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Law Related Education



**Baron Charles
de Montesquieu**
(1689-1755)

Baron Charles de Montesquieu was a famous French nobleman who lived from 1689 to 1755. His ideas about government and law were recorded in several books. The most influential of these was *The Spirit of the Laws* written in 1748. In this work, he proposed separating government into three branches so that power would not be concentrated in the hands of one person or one group of people. His ideas inspired James Madison and were echoed in *Federalist 47* in which Madison defended the division of power detailed in Articles I, II, and III of the new U.S. Constitution. Madison went on in *Federalist 51* to defend the checks and balances system as a way to further define the powers of the three branches.

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John Locke
(1632-1704)

In the 17th century John Locke was an early English philosopher who lived during the time of the Glorious Revolution. He was a natural rights philosopher who believed in the protection of individual rights including life, liberty and property. He was a social contract theorist who believed that the people create government. If that government does not protect the people's rights, then Locke argued the people have a right to revolt. His two most famous books were *The First and Second Treatises on Civil Government*. His works inspired Thomas Jefferson who authored the Declaration of Independence.

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**William
Blackstone**
(1723-1780)

William Blackstone was a British jurist (attorney) in the eighteenth century. As a philosopher he taught that man is created by God and granted fundamental rights by God. He is famous for his multi-volume work, *Classic Commentaries on the Laws of England*. Educated at Oxford, he provided a complete overview of English law. His work influenced the Founding Fathers of the U.S. such as James Madison and Thomas Jefferson. More copies of his work were sold in America than in England. It was a basic textbook for America's early lawyers.

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William Penn
(1644-1718)

William Penn was born in 1644 in London, England. He obtained a land grant in North America from King Charles II in 1681. He was a Quaker and established a colony in America called Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania was a haven for Quakers and welcomed people of diverse backgrounds to the colony. He insisted that women deserved equal rights with men. He implemented democratic principles through his Frames of Government. Penn gave Pennsylvania a written constitution which limited the power of government, provided a humane penal code, and guaranteed many fundamental liberties. His most famous works include *No Cross, No Crown* and *Innocency with Her Open Face*, which was written while he was in prison for his religious views (1668-70).

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**Thomas
Hooker**
(1586-1647)

Born in England in 1586, Thomas Hooker was raised in an ultra-conservative period in English history. After receiving degrees at Cambridge University, Thomas Hooker became a preacher whose sermons clashed with the established Church of England. He was eventually forced to leave England. He lived in Massachusetts and later founded the colony of Connecticut where he established a highly successful church in what is now Hartford, Connecticut. He aided in the adoption of the *Fundamental Orders of Connecticut* in 1639. Believing in the principle of equality for all mankind, Hooker is sometimes called “the father of American democracy.” Hooker advanced a more democratic view, favoring the vote for all men, regardless of any religious or property qualifications.