

Fall 2020 OLLI Indigenous Cultures

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Plan for October 28 (Session 6)

- **Entire Berkshire Land Acknowledgment**
- **Today: What we can learn from the Americans**
 - **Climate Change: Steady State Economics**
 - **Communism in Living: Privatization of Public Goods (Land and other Resources, Intellectual Property), Mutual Aid**
 - **Income Inequality: Affine Growth Models and Capitalism**
 - **Racism: Race and other Colonial Myths**
- **Review (1 thru 5)**

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Session 6: Colonial Values in Practice, & Remedies i.e. What can we learn from Indigenous Culture?

- Land Management (already covered)
 - Monoculture (niacin [B3] deficiency)
 - Plowing (erosion) *Do stones have souls?*
 - Water table & Soil depletion, Water pollution (phosphates)
- Private Land Ownership (Fencing, Animal Slavery)
- Technology
 - Who are the beneficiaries?
 - Intellectual Property
- Wealth Inequality – Affine Wealth Model
<http://www.mfw.us/blog/2019/11/18/wealth-inequality-causes-and-cures/>
- Overpopulation / Hunger / Homelessness

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Session 5: European Origins of Colonial Values

- 13th Century: expansion of commerce, use of coinage
- 14th Century Shift away from Aristotle to proto-scientific thinking (Oresme)
- 15th Century The Age of Discovery and the invention of race
 - <https://www.history.com/news/christopher-columbus-ships-caravels>
- 16th Century
 - **Henry VIII (1509-1547) land measurement and ownership**
 - The Little Ice Age – peaked in 1570 (Spinoza)
 - Population collapse in the Americas, ending cultural progress
- 17th Century: King James Bible & Shakespeare, **John Locke 1632-1704; Thomas Hobbes 1588-1679**
- **The Age of Enlightenment 1715-1789; Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1712-1778**

Partial list of historical events and people

Eratosthenes (276-194 BC) <https://tinyurl.com/earthsz>

- *Migration of the Algonkian people into North America*
- *The arrival of 3 sisters [maize, beans, squash] in the Northeast ~1000 AD*
- *Hiawatha (Ayenwatha), the Peacemaker (Deganawida) and Tododaho ~1451 or earlier*
- *Hendrick Aupaumut (1757-1830)*
- *Daniel Ninham, Jacob Cheeksaunkun, Solomon Uhhaunauwaunmut, and John Naunauphtaunk (to London in 1765)*

Koch, Alexander et al (2019)

*(PDF) Earth system impacts of the European arrival and Great Dying in the Americas after 1492
Quaternary Science Reviews 207 pages 13-36*

Albertus Magnus ~1200–1280

<https://www.inthemedievalmiddle.com/2013/11/do-stones-have-souls.html>

Nicole Oresme (1320-1382) precursor of Cartesian Coordinates?

Little Ice Age (Nature's Mutiny) peaked 1570 to 1680s

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) & John Locke (1632-1704)

Baruch (Bento) de Spinoza 1632-1677 [killed God before Darwin]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) The Social Contract

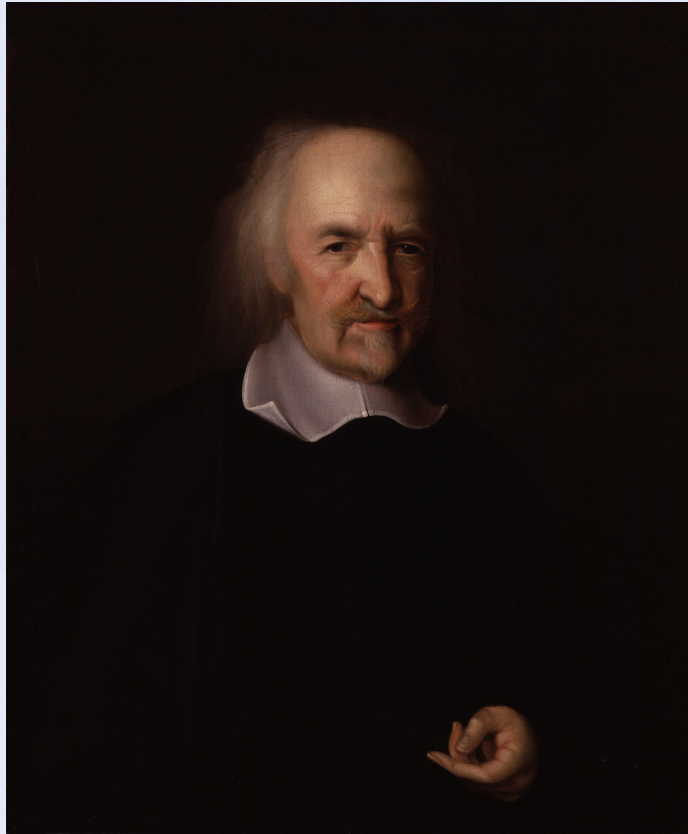
Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881)

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The influence of Colonial observations on European thinking

- Locke and others used the (Native) Americans as examples of people living in a “state of nature” without a government
- They believed that the “state” (i.e. government) was (or should be) established “with the consent of the governed” to protect private property.
- John Locke: “in the beginning all the world was America” *The Second Treatise of Government* 1690

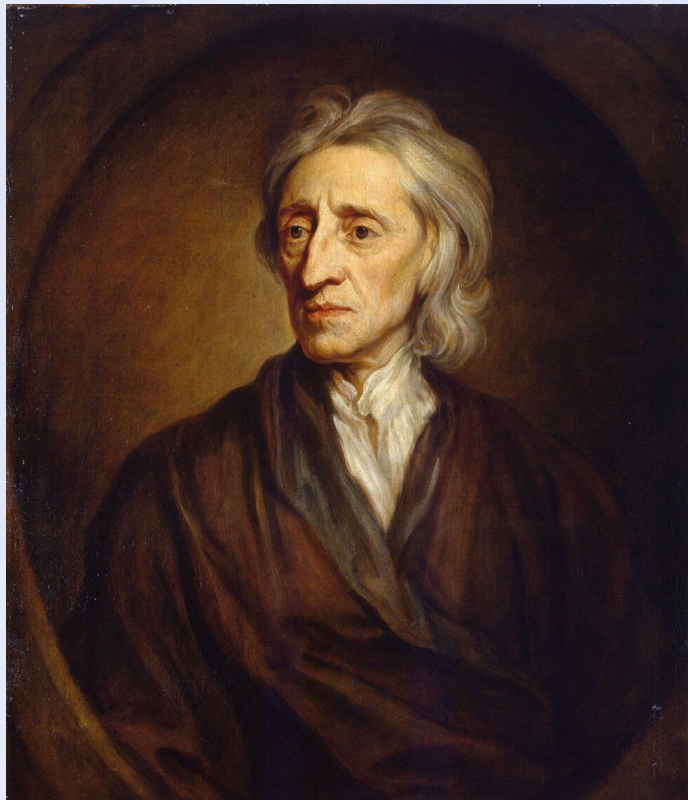
Thomas **Hobbes** (1588-1679)



A “social contract”
provided for a strong
central authority
(sovereign) to overcome
the “state of nature”...

In such condition, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

John Locke (1632-1704)
[Portrait 1697]



In a natural state, all people are equal and independent, and everyone has a natural right to defend his "life, health, liberty, or possessions."

Locke advocated governmental separation of powers and believed that revolution is not only a right but an obligation in some circumstances. These ideas would come to have profound influence on the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

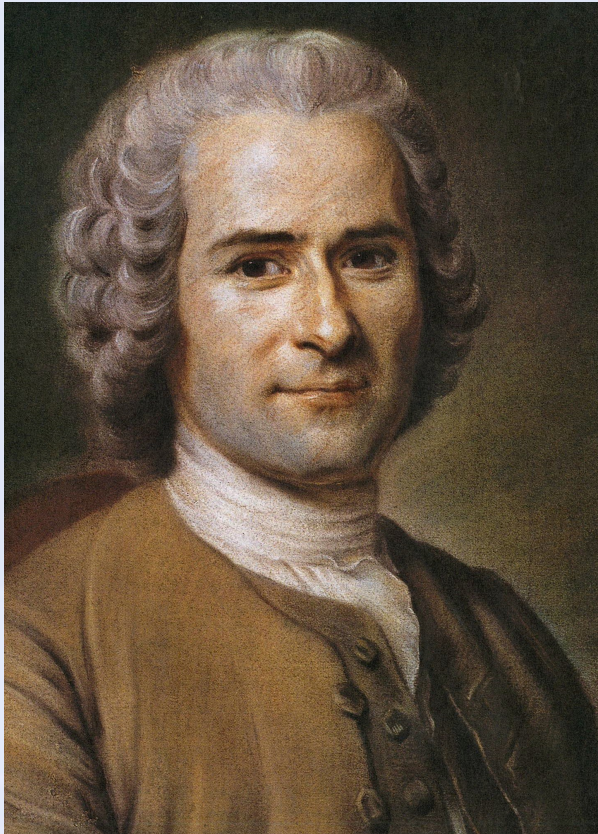
He argues that property is a natural right that is derived from labour. "...at least where there is enough [land], and as good, left in common for others"

Some see his statements on unenclosed property as having been intended to justify the displacement of the Native Americans.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

The Social Contract

[Portrait 1753]



His view of the “social contract” relied on individuals joining together to cede rights for the good of all.

The first man who, having fenced in a piece of land, said 'This is mine', and found people naïve enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars, and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows: Beware of listening to this impostor; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody.— Rousseau 1754

https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/12081_19-Land-for-the-Many.pdf

LAND FOR THE MANY

Changing the way our fundamental asset
is used, owned and governed

Authors:

George Monbiot (editor), Robin Grey, Tom Kenny,
Laurie Macfarlane, Anna Powell-Smith,
Guy Shrubsole, Beth Stratford.

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The highly developed European system of private property and markets;
something unknown in the Americas

- **The Language of Balance**

- Affine Growth Models: The inevitability of income inequality
- Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma
- Rawlsian Justice
- Utilitarianism (problem of interpersonal comparison)
- Pareto Optimality
- Cooperation (Mutual Aid) versus Competition
- Eusociality – *Consilience* (E.O. Wilson)
- Swarm Intelligence (*The Perfect Swarm* Len Fisher)
- *The Faith Instinct* (Nicolas Wade)
- *The High Cost of Free Parking* (Donald Shoup)

- **Steady State Economics**

- Is it what we need to combat Climate Change?
- What can we learn from Indigenous Culture?

Mutual Aid

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/05/18/what-mutual-aid-can-do-during-a-pandemic>

There's a certain kind of news story that is presented as heartwarming but actually evinces the ravages of American inequality under capitalism: the account of an eighth grader who raised money to eliminate his classmates' lunch debt, or the report on a FedEx employee who walked twelve miles to and from work each day until her co-workers took up a collection to buy her a car. **We can be so moved by the way people come together to overcome hardship that we lose sight of the fact that many of these hardships should not exist at all.** In a recent article for the journal Social Text, the lawyer and activist Dean Spade cites news reports about volunteer boat rescues during Hurricane Harvey which did not mention the mismanagement of government relief efforts, or identify the possible climatological causes of worsening hurricanes, or point out who suffers most in the wake of brutal storms. Conservative politicians can point to such stories, which ignore the social forces that determine the shape of our disasters, and insist that voluntarism is preferable to government programs.

Radicalism has been at the heart of mutual aid since it was introduced as a political idea. In 1902, the Russian naturalist and anarcho-communist Peter Kropotkin—who was born a prince in 1842, got sent to prison in his early thirties for belonging to a banned intellectual society, and spent the next forty years as a writer in Europe—published the book "Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution." Kropotkin identifies solidarity as an essential practice in the lives of swallows and marmots and primitive hunter-gatherers; coöperation, he argues, was what allowed people in medieval villages and nineteenth-century farming syndicates to survive. That **inborn solidarity has been undermined, in his view, by the principle of private property** and the work of state institutions. Even so, he maintains, mutual aid is "the necessary foundation of everyday life" in downtrodden communities, and "the best guarantee of a still loftier evolution of our race."

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Sessions 1 to 4: European Origins of Colonial Values

- **Session 1:** Arrival and Dispersion of the Algonkian Peoples
- Charles Mann in **1491**: arrival in the Americas was earlier than thought
 - *also, that cultures and land management were far more sophisticated than had been previously acknowledged, and there were many more people than had been realized*
- **Session 2: Race and Racism** as European inventions of the 15th century
<http://www.mfw.us/blog/2015/02/16/segregation-in-the-berkshires-in-the-civil-rights-era/>
- **Session 3: (1) Land Management and (2) Cultural Values:** (1) more successful and (2) equivalent to Colonial systems
- **Session 4: Language** – more sophisticated than Colonial languages
- Colonial view of “primitive” societies
- Examples abound of sympathetic Colonists, but they were overwhelmed
- Takeaway of John Trusler

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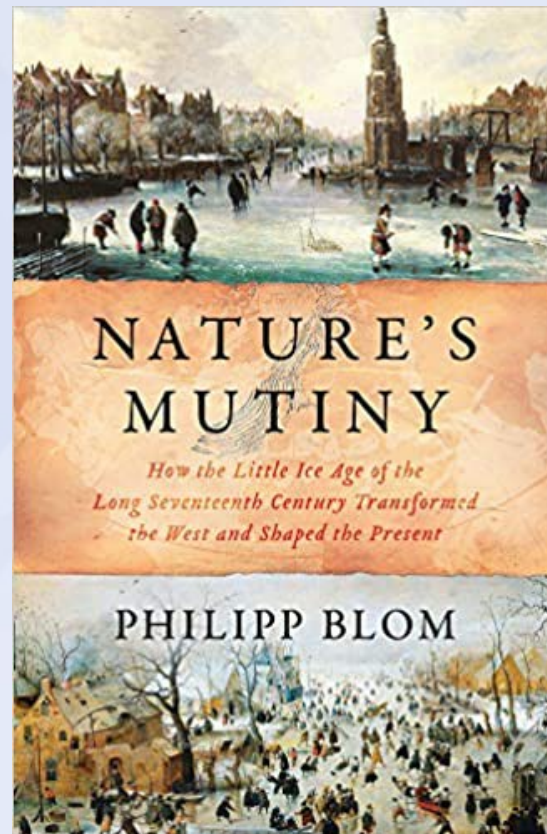
Session 5: European Origins of Colonial Values

Overall Message: Cultural Divergence is Recent

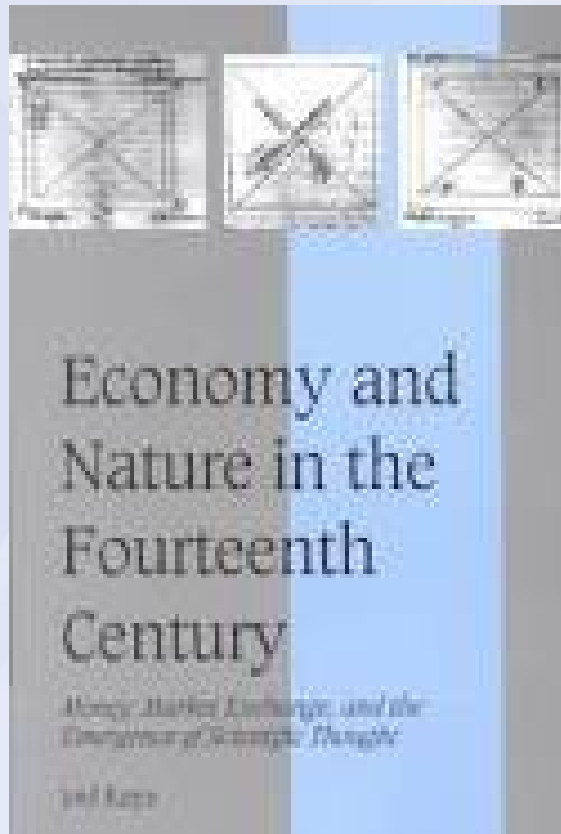
- Prior to the 14th Century, European societies were largely authoritarian, with little room for personal liberty.
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- Although American cultures of this period were sometimes authoritarian (e.g. Inka, Mayan, Triple Alliance), for the most part they were more egalitarian and democratic (communistic even).
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- Both worlds were largely agricultural; one of the biggest difference was that in Europe written languages had become common; in America they were the exception.
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- Mesopotamia (between 3400 and 3100 BC), Egypt (around 3250 BC), China (1200 BC), and lowland areas of Southern Mexico and Guatemala (by 500 BC).

Little Ice Age

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/04/01/how-the-little-ice-age-changed-history>



Book by Joel Kaye



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Social values taught to Mohican children

Love to all men, and be kind to all people
Any that are in distress, you must try to help
Listen to the instruction of old folks: thereby you
will be wise
You must be very kind to strangers
Be honest in all your ways
Never steal anything
Always avoid bad company
Never commit murder
You must be very industrious
At all times you must obey your Sachem and Chiefs