THE SOCIAL MEANINGS OF HOME

This course is an exploration of the economic, cultural, social and political dynamics of "home" in contemporary U. S. society. The concept, "home" invariably invokes multiple images and connotations -- a physical dwelling, family, economic property, birthplace, nationality, environment, haven, etc. We may speak fondly of "home sweet home," "dream home," "home is where the heart is," "there's no place like home," and "homiest." Yet we also want to be mindful of home as a site of exclusion, conflicts, loss and danger – homesick, homelessness, homeland security, and home invasion.

In the course, we will consider the home as both a social construction and a social context that profoundly shapes our personal and collective identities, gender roles and intimate relationships, plus class status and divisions, racial-ethnic memberships and tensions. The course will explore home & the household as economic property; and the implications of their location, design, artifacts and domestic lifestyles for the cultivation of self-defining agents as well as model subjects, consumers and citizens. Theoretical, empirical and interpretative materials in the course may touch on subjects as varied as housing and home ownership, shopping and hyper-consumption, food & kitchen culture, family practices and values, the home improvement industry, and home/self makeover shows on reality television.
REQUIRED BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Books are available at the Dartmouth Bookstore and Wheelock Books


Optional:


Additional Required Readings and Materials

Other required course readings and materials will be posted on Blackboard, placed on Baker Library Reserves or the Jones Media Center Reserves. The course site contains the syllabus, assignments, files and links to online readings, resource websites and other materials.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to attend all class sessions as well as any special sessions, to complete reading assignments in a timely fashion and to participate meaningfully in class meetings. Much of the work of this course will involve our collective examination and discussion of secondary as well as primary sources -- print, visual and recorded.

20% Your Personal Home Scrapbook

Student will be required to complete a series of brief tasks and assignments that are related to various aspects of the social meanings of home. These essays and reports, 1-3 pages in length, will explore various themes and issues raised in the course materials through reflections on your experiences and desires of “home”. The information conveyed in these assignments will be read only by Professor King and will be handled in a confidential manner. The assignments are scheduled throughout the term, with detailed descriptions posted on Blackboard.

15% One Short Exercise in the Use of the Sociological Imagination

This assignment will involve different types of research methodologies (e.g. observational/ ethnographic, content analysis, interview, quantitative, etc.) and entail the critical use of theoretical concepts and the sociological imagination. The options and detailed descriptions for satisfying this requirement will be posted on Blackboard.

30% In-class Midterm Examination

This exam will cover all readings, lectures, videos, presentations and other required activities.

35% Take-home Final Examination
**COURSE POLICIES**

**Honor Principle**  Academic work is simultaneously a collaborative and an independent enterprise. Consulting with others and using their questions, ideas, findings and interpretations are integral parts of intellectual inquiry. The laborious, critical and creative work of developing one's own understanding is equally important. In this course, you will have opportunities to engage in both endeavors. Therefore it is essential that you maintain the integrity of each. Class members are encouraged to discuss readings, lectures and other course materials with one another. However writing assignments and the research paper must be your own independent work; in which you appropriately cite the intellectual ideas and products of others (including other class members, scholarship and other sources and lectures). 

**Remember:** Plagiarism is the borrowing of the words or the ideals of another person without proper acknowledgement. Please purchase and use a comprehensive reference book on acknowledging sources, consult Sources: Their Use and Acknowledgment, use links to various citation references posted on Blackboard’s “External Links” and speak with the professor.

You should familiarize yourself with Dartmouth College's Academic Honor Principle regarding honesty in completing all course examinations, research papers, and exercises (see online “Academic Honor” under the Registrar Regulations, plus the Standards of Conduct regulations on computing resources and library privileges). This Principle commits each of us to individual responsibility and fairness in all course work; and prohibits cheating on exams, fabricating research, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, purchasing papers, submitting fraudulent documents, engaging in computing abuses and forging signatures.

**Submission & Return of Assignments**  The submission of assignments, exams and paper is expected on the indicated “due date” during that day’s class meeting (unless otherwise stated). Requests for late submissions should be made prior to the due date. Please note that grades on non-approved late submissions will be penalized. All work to be graded should be submitted in a clasp envelope, with your name clearly printed on the front. Graded work will be returned in the same envelope. Course assignments, examinations and papers may not be submitted by blitz, mail or fax (unless otherwise instructed and with prior approval).

**Missed Classes**  As responsible adults, class members should notify the instructor in writing of any anticipated absences. Repeated absences, without documented evidence of illness or family emergency, will adversely affect your grade. In the event that you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for getting the lecture notes for that class from another student. As a general policy, I do not make my lecture notes available. I trust that members of the class will be cooperative in sharing their notes, realizing that you also may be in a similar position one day.

**Religious Observances**  Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during the term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please notify me in writing before the end of the second week of the term.

**Make-up Exams**  Students with valid reasons are entitled to make-up the midterm examination. However, such arrangements are only available for students who inform me at least 48 hours prior to the original exam date.

**Note for Students who Speak English as a Second Language**  Students who speak English as a second language are encouraged to meet with the professor during the first week of the term to discuss any academic assistance you may require.

**Note for Students with Disabilities**  Students with learning or other disabilities as well as chronic health conditions that may disrupt your studies are encouraged to meet with the professor during the first two weeks of the term to discuss any academic assistance or accommodations you may require. Please provide official documentation of your condition or circumstances. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Disabilities Coordinator or other college officials may be consulted.

**Electronic Devices**  Your cell phone, iPod, MP3, Blackberry, Bluetooth, etc. must be turned-off and put away during class sessions and required events. Laptop computers and notepads may only be used for note taking. Web browsing, handling email, and working on non-course related matters are distracting for you as well as other class members. Repeated disregard of this policy will lead to a reduction in your grade.
SCHEDULE OF READINGS, ACTIVITIES & ASSIGNMENTS

PART 1  WHAT EXACTLY DO WE MEAN . . . HOME?

Wed. Jan. 4  Course Overview

Fri. Jan. 6  Imagining Home
Baum, L. Frank. “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” (on Blackboard)

(on Blackboard – Assigned Readings)

Home for Houseless Young People,” Youth Society, vol. 43 no. 2 June: 752-773 (on Blackboard – Assigned
Readings)

Scrapbook Assignment One: An Environmental Memoir of Home
See instruction on Blackboard for details.
Due: Fri. Jan 6

PART II  PIECES OF THE DREAM: HOME AS HOMEOWNERSHIP AND CONSUMPTION

Mon. Jan. 9  The American Dream: Marketing the Desire for Housing
Prologue, Chapters 1 - 4

Preface, Intro, and Chap. 1

Wed. Jan. 11  Persistent Nightmares: Race, Class & Gender Dynamics in Housing Consumption
Cohen, A Consumers’ Republic America. Chap. 5 - 7

View: Models "Sears Homes 1908-1940 - Houses From Sears Catalog,” Sears Archives, Historic Homes
(on Blackboard)

Fri. Jan. 13  Homeownership as a Mechanism for Inequality: Housing Wealth or Housing Insecurity
Homeownership.” Cityscape v9 n2: 137-151 (on Blackboard)

Stone, Michael. 2006. “Housing Affordability: One-Third of a Nation Shelter-Poor,” in A Right to Housing:
Foundation for a New Social Agenda, edited by Rachel C. Bratt, Michael E. Stone and Chester Hartman.
Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, pgs. 38-60 (on Blackboard)

Haurin, Donald, Herbert, Christopher and Rosenthal, Stuart. 2007. “Homeownership Gaps Among Low-
Income and Minority Households,” Cityscape v9 n2 : 5-31 (on Blackboard)

Skim:
and 2000.” (on Blackboard)

to Congress” May 2007 (on Blackboard)
Mon. Jan. 16  

**No class meeting ~ MLK Observance**

Wed. Jan. 18  

**Current Racial & Ethnic Barriers to Ownership**


*One of the following:*

- McConnell, E. D. et. al., 2007. “Buying into the American Dream? Mexican Immigrants, Legal Status and Homeownership in Los Angeles County,” *Social Science Quarterly* v. 88 no. 1 March: 199-221 (on Blackboard)


*Optional:*

Department of Housing & Urban Development. Discrimination in Metropolitan Housing Markets: National Results from Phase 1 of the Housing Discrimination Study (HDS), May 2003 (on Blackboard)

Fri. Jan. 20  

**Housing Boom to Bust: The Foreclosure Disaster**


*The State of the Nation's Housing*. 2011. Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University. Chap. 4 "Homeownership" and Chap. 6 "Housing Challenges" (on Blackboard)

View: "Foreclosing on the American Dream," *Los Angeles Time* video. View 3 of Trustee Sales. (Link on Blackboard)

PART III  BEING AT HOME: HOME AS THE SELF

Mon. Jan. 23  Conceptualizing Home


Duany, Suburban Nation, Chaps. 2- 4 and 7  (pp.21-83, 115-133)


Wed. Jan. 25  Consuming Fantasies: The Idealized Home & The Idealized Self


Madigan, Ruth and Munro, Moira. 1996. ‘House Beautiful: Style and Consumption in the Home,” Sociology v30 n1: 41-57  (on Blackboard)


Fri. Jan. 27  Our Kind of Dream Home: Culturally Meaningful Housing


Hadjiyanni, Tasoulla; and Helle, Kristin. 2010. "(Im)materiality and Practice: Craft Making as a Medium for Reconstructing Ojibwe Identity in Domestic Spaces,” Home Cultures, v 7,n 1, March: 57-84  (on Blackboard)

PART IV  HOW WE PRACTICE HOME: GENDER, CLASS, & FAMILY VALUES

Mon. Jan. 30  The Value of Home, Assessing Its Residents:

Allen, Chris; Powell, Ryan; Casey, Riamach; and Coward, Sarah. 2007. ‘Ordinary, the Same as Anywhere Else’: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity in ‘Marginal’ Middle-Class Neighborhoods,” Sociology, v41 n2; 239-358  (on Blackboard)

**Home Schooling in Social Class**

**Power and Limits of Social Class & Parenting**
Lareau, *Unequal Childhoods*, Chaps. 12 and 13

**Midterm Examination**

**Gender, Home and Domesticity: The Masculine Self**


**Homemaking: The Feminine (or Subordinate) Self**

Carrington, Christopher. *No Place Like Home: Relationships and Family Life among Lesbians and Gay Men*. Introduction, Chaps. 1 & 2

Skim:

**Privilege, Kin and Home-style Choices**
Carrington, *No Place Like Home*. Chaps. 3 – 5 and Conclusion

**WHEN HOME IS NOT A HAVEN: FEAR AND DANGER AT HOME**

**Protecting the Idealized Home: Disney-fication and Gated Communities**


Duany, *Suburban Nation*, Chap. 10 "How To Make a Town"
Wed. Feb. 22  *Home as Security*

Fri. Feb. 24  *No Class Meeting Today*

Mon. Feb. 27  *Securing the Homeland*
Kefalas, *Working Class Heroes*, Chap. 4 and Conclusion


Wed. Feb. 29  Topic & Readings - TBA

Fri. Mar. 2  Topic & Readings - TBA

Mon. Mar. 5  Topic & Readings - TBA

Wed. Mar. 7  *Course Review - Last Day of Class*

**MONDAY, MARCH 12**

**TAKE-HOME FINAL DUE:  6:00 pm**

Please submit a [hard copy](#) to 107 Silsby or my mailbox in 111 Silsby.

*Submission via email, Blackboard, fax, or mail will not be accepted*


Poverty, prosperity, and place: the shape of class segregation in the age of extremes
RE Dwyer


Housing and wealth inequality: racial-ethnic differences in home equity in the United States
[PDF] from jhu.eduL
J Krivo... - *Demography*, 2004


<http://www.vnews.com/irene/>