Enlightenment Salon- 1st Hour

Salon date: Monday, November 14th

Enlightenment salons were social and intellectual gatherings in 17 and 18C Europe (most notably in France). Fashionable and charismatic hostesses would invite the greatest thinkers of the day to talk about their ideas on such things as politics, how to improve education, and the role of religion in society (to name a few). Some of your classmates will be leading us in simulating such a salon. I will play host to our discussions as Friedrich Melchior Baron von Grimm, literary critic and frequent attendee of Madame Geoffrin’s famous salon.

**Cast of Philosophes**

Denis Diderot Claire Dana

Jean-Jacques Rousseau Jacob Turley

Voltaire Ammon Andreason

Montesquieu Dylan Huttenlocher

Mary Wollstonecraft Maggie Yellen

John Locke Jordan Kemp

David Hume Elise Hatch

Adam Smith Destiny Judd

**Assignment**

**Philosophes from the 18C will interact and discuss the issues of the day. Cast members need to do research on the discussion questions, answer them in a 2-3 page paper, and then be prepared to act their character. Dressing up and bringing in appropriate props is encouraged.**

The first part of the salon will be informal with guests mingling; the second part will consist of directed discussion under the host, who will be in charge of keeping the debate moving along and providing some refreshments. Students not assigned a figure will identify positions on various topics and conflicts through listening in on conversations and through the directed discussion (you will be assessed by a chart filled out during the formal exchanges).

**Structured Discussion (Find your assigned figure under the different topics and focus your research on answering those questions)**

1. What is the role of government in the economy? (Smith, Locke, Montesquieu)
2. What is the nature of the social contract? (Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau)
3. What is the role of God and religion in society? (**ALL**)
4. What are your beliefs about political and/or social (in)equality? (Rousseau, Montesquieu, Wollstonecraft)
5. What are your thoughts on women’s rights? (Wollstonecraft, Rousseau, Voltaire)
6. What are your beliefs on the authority of science? (Voltaire, Diderot)
7. How does one obtain knowledge, justice, happiness? (Smith, Hume, Diderot, Voltaire)
8. Is society “progressing” in this Age of Enlightenment? Are you optimistic about human nature? Why? (**ALL**)