

AMST 333
House and Home in America
Roger Williams University
M-TH 3:30 - 4:50
GHH 108

Michael R. H. Swanson, Ph. D.
Office: GHH 215 Phone: ext. 3230
Hours: M, T, Th, F 9:00-10:30
or by Appointment
mswanson@rwu.edu

Take-Home Final Exam, Spring, 2012

Due: Last Day of Final Examinations: Wednesday, May 16

Length: 3-5 Pages per part should be plenty, inclusive of illustrations.

Submit: via [Bridges](#) or [E-mail](#).

If you submit by e-mail make AMST333 Final the subject line

Part I.

The proposition and question:

No change in ways of living is without both gains and losses, and this general statement is true of the change from living in walking cities to living in Suburbs. Furthermore, these gains and losses have both personal and societal dimensions to them. Things which may benefit individuals and families may harm the social fabric and vice versa.

Reflecting on the reading we've done in Stilgoe and Jackson, and your thinking about your own communities (remember the exercise you did with Google Maps) at the beginning of the course).

What do you judge to be the personal gains and losses and what to you judge to be the societal gains and losses occasioned by the new suburban lifestyle?

Some Suggestions:

1. Locate your "neighborhood" (The place you most consider "home" using one of the tools we've used this semester: Google Maps, Bing Maps, Yahoo Maps, or Google Earth.
2. Define your neighborhoods by the institutions you used when you lived there.
3. Analyze what kind of neighborhood
 - a. What kind of neighborhood is it? A walking city neighborhood? a railroad suburb? A trolley suburb? An automobile suburb (pre or post Interstate?). How do you know?
 - b. If you live in a small town, that's o.k., too. use it, but use the parts of it you consider your neighborhood.
4. Compare it with a Walking City Neighborhood, and on the basis of the comparison form your answer. If you happen to live in a Walking City Neighborhood, find a different kind of neighborhood to frame your comparison.

More suggestions and resources are available on the class website. Prowl through them and use them freely.

Part II.

Tracy Kidder's book, *House*, suggests that the building of a house is a more complicated thing than simple carpentry and design. Everyone involved experiences the process differently, and because this is true, the house takes on a different meaning for each. Discuss this idea through analyzing the role and experience of TWO persons, one each from the groups below.

Group 1. The Family:

- Jonathan Souweine,
- Judith Souweine,
- Bill Rawn, or
- Jules Weiner

Group 2. Apple Corps:

- Jim Locke,
- Richard Gougeon,
- Alex Ghiselin, or
- Ned Krutsky.

All of the above share a common experience, the building of a new house. Yet though the experience is common to all, the meaning and impact of the experience is different for each. I'd like to have you explore this idea, interpreting how each person you choose was affected by the experience and the interactions he or she experienced.

For each character, describe their chief role(s) in the process, the satisfactions, and frustrations that role or those roles provided. How did temperament or personality influence their experiences? How did their personal histories influence those experiences. With whom did they form alliances? With whom were they in conflict?

Note: While not technically a member of the family, Rawn is a long-time family friend and seems to fit into this group better than into the second.