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TAH: A More Perfect Union  
Final Project: Lesson Plan  
September, 2009

## **Political and Economic Theories: How to organize the New Nation?**

This lesson is at its core a lesson on theory. This lesson will give the students the basics of political and economic theory. These theories will then be applied to the United States in its infancy after the American Revolution. The idea is that the students will come away from the lesson with the idea that the founding fathers had a blank slate on which to design the United States and that the choices and compromises that they made had both a historical foundation and future ramifications.

The lesson will begin with a power point that defines the role of government, political theories, the idea of an economy and different economic theories. Through out the power point the students will be taking notes and answering questions imbedded within the presentation (see attached ppt). Specifically, for each government the students will have to figure out who “rules.” After each theory is explained there are symbols at the end that refer to one or more theories. The students will have to figure out which one is being symbolized. The symbols will hopefully give them a visual to keep coming back to when they think of the theory.

After the power point presentation the students will be put into groups of two. Within their pairings they will have two graphic organizers to work on. The first is their opportunity to create the country. This is their opportunity to be one of the founding fathers. They will need to decide what kind of government they want to have based on the theories that they learned in the power point. They will then have to choose an

economy. The students will then apply their knowledge to an explanation of what the country would look like under those political and economic parameters. The second graphic organizer asks them to fill it in as the founding fathers would have. In order to get full credit they would need to state and explain that the founding fathers chose a representative democracy and capitalism. The final box to fill in asks them about the government that they had rebelled against in the Revolution and how that would have affected their decisions about how the United States was going to be governed.

The genesis for this lesson was the first day of the summer session of our class. Professor Bernstein talked at length about the three forms of pure government and how they influenced the founding fathers' decisions. He also talked about legitimizing the new government and how that was to happen. I was also taken in by the introduction to Darren Staloff's book *Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson: The Politics of the Enlightenment and the American Founding*. In the introduction he talks about the tabula rasa that the founding fathers had to work with. Giving the students a variety of political and economic theories to work with and having them struggle with it will, I hope, give them a sense of how daunting that blank slate was. As research for this lesson I also drew from Isaiah Berlin's *The Power of Ideas*, the *We The People* textbook, and <http://www.politicsprofessor.com/>.

# **Political & Economic Theory**

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# What is a political theory?

- Political Theory (ideology):
  - *The ideas/beliefs behind the government/policies of a nation*
- Government:
  - *the political direction and control exercised over the actions of the members, citizens, or inhabitants of communities, societies, and states; direction of the affairs of a state, community, etc.; political administration*

# **3 Forms of Pure Government**

## **1. Monarchy**

- Rule by 1
- Founded upon fear
- Degrades into a tyranny
- What are the positives of this?
- What are the negatives?

# **3 Forms of Pure Government**

## **2. Aristocracy**

- Rule by few (by birthright)
- Founded upon honor
- Degrades into a oligarchy
- What are the positives of this?
- What are the negatives?

# **3 Forms of Pure Government**

## **3. Democracy**

- Rule by many
- Founded upon envy
- Degrades into a anarchy (mob-rule)
- What are the positives of this?
- What are the negatives?

# Pure Democracy

- **Majority Rule.**
- **A democracy in which the power to govern lies directly in the hands of the **people** rather than being exercised through their representatives.**
- **Every vote counts with **equal** weight.**
- **Rule by?**



# Representative Democracy

- **Majority rule.**
- **Government by the **people**; a form of government in which the supreme power is held completely by the people and exercised directly by them (**voting**) or by their elected agents under a free electoral system.**
- **Rule by?**





# Parliamentary Government

- An **assembly** of representatives, usually of an entire nation, that makes laws.
- The leader is usually called the **prime minister or premier**.
- Often, a different person —a king, queen, or president — is head of state, and their duties are usually more ceremonial than governmental.
- Often used with a **Monarchy**
- Rule by?



# Aristocracy

- Originally from the Greek '**rule by the best**', but now attribution of quality to **hereditary elites**.
- In any society there will be a minority of people of superior skill, wisdom, experience and moral fiber. *These qualities are likely to be transmitted through families* and are thus to all intents and purposes hereditary.
- **Rule by?**

# Totalitarianism

- **Totalitarian governments are characterized by an a leader wanting to rule permanently;**
- **Attempted total control over all aspects of the lives of their subjects; concentration of power in a *single leader* (often a dictator); and use of mass propaganda and public ritual.**
- **Rule by?**





**VOTING**



# Fascism

- A governmental system led by a **dictator** who has complete power
- The leader **forcibly** holds back or stops opposition (those against him) and criticism, **regiments (controls) all industry, commerce (trade)**
- Stresses an *aggressive nationalism and often racism*
- **What other government is this like?**
- **Rule by?**



# Monarchy

- **A form of government in which supreme authority is held by a **single hereditary ruler**, such as a king**
- *Rule by?*



# Constitutional Monarchy

- **A monarchy in which the powers of the ruler are restricted by the constitution and laws of the nation.**
- **King/Queen and a Constitution (set of laws)**
- **Rule by?**

# What is an Economic Theory???

- **Economic Theory:** the system of production and distribution of goods in a country (how the system of production and distribution of goods is organized for a country)
- **Economy:** *the management of the resources (\$\$) of a nation, country, etc...*

**Socialism: The  
government owns  
and operates the  
main/large means of  
production for the  
country/nation**

**Capitalism: An  
economic theory  
where the means of  
production are owned  
and operated privately  
& for profit**



**Communism: Classless society where **all** means of production were owned by the community, *no private business or profit*, no need for a government**

**•Political Theories**

**Explain and Organize:**

**•Government**

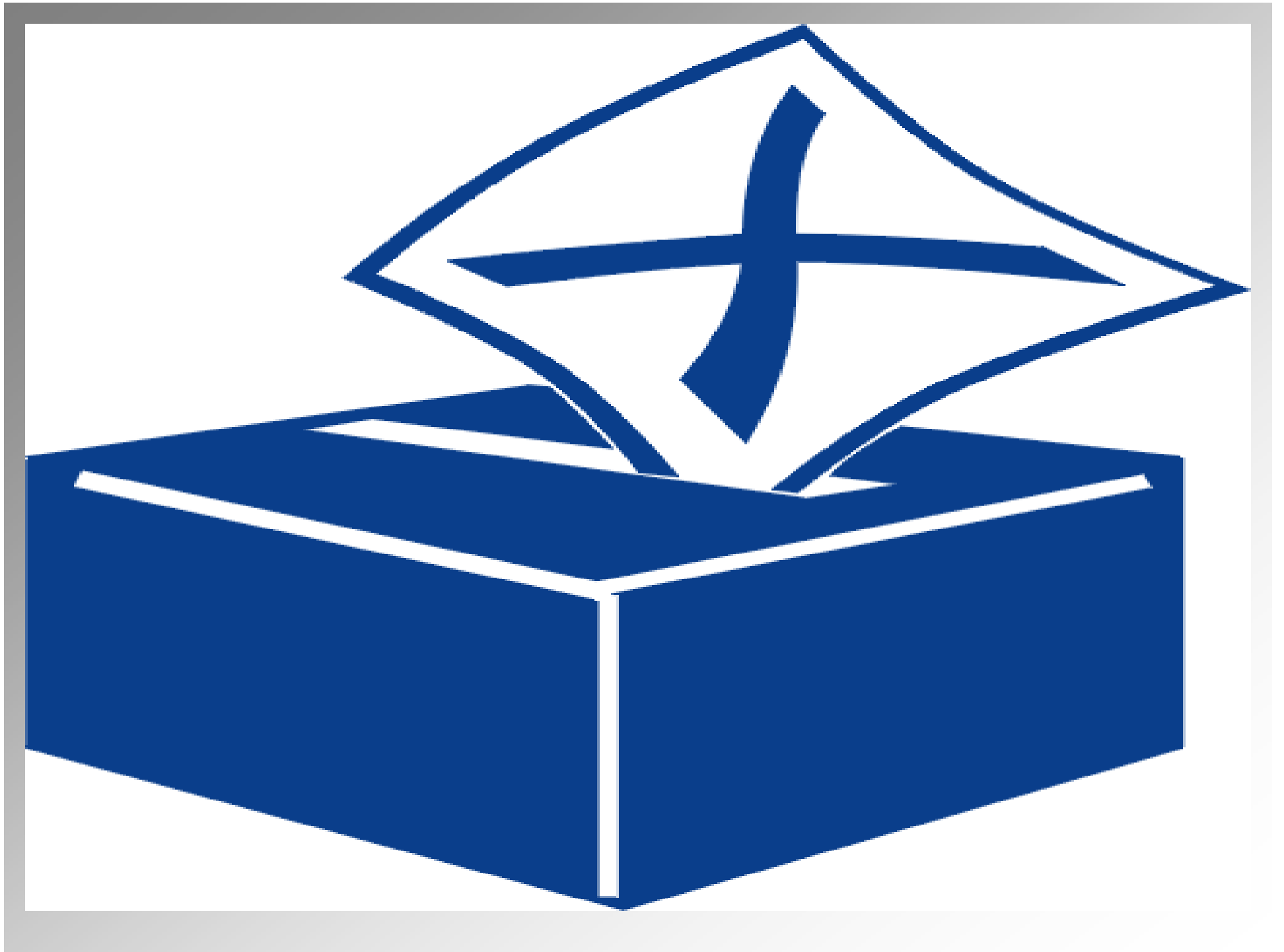
**•Economic Theories**

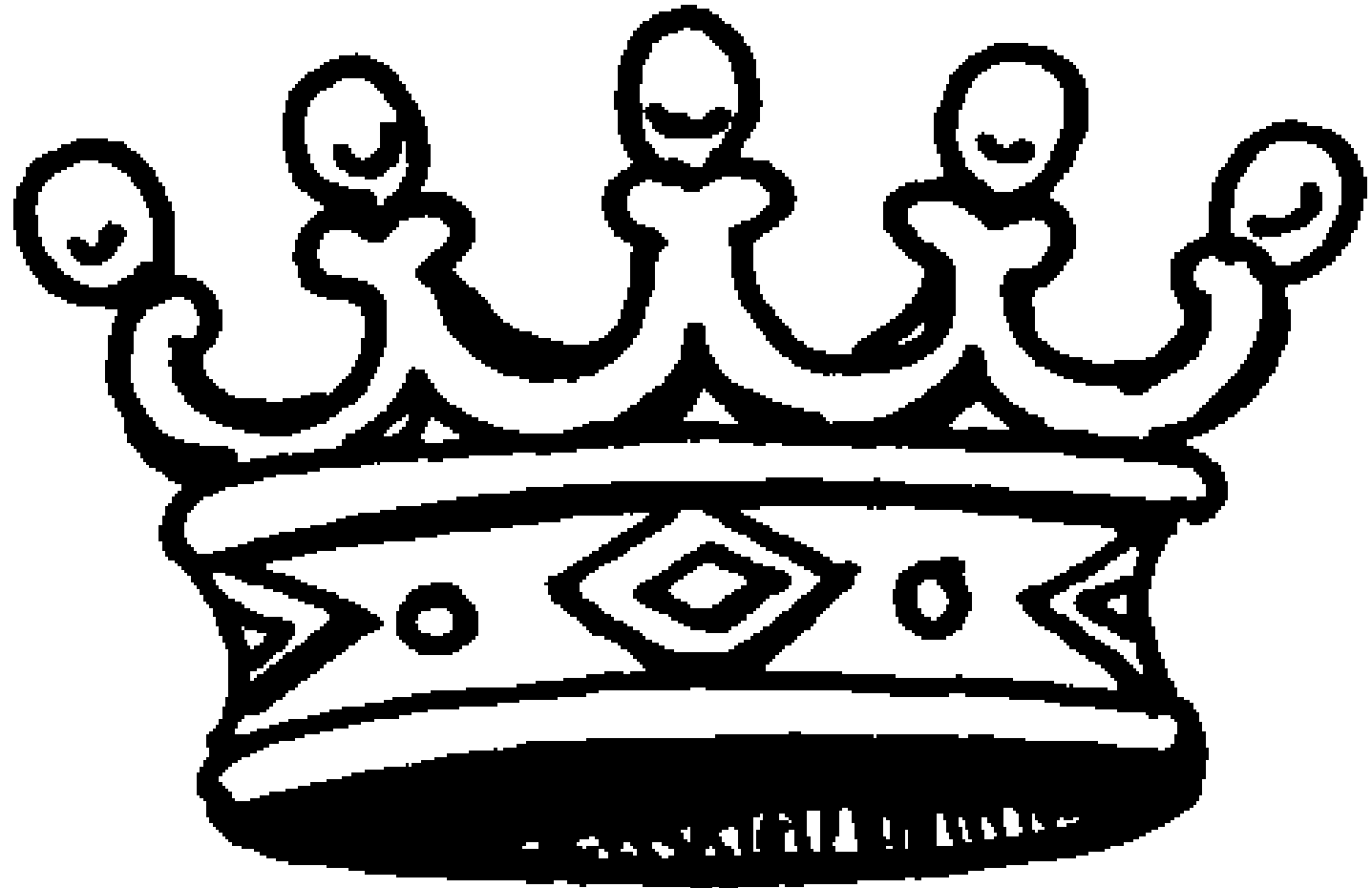
**Explain and Organize:**

**•Money**

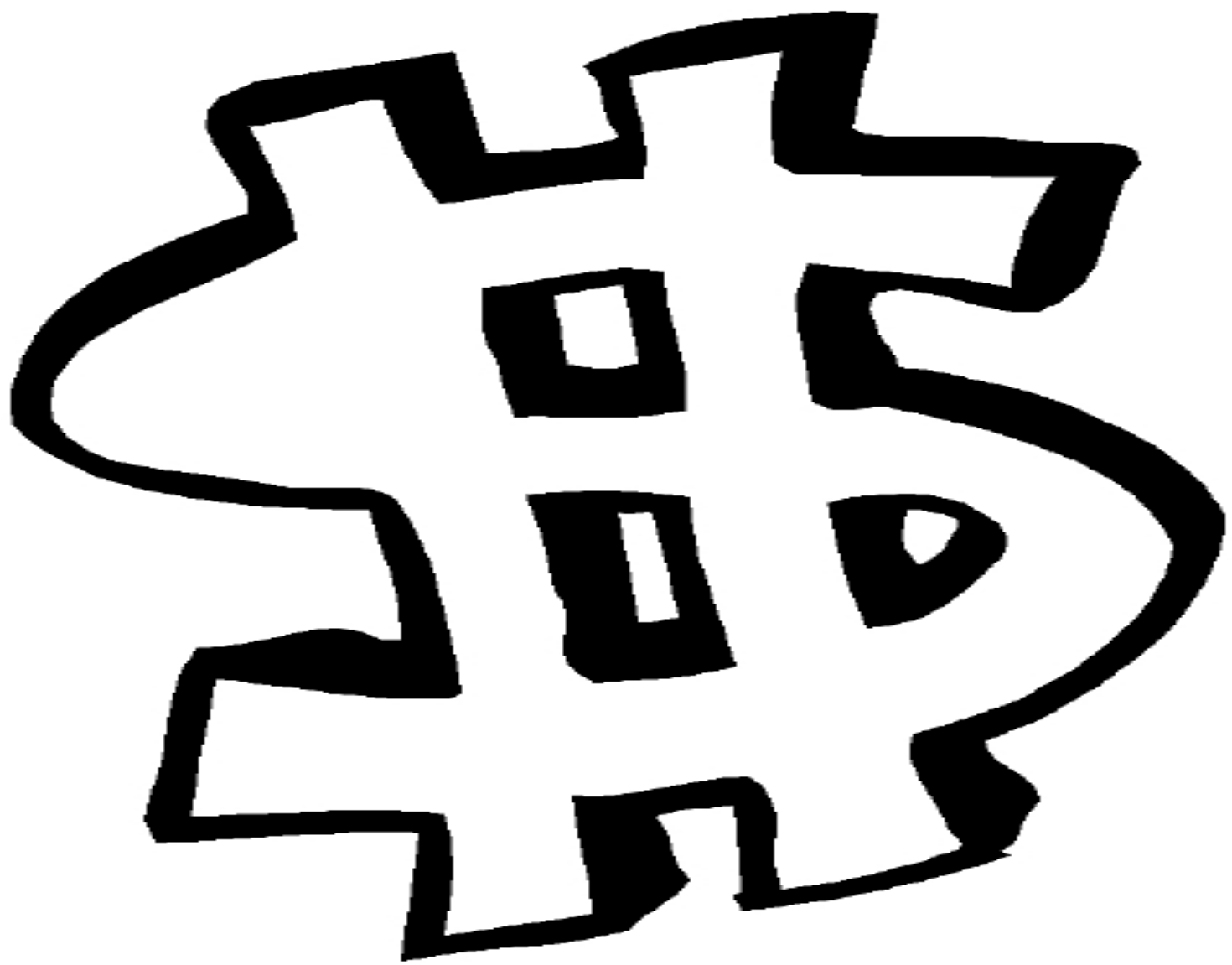
**For each of the  
next 8 slides:**

**Decide which **political theory**, **economic theory** or **combination** is being shown with the symbols**





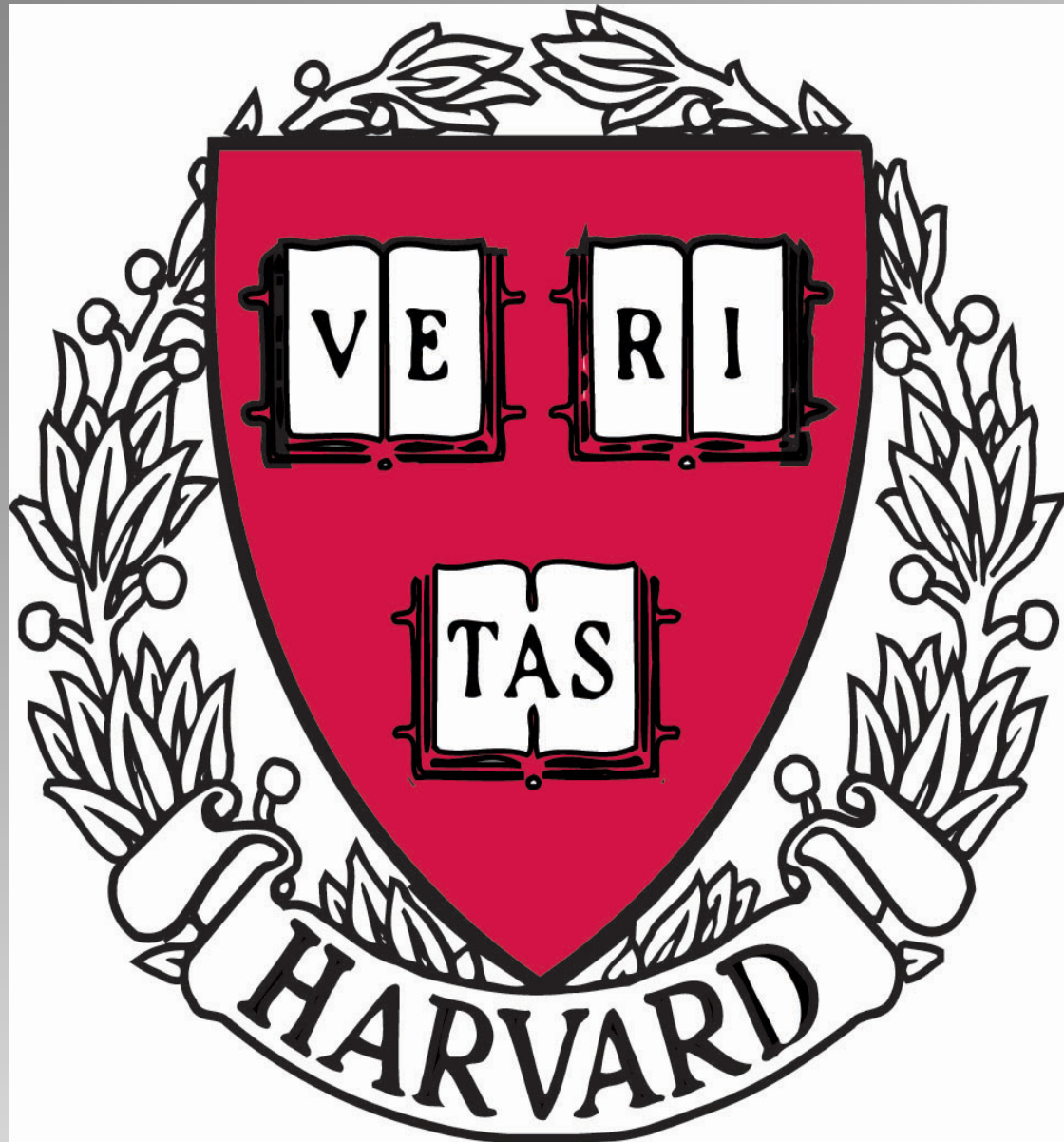


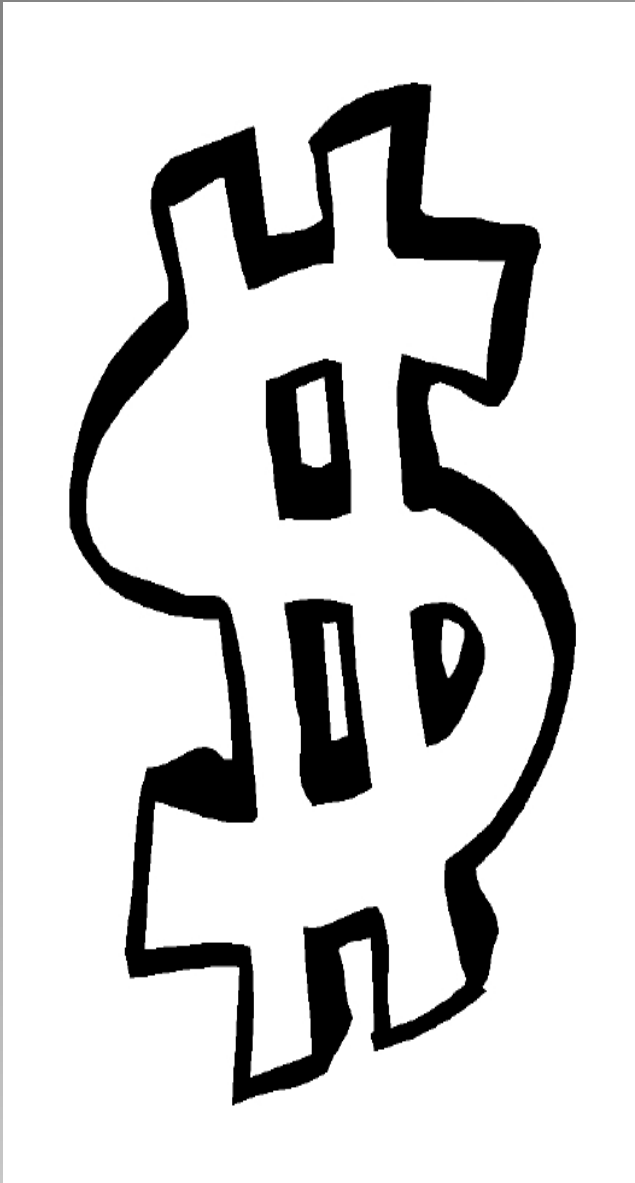






**The  
Color  
RED**





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# Bibliography

- Berlin, Isaiah. The Power of Ideas
- Professor Bernstein. Class Notes 7/7/09  
(TAH: A More Perfect Union)
- <http://www.politicsprofessor.com/>
- Staloff, Darren. Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson: the Politics of the Enlightenment and the American Founding
- We The People textbook

# What did they decide? The New Nation!

*Directions:*

*With your partner, fill in the below graphic organizer as the founding fathers would have! Use the information from your political and economic theories sheet to help you.*

**What kind of government did they choose? (hint: define and then explain!)**

**What kind of economy did they choose? (hint: define and then explain!)**

**Because of the economic system they have chosen, explain how the economy functions! Be specific!**

**What kind of government had the new nation just rebelled against? (hint: define and then explain!)**

**Because of the political system they have chosen, explain how the government functions! Be specific!**

**How did this affect their decisions?**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Block \_\_\_\_\_

# You Decide! The New Nation!

*Directions:*

*With your partner, fill in the below graphic organizer as though you are one of the founding fathers and you get to decide! Use the information from your political and economic theories sheet to help you.*

**What kind of government will we have? (hint: define and then explain!)**

**What kind of economy will we have? (hint: define and then explain!)**

**Because of the economic system you have chosen, you now need to explain how OUR economy will function! Be specific!**

**Because of the political system you have chosen, you now need to explain how OUR government will function! Be specific!**

[Go to SSEC TAH Site](#)