



Peter Gunn

Peter is an avid student of American society who devoted four decades to helping high school students explore the nature of history, government and economics. Now he works on a farm, crafts wood into useful things and volunteers to help his neighbors enjoy a better day.

American Political Thought – Yesterday and Today

Study Leader: Peter Gunn

Thursdays, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

6 weeks beginning Sept. 19

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 16

Do Americans fundamentally agree about politics or not? We will examine this broad question by pursuing a particular path – the role of culture in American political and popular life. James Davison Hunter authored our core text, *Democracy and Solidarity*. His analysis of American attitudes suggests that we suffer from a breakdown of solidarity: a loss of cohesion around a common set of cultural values. He argues that while the Enlightenment informed our system of government, the core values of the Enlightenment no longer sustain our politics.

We will examine Hunter’s description of the historical evolution of American political culture. We will also consider how we might address the fundamental divisions in our society. And the elephant in the room, the presidential election, will surely inform our weekly conversations. I look forward to guiding our inquiry as we seek to produce new understanding in the search for truth.

Required Text

Democracy and Solidarity

James Davison Hunter

ISBN: 978-0-300-27437