

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History

Semester I Year 81/82

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
622	History of American Thought, 1859-Present	Boyer

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will focus on social thought; that is, we will be looking at the ways Americans have dealt with some of the great social issues that have arisen from the Age of Lincoln to the Age of Reagan: War, Industrialization, Race, Empire, Gender Roles, Science, Technology, the City, and Social Class.

The range of sources will be broad, including the social thinkers who have attempted systematic explorations of these issues; the advocates and polemicists who have promoted particular ideologies and panaceas; and the mass media - from dime novels to the movies - that have both shaped and mirrored popular attitudes toward social issues.

LECTURES

The lectures will provide background on specific thinkers and movements, and explore the background and context of various currents of social thought. Depending on class size, I hope to set aside at least one class every 2 weeks for discussion.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMINATIONS

There will be a midterm exam and a final. In addition, each student will write a term paper based on the student's own interests, the precise topic to be defined in conference with the instructor.

GRADING SYSTEM

Approximately equal weight will be given to the exams and the term paper, with class participation factored in if possible (again, class size will influence the degree to which individual discussion participation can be weighted.)

REQUIRED READINGS

The readings will be in a variety of primary and secondary sources reflecting the wide range of social thought described above. If possible, I hope to show one or 2 movies at specially scheduled evening meetings, but this is still uncertain.