

AP Seminar Summer Assignment

Gentlemen,

Please give the following assignment your best shot. The assignment is similar to what will be found on the AP Seminar End of Course Examination. Your response should be five paragraphs in length. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

Mr. McElhinney

Directions: Read the three sources carefully, focusing on a theme or issue that connects them and the different perspective (point of view) each represents. Then, write a logically organized, well-reasoned, and well-written argument/essay that presents your own perspective (point of view) on the theme or issue you identified.

Please know that you must incorporate at least two of the sources provided in your argument/essay. To be clear – you must utilize at least two of the sources in your response. You may also use the other provided source and/or you can draw upon your own knowledge. In your response, refer to the provided sources as Source A, Source B or Source C or by the author's name.

Remember that the response should be five paragraphs in length. Good Luck.

Source A

From “Home Truths: An Anthropology of House and Home”

By Dr. Francine Barone (*Human Relations Area Files*, Yale University, December 12, 2019)

We can begin ... by offering a simple, everyday reckoning of a house: a building intended to provide shelter for human habitation; typically holding possessions as well as persons; decorated and spatially designated in both interior and exterior; by which an otherwise empty space is transformed into a residential one. Some societies—readily recognizable as the norm in the West—may value the privacy of the house as an intimate space for nuclear families, with distinct rooms each serving a purpose, and a strong locking door to separate the exterior/“street” from the interior/“home” (Barone 2010).

Yet the establishment of a house (and, as will be shown below, a home) is not always strictly a family affair. It takes place within wider inhabited surrounds, and the spatial layout and design of the dwelling vis-à-vis neighbors is a fundamental building block of the social landscape. Some societies may orientate their houses towards a communal center (see, for example, Kroeber 1917: 153), with fewer restrictions on hospitality for more

extended familial connections or other visitors. In this way, the radius of residence of a house can become rather fuzzy, and its boundaries semi-permeable, when open to other community members and their shared responsibilities or co-dependencies. ...

Two examples from the Middle East ...illustrate the juxtaposition of “private” vs. “public” spaces as entwined with the concept of home. Beeman describes how Iranian culture, until recently primarily a rural one, continues to value nature and the open air in residential spaces despite rapid urbanization in the early 2000s:

“Because Iran is largely a desert, however, the ideal open space is a culturally constructed space—a garden. Iranians will try to bring the outdoors inside whenever possible.” ...

The impression of the Iranian house is one where living together and sharing spaces is as fundamental to the home as is the careful intention given to curating the space, quite literally from the outside in. The everyday activities of eating, sleeping, and entertaining are key criteria in the life of a home, whether a single room or a larger structure. Here, then, one can argue that “home” is a composite of the building itself and the life that unfolds within it. Thus, the interior of the house represents the heart of the home and is a safe space for the most “unguarded” and relaxed behavior.

In Susurluk culture in Turkey, attention is also put on safety and sanctity; yet in Turkish society, this requires a communal solidarity that by necessity extends well beyond the walls of a single house: Primary concerns of all Susurluk households are the sanctity of the home and the safety of their women and children. One indication of these concerns is the enclosed courtyard characteristic of older homes; another is the solidarity that members of an immediate neighborhood display to the outside. In effect, the immediate neighborhood is a shared extension of all the households whose women and children participate in its use. Consequently, throughout Susurluk groups of neighboring households have united to form what may be termed “defended neighborhoods”—spatial units within which neighbors cooperate to maintain a degree of security for their members which is relatively high in comparison to adjacent areas (Magnarella 1974: 43).

Such informal spatial arrangements have developed in Susurluk society in response to a potentially volatile and conflictive external environment, or “perceived fears of invasion from the outside” (ibid). Those bonding together and thereby traversing the boundaries of individual dwellings may not be related through kinship or even ethnicity, but are connected via an impetus to act together to safeguard the domestic privacy and sanctity of family that define a Turkish home.

Barone, F. 2019. "Home Truths: An Anthropology of House and Home", HRAF, Yale University. <https://hraf.yale.edu/home-truths-an-anthropology-of-house-and-home/>

Source B

“Home” by Gwendolyn Brooks

What had been wanted was this always, this always to last, the talking softly on this porch, with the snake plant in the jardinière in the southwest corner, and the obstinate slip from Aunt Eppie's magnificent Michigan fern at the left side of the friendly door. Mama, Maud Martha, and Helen rocked slowly in their rocking chairs, and looked at the late afternoon light on the lawn and at the emphatic iron of the fence and at the poplar tree. These things might soon be theirs no longer. Those shafts and pools of light, the tree, the graceful iron, might soon be viewed passively by different eyes.

Papa was to have gone that noon, during his lunch hour, to the office of the Home Owners' Loan. If he had not succeeded in getting another extension, they would be leaving this house in which they had lived for more than fourteen years. There was little hope. The Home Owners' Loan was hard. They sat, making their plans.

"We'll be moving into a nice flat somewhere," said Mama. "Somewhere on South Park, or Michigan, or in Washington Park Court. "Those flats, as the girls and Mama knew well, were burdens on wages twice the size of Papa's. This was not mentioned now.

"They're much prettier than this old house," said Helen. "I have friends I'd just as soon not bring here. And I have other friends that wouldn't come down this far for anything, unless they were in a taxi."

Yesterday, Maud Martha would have attacked her. Tomorrow she might. Today she said nothing. She merely gazed at a little hopping robin in the tree, her tree, and tried to keep the fronts of her eyes dry.

"Well, I do know," said Mama, turning her hands over and over, "that I've been getting tired and tired of doing that firing. From October to April, there's firing to be done." "But lately we've been helping, Harry and I," said Maud Martha. "And sometimes in March and April and in October, and even in November, we could build a little fire in the fireplace. Sometimes the weather was just right for that."

She knew, from the way they looked at her, that this had been a mistake. They did not want to cry.

But she felt that the little line of white, sometimes ridged with smoked purple, and all that cream-shot saffron would never drift across any western sky except that in back of this house. The rain would drum with as sweet a dullness nowhere but here. The birds on South Park were mechanical birds, no better than the poor caught canaries in those "rich" women's sun parlors.

"It's just going to kill Papa!" burst out Maud Martha. "He loves this house! He lives for this house!"

"He lives for us," said Helen. "It's us he loves. He wouldn't want the house, except for us."

“And he’ll have us,” added Mama, “wherever.”

“You know,” Helen sighed, “if you want to know the truth, this is a relief. If this hadn’t come up, we would have gone on, just dragged on, hanging out here forever.”

“It might,” allowed Mama, “be an act of God. God may just have reached down and picked up the reins.”

“Yes,” Maud Martha cracked in, “that’s what you always say – that God knows best.”

Her mother looked at her quickly, decided the statement was not suspect, looked away. Helen saw Papa coming. “There’s Papa,” said Helen.

They could not tell a thing from the way Papa was walking. It was that same dear little staccato walk, one shoulder down, then the other, then repeat, and repeat. They watched his progress. He passed the Kennedys’, he passed the vacant lot, he passed Mrs. Blakemore’s. They wanted to hurl themselves over the fence, into the street, and shake the truth out of his collar. He opened his gate – the gate – and still his stride and face told them nothing.

“Hello,” he said.

Mama got up and followed him through the front door. The girls knew better than to go in too. Presently Mama’s head emerged. Her eyes were lamps turned on.

“It’s all right,” she exclaimed. “He got it. It’s all over. Everything is all right.”

The door slammed shut. Mama’s footsteps hurried away.

“I think,” said Helen, rocking rapidly, “I think I’ll give a party. I haven’t given a party since I was eleven. I’d like some of my friends to just casually see that we’re homeowners.”

Source C

From “The Psychology of Home Environments: A Call for Research on Residential Space”

By Lindsay T. Graham, Samuel D. Gosling, and Christopher K. Travis (*Perspectives on Psychological Science*, Vol. 10(3), 346-356, 2015)

Theorists ranging from Carl Jung (e.g., 1963) to Clare Cooper-Marcus (e.g., 1995) have proposed that of all places, the home has a particularly powerful symbolic and psychological significance. That is, the home is more than a place in which an individual

resides but rather a unique place where a person's past, present, and future selves are reflected and come to life. On the basis of a series of interviews with home owners, Cooper-Marcus (1995) argued that the home is a place that reflects the character and identity of those who dwell within it. ...

Some architectural practitioners have speculated about the motives that may drive how a home's appearance is shaped. Israel (2003) argued that individuals' home environments are reconstructions of past spaces in which those people felt safe and secure. According to this view, a person may, for example, unconsciously incorporate features into a space that evoke qualities from a well-loved grandmother's home. The motives behind these decisions may be propelled not by conscious tastes and preferences but rather by the emotional connections promoted by these elements.

Gosling has proposed that manipulating one's space can serve three broad functions (Gosling, Gifford, & McCunn, 2013; Gosling, Ko, Mannarelli, & Morris, 2002). First, features of a space can influence the activities likely to be performed in that space—thanks to the physical features of kitchens, bedrooms, living rooms, and garages, these spaces are particularly well suited to cooking, sleeping, entertaining guests, and parking, respectively. The layout and other physical features of the space can influence the activities (e.g., reading a book) or social interactions (e.g., chatting with friends) that take place in the space, which in turn may affect cognitive and emotional states of the occupants (e.g., a sense of creativity or relaxation). ...

Second, the items in a space and their arrangement can be used to convey impressions to others; thus, for example, occupants can convey the importance that they place on family by displaying photos of their relatives or can communicate their political orientation via symbols and icons. ...

Third, features of the space can affect what people think about and how they feel when in that space; for example, mementos may evoke fond memories of other times, places, and people. The presence of personal and cultural artifacts (e.g., art, photos, furniture) can influence levels of well-being and feelings of social support (Gifford, 2007). For instance, people may use photos of loved ones and other “social snacks” (tangible reminders of connections to others) to fend off feelings of loneliness and social isolation (Gardner, Pickett, & Knowles, 2005).

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