

Course Description:

This course is a continuation of the themes developed in Culture & Social Structures I, though participation in the first seminar is not a requirement.

By the use of texts from a variety of fields, we will explore the origins and underpinnings of American culture. We will do so in order to seek an understanding of contemporary ways in which people choose to structure -- literally and figuratively (or perhaps better, symbolically) -- the way they live together. Our study centers on questions about how our cultural and social structures are the concrete expression of what we value, of the things we consider meaningful and important. The approaches will be historical, social, literary, political and cultural.

Texts:

Christian Norberg-Schulz, *New World Architecture*.  
Michael Kammen, *A Season of Youth*.  
Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence*.  
Jane Jacobs, *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*  
Andrew Delbanco, *The Real American Dream*  
Tolstoy, "Master and Man" and "The Death of Ivan Ilych"  
John Irving, "Pigeon Feathers" and "Cathedral."

Requirements:

Reading of assignments in advance of class.  
Presentation on *at least* two of the readings.  
A middle of the term conversation.  
A group, oral final exam.

Reading/Assignments:

January 17	Introduction
January 24	Slotkin, Chapters 1, 4 & 7 (Somewhere in these next two weeks, you should watch <i>High Noon</i> and then <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> . You pick the dates, I'll arrange to get the movies.)
January 31	Slotkin, Chapters 8, 9 & 10
February 7	Slotkin, Chapters 12, 13 & 14
February 14	Kammen, Chapters 1, 2 & 3..
February 21	Kammen, Chapters 4 & 5.
February 28	Kammen, Chapters 6 & 7.
March 14	Delbanco (the whole book)
March 21	Jacobs, Chapters 1 - 4
March 28	Jacobs, Chapters 5 - 9
April 4	Jacobs, Chapters 10 - 14.
April 11	Norberg-Schulz (the whole book)
April 18	Tolstoy, "The Death of Ivan Ilych" and "Master and Man;" and John Irving, "Pigeon Feathers" and "Cathedral."
April 25	Grand Synthesis
May 2	Final Exam