



Speaker: Neoclassical architecture is the Anti-Rococo style. It utilized classical vocabulary with columns, triangular pediments and above all, regularity and symmetry. Although it still may seem quite ornate in our day, this style was extremely austere in comparison to the Baroque and Rococo architecture. The intention was to forsake emotion and replace it with logic and reason. The Neoclassical style was a deliberate choice of architecture for the leaders in the newly founded United States of America.

Based on Ancient Greek and Roman temples, it was meant to harken back to the birth of democracy and the republican form of government. One of the leading architects in America was Thomas Jefferson. He studied the Ancient Roman Temple, Maison Carrée, in France and used his studies as a model for the Virginia state capital, as well as his own home, Monticello. The symbolic message of American neoclassical architecture was to convey the notion of a government based on logic, reason, order, an enlightened democracy.

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