Politics of 18th C.
- lose America (1776)
- fascinated with French democracy
  - devastated with overthrow of European/French democracy
    - Fall of Bastille (July 14, 1789); freed only 7 prisoners
    - sparked many debates regarding "revolution"
      - Thomas Paine’s *Rights of Man*
      - Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry*
      - Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*
    - Napoleon ruled until 1814 (dictator; anti-British)
- attempt to abolish slave trade in Britain (very successful)
  - women head the movement
- early feminist movement (Wollstonecraft, Baillie, Barbauld, Hays)
  - gives voice to women in a time when they had no power (political or economic)
- shifting class system & economic theories because of Industrial Revolution & colonial expansion
  - naval force not to be paralleled until end of 19th C.
  - colonies include: India, W. Indies, Africa & N. America
  - rise of the middle class & urban centers

Sciences of 18th & 19th C:
- Geology: Lyell, *Principles of Geology* (1830-33)
  - forces of geological change = permanent but gradual
- Psychology: threat to mind, free will & soul
  - Locke = 17th & 18th C, mind governed by psychological laws equal to physical (Natural) laws
- Organicism: Schlegel
  - change is inevitable; nature in constant state of becoming; power of mind needed to understand a world

Literature of 18th C.
- Dr. Samuel Johnson (d.1784)
  - began the modern dictionary (1755)
- Swift & Pope both die 1745 (wrote satire, a ridiculing and publicly disruptive style)
  - they pushed a tradition of satirical writing which authors rejected in the 1790s
- Publishing
  - copyright laws began to protect author’s works (1774) & pay them
  - periodicals came up everywhere and were cheap (easier to read than poetry/novels & shorter)
  - rise of consciously “British” Literature (“nationalism”)
  - writing sold directly to booksellers instead of patronage system

Rise of the Novel in the 18th C.
- novel becomes popular during mid-18th C. with rise of middle class
- becomes distracted, leisure reading & easier than poetry
  - Richardson, *Clarissa*: 1st, conduct novel, sentimental, *bildungsroman* (growth of character)
  - Defoe, *Moll Flanders*: thief, prostitute, incest, travel to U.S., *bildungsroman*
- at first, an attempt to give an exact description of realism
  - focuses on the progress/growth of one person
  - attracts people because reflects society
- Gothic novel appears (1760-1820)
  - deals with the fantastic, romantic & “sentimental”
  - evolved from “sentimental” & realistic novels
  - includes sexuality, danger, female rage, power
  - medieval morality plots
  - popular form for women writers (publish under male pseudonym)
- becomes “woman’s reading” & potentially corrupting to young women
- appears beside women’s conduct manual
  - many women illiterate & uneducated