

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History  
Spring, 1982

History 625  
American Social History, 1600 - 1860

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Room 4110 Humanities  
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1. American Social History: The Sharpless Approach

The course is organized topically. The overall orientation of the course is sociological. Within this general framework we will examine three broad periods of American History: 1600 - 1776, 1776 - 1840 and 1840 - 1860.

Social history is, by definition, a field without definition. In many ways it is all the history which is "left over" after the political and economic historians get theirs. This fact allows a teacher of social history considerable leeway in selecting topics for lectures. Although others could have been selected, the following list of "themes" will provide the major focus for this term.

- The Growth and Redistribution of the American Population, 1600 - 1860
- The Changing Structure of Community Life, 1600 - 1860
- The Changing Nature of Family Life: Sex, Marriage and Child Rearing
- Race and Ethnicity: The Basic Elements of the American Social Order
- Evolving Systems of Morality Ideology and Ethical Behavior
- The Social Dimensions of Economic Growth, Market Behavior and Economic Class
- Religion and Social Organization

2. The MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- A. Regular attendance at lecture/discussion sections (see below).
- B. A satisfactory performance on the mid-term and the final.
- C. Completion of the short paper assignment (see below).
- D. Discussion Topic presentation (see below).

### 3. The "Fourth Credit"

American Social History is a four credit course for all enrolled (undergraduates). In order to make the course "worth" four full credits some additional demands must be made.

- A. Over the term, regular discussions will be held on various topics. Please come prepared to discuss the topic for the week (i.e., try to keep up with the reading). Indeed I would hope that everyone will participate regularly. I will attempt to keep note of the students who meet this obligation and provide a bonus to the final point total.
- B. In addition to the mid-term and final a short (8-16 typed pages) paper must be completed. It can be worth as much as 25 points toward the final grade. The paper is due the first week in May. (Graduate students must complete a paper of 20+ pages.) The paper will focus on one of three Books - Moby-Dick (1851), Democracy in America (1835) or Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852).
- C. Periodically, students will be responsible for "orchestrating" a discussion around some special topic (the list will be distributed the second week of class). This effort should be taken seriously for it can count as much as 25 point toward the final total.

### 4. The Final Grade

The mid-term exam will count no more than 100 points and the final will have a maximum of 150 points. The extra assignments in total will not count more than 50 points. Therefore, 300 points provides the upper limit. To avoid misunderstanding, the total number of points (over the term) required for each letter grade is established at the outset.

A	285--
A/B	265-284
B	240-264
B/C	225-239
C	200-224
D	180-190
F	0 -179

Note: Failure to meet any of the Minimum Requirements of the course (see Section 2, above) can result in a grade of F, even if the point total exceeds 234.