



GREAT AMERICAN STUDIES

American National Government

- Week 1
- Reading: None
- Watch Lectures: Lecture 1 Western Civilization
Lecture 2 Law, Government, and Politics
- Vocabulary

Western civilization-culture of societies in Europe and North America as opposed to Asia or in modern history, Communist Eastern Europe. Major influencers of the west come from Judaism (Monotheism), Ancient Greece (Reason), and Christianity (Love).

Rationalism-belief that reason and knowledge, rather than emotion should rule the actions of man.

Feudalism- governing system during the Middle Ages. Headed by a monarchy (king), supported by land owners (lords), and at the bottom were the peasants (serfs) who worked the land, shared the harvest, and fought as soldiers.

Nation- a large group of people united by a shared history, culture, language, and/or religion located in a particular geographic area.

Law- a system of rules a community recognizes as regulating the actions of members and is enforced by penalties; Law is justice.

Government- the means by which a society organizes itself and allocates authority in order to accomplish collective goals. Governments can force you to pay taxes, seize your property, and send you to jail.

Politics- the process by which people decide how resources will be allocated and which policies government will pursue. Who gets what, when and how.

Anarchy- lack of government and law, great disorder (Somalia, Afghanistan)

Authoritarianism- enforcing strict obedience to government (China)

Theocracy-government by religious leaders (Iran)

Totalitarian- government by a dictator (North Korea, Russia)

Aristocracy- government by an upper class minority (Thailand, Saudi Arabia)

Oligarchy- government by a powerful few, often the military or wealthy elites (Egypt)

Democracy- government in which people hold power (Ancient Athens)

Republic- a state in which the people and their elected representatives hold supreme power and are ruled by law (U.S., France, Germany)

Freedom- power or right to act, speak, or think as he chooses, so long as he does not harm anyone else.

- **Good Reads**

The Holy Bible (NASB, ESV)

Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan

The Republic by Plato

Church History in Plain Language by Bruce Shelley (3rd Edition)

The Law by Frédéric Bastiat

- **Good Videos**

"Putin's Way" PBS Frontline (2015)

"Secret State of North Korea" PBS Frontline (2014)

"One Child Nation" Amazon Original (2019) *Ask your parents' permission first!