1 
Syllabus: The Washington Mall and The American Experience 
 
ARSC 3370 
Instructor: Jerry Prout 
Class Time: Thursday 10AM 
Email: gerald.prout@marquette.edu 
 
At the epicenter of our capital city is the Washington Mall with its surrounding symbols, 
monuments, theaters, and diversified population reflecting the complex tapestry of American 
culture and history. The Mall is a central gathering point for spirited protest marches and

2 
attributed to the growth of our nation’s capital, the Mall itself can be viewed as 
very much a Jeffersonian derivative. 
 Theme: Straddling the Hamiltonian-Jefferson Divide 
 Readings: Making of Democracy and the Jefferson-

4 
October 22: Discovery (Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum) 
Invention: Americans have long had a love affair with discovery. Jefferson sent 
explorers Lewis and Clark on a mission to reveal the natural wonders of a vast 
interior space. John Kennedy mobilized the scientific community to put a man on 
the moon within a decade. From Ben Franklin to Thomas Edison to Steven Jobs 
technological advance is celebrated and commercialized. Both these aspects are 
evident within the vast Smithsonian complex on the Mall and provide a window into

5 
https://www.vox.com/2019/1/2/18130630/american-capitalism-neoliberalism-steven-pearlstein 
 
 
November 12: Summary 
Synthesis: We have only touched on many of the broad and sweeping themes that 
define the American experience. But if America is exceptional it is arguably 
because over two and half centuries our many values and beliefs, cultures and 
religions, have been allowed to take their own circuitous course, often colliding 
with one another, often causing social and political conflicts, once even a Civil 
War. We shall take a deep breath, perhaps at one end of the Mall or the other, 
and discuss what it is we now see as we view this space conceived by a French 
architect and envision what it may be like in 2076. 
 
November 19: Presentations 
 
November 26: Thanksgiving Break 
 
December 2 Final Paper Due