

Legitimacy

Written by Robert Higgs for The Independent Institute.

What is the difference between a government and a criminal gang or protection racket such as the mafia? In a word, it is legitimacy. In practice, this vague notion suggests that people view the government—its institutional composition, its personnel, and its conduct—as morally acceptable or proper, whereas they view the mafia—at least in its conduct—as morally unacceptable or improper.

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