

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History

SEMESTER II YEAR 1973-74

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
History 405	American Cultural History to the Civil War	Rodgers

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed to explore American culture--popular values, ideas, and social and family organization--from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century. In lectures I will try to raise some broad themes about the course of American culture and examine some small byways which seem to me symbolic or challenging. I will deal (among other topics) with the Puritan mind and its tenacity, the political ideologies of the Revolution and after, norms of behavior for women and families, the popular impact of emerging industrial forms, and the romantic movement in both literature and popular culture. My guiding thread will be the pull between self and community, politics and anarchy.

The heart of the course, however, will lie not in the lectures but in the discussion groups which will meet for 1½ hours each week (at times to be arranged the first week of classes). Some discussion sections will be led by a graduate assistant, some by myself. Their aim is to confront students with original source materials in American cultural history, to prod their powers of analysis, and to encourage the "doing" (not merely the absorption) of history.

The course is substantially the same as that I have offered before as History 621, and students who have taken that course with me should not enroll for History 405.

LECTURES

Twice weekly.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMS

Three short (4-5 page) papers on some aspect of the week's reading will be required during the course of the term, with some choice of topics. Each will be commented on extensively. There will be no exams. In place of a final exam a final synthetic paper will be required, analyzing one of the four optional readings or any primary document from the period and relating it to the course themes.

GRADING SYSTEM

Assignments will be weighted approximately in proportion to the number of pages required, but grading will not be done on a strictly mathematical basis. Improvement, extraordinary work and extraordinary lapses, and, in particular, class discussion will all be considered in the final grade.

REQUIRED READINGS

See attached list.

History 405: Outline of Readings

Required:

William Bradford, Of Plymouth Plantation.

Edmund S. Morgan, The Puritan Family.

Collected documents of the Great Awakening

Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia

Representative documents of the debate over the Constitution

James Fenimore Cooper, The Prairie

Herman Melville, "The Tartarus of Maids" and "The Encantada" (to be discussed with slides in sections)

Marvin Meyers, The Jacksonian Persuasion

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Selected Essays

Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance

Optional:

Henry David Thoreau, Walden

Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin

Staughton Lynd, The Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism

George Fredrickson, The Inner Civil War