and set about to limit his powers and royal authority.
- Upset, Charles dismissed parliament after only 3 weeks
- It became known as the "Short Parliament"
  - The Long Parliament
    - Before 1640 ended, Charles had to resummon parliament to deal with a military disaster in Scotland
    - the MPs took advantage of the king's dilemma and forced him to agree to a number of concessions, including one where he agreed not to dissovle parliament without the member's consent
    - this parliament sat for the next 13 years, earning it the name of the "Long Parliament"
- English Civil War
  - By 1642, the Puritans had gained control of Parliament
    - they drafted a document known as the "Grand Remonstrance," which listed numerous grievances against Charles and appealed to the public for support
    - Charles objected and took to the field in 1642
  - Civil War
    - The two sides
      - The Puritans (known as Roundheads because of their "soup-bowl" haircuts) were led by Oliver Cromwell
      - The loyalists to King Charles I were known as Cavaliers
    - The war raged throughout England for four years
    - Finally, Charles was defeated by Oliver Cromwell's army in 1646
  - A defeated Charles was accused of treason and executed in 1649--after Parliament had redefined treason to make his previous acts illegal.
- The Commonwealth
  - The new government was called the Commonwealth
    - It proceeded to abolish the monarchy and House of Lords
    - When the Parliament tried to grow rich on the spoils of the defeated cavaliers, Cromwell took over as Lord Protector in 1653, especially when the Parliament tried to disband his army of fifty thousand experienced men he would need to stay in power
  - Oliver Cromwell as ruler
    - Cromwell became Lord Protector, a sort of military dictator, but not a tyrant dictator in the modern sense
      - After all, he could not veto Parliamentary legislation
      - But the threat of the army was enough to enforce his powers
    - Cromwell experienced many difficulties as Lord Protector
      - As time went on he became intolerant, producing a backlash
      - Stiffbacked Puritan supporters angered the populace by closing the theaters and muzzling the press
      - Foreign adventures inflated the budget to three times that of Charles
      - Cromwell savagely crushed a rebellion in Ireland, leaving a legacy of hatred there and frightening the British with his brutality
Cromwell found it impossible to reconcile the religious differences among Puritans themselves, with the levelers and the true puritans clashing openly.

In this chaos, trade and commerce declined.

- Thomas Hobbes' response to the Commonwealth
  - *The Leviathan*, published in 1651
  - What was Hobbes' view of humanity?
    - equality
    - baseness
    - these traits would "naturally" lead to a war of everyone against everyone else unless prevented
  - What was his solution to this problem?
    - an absolute ruler--the state must have supreme power
    - the Leviathan--a machine, a manmade rather than a natural creation
  - What was the basis for this solution?
    - scientific foundations--desire for scientific precision in determining human affairs
    - drew upon geometrical models
  - In what ways did Hobbes' view of political power differ from that of political philosophers from the Medieval period to his day?
    - was totally secular
    - rejected the idea that different classes of people should naturally fall into certain categories
    - equality of mind and talents were something he accepted (and feared unless controlled)
  - What is the legacy of Hobbes?

- The Restoration
  - Charles II
    - When Cromwell died in 1658, the English decided they had had enough of military dictatorship, and so invited Charles II, the son of the executed king, to take the throne in what is called the Restoration.
    - Charles was restored in 1660, and immediately won approval for stepping up the challenge to the Dutch who had been England's foremost trading rival
      - London became the commercial and business center of the world, and Holland's defeat ended abruptly her Golden Age which had seen the emergence of Rembrandt
      - In these wars, Charles was kept afloat financially from money slipped to him under the table by Louis XIV of France, who thought Charles would soon convert to Catholicism and return England to the Catholic fold
      - Because Charles had money from abroad, he had little trouble with Parliament, because he did not demand new taxes
  - Charles and Religion
    - Charles was secretly pro-Catholic and so he preferred toleration
- The Anglicans who dominated Parliament thought otherwise, passing the Test Act that said that you could not vote, hold public office, teach or preach unless you received the Anglican sacraments.
- **Charles and Parliament**
  - When Charles returned, the powers of the king were further restricted
  - There was now the implicit understanding that the king should rule through Parliament, a position very different from the continent's tradition of absolutism, where the king was responsible to God alone
  - The English king could veto laws and command the militia, but Parliament controlled the finances and the king was obliged to live on a fixed income, financed by a tax on beer.
- **James II**
  - Charles did secretly convert to Catholicism on his deathbed, and this brought his brother James II to the throne
    - People were unhappy that James was a Catholic, fearing he would follow Louis XIV's example of revoking the Edict of Nantes and thus ending religious toleration in England as Louis had done already in France in 1685 (Remember, many of the Huguenots fled to England and spread their stories of Louis' brutalities toward Protestants)
    - When Parliament tried to exclude Catholics from office, James adjourned it, and in violation of the Test Act, began appointing Catholics to important positions in government
    - The English were content to wait James out, but to everyone's surprise, James' second wife gave birth to a son under suspicious circumstances, meaning the Catholic line would continue
- **William and Mary and the "Glorious Revolution"**
  - Parliament then rebelled and invited William of Orange, husband of Mary, James' daughter by his first, Protestant wife, to be king. William had been the champion of the Protestant cause in Europe
    - Although his army was only one half the size of James', James still fled, leaving William to use England against Louis XIV with whom William had been at war for years
  - **"The Glorious Revolution"**
    - Parliament redefined power between the King and Parliament
    - Upon becoming king, William had to accept the English Bill of Rights
      - This document provided that judges were to stay in office during their tenure of good behavior and could not be removed by the king for delivering decisions he did not agree with
      - There was to be no standing army in time of peace--no more Cromwells
      - Freedom of religion was granted to all Protestant dissenters except Unitarians
- discussion of the Bill of Rights (from reader)
  - what other rights granted
    - taxation
    - free elections
    - trials--jury of peers, no excessive bail, no forfeiture of property or liberty before trial
    - right to petition
    - no standing army
  - Impact of these rights on royal authority, American Revolution and constitution
- The impact of this so-called Glorious Revolution was profound
  - Parliament had deposed a line of kings and laid down conditions under which future kings could rule. Divine right of kings was therefore discredited
  - In foreign policy, it meant a switch from the pro-French foreign policy of the Stuarts to checking the designs of Louis XIV
  - This Glorious Revolution would later be justified by John Locke, whose reasons would even later by used by Jefferson to justify the American revolution
  - The role of the English gentry was vastly increased in government as well
  - Unlike in the rest of Europe, these gentry could actually determine national policy through membership in Parliament, and came to see themselves as an independent force in politics
- Aftermath of the Glorious Revolution
  - The Glorious Revolution saw England reach the heights of her prosperity
    - The navy which had been built up and reorganized under the late Stuarts became the premier force of the sea
    - New colonies, especially in New Jersey and the Carolinas, were settled mainly by the English aristocracy
    - The Bank of England grew to become the world's foremost financial institution, cementing London's position as the commercial capital of the world
    - The crippling inflation of the last century was stopped so even the average worker could make a better living
  - A new way of living for the common folk
    - Thus the ordinary Englishman was better off than anyone else in Europe with the possible exception of the Dutch
    - He enjoyed better roads, lower taxes, a more impartial judicial system, and more freedom from government interference than almost anyone else
    - Moreover, he self-consciously thought of himself as English and was willing to fight for his liberties against Britain's main rival, the other giant of Europe, the France of Louis XIV, thus precipitating the struggle for the control of Europe which would consume most of the eighteenth century