



I. Subject Matter: A sequence of lecture-discussions:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1 - 2	(#1) Historical background of popular culture in America
3	(#2) History of print media Popular writing and Illustration: Magazines, pulp fiction, genre poetry and art
*4 - 5	(#3) The evolution of the comic strip, the political cartoon, comic books
6	(#4) A brief history of the Popular Theater: Vaudeville, melodrama, and musical
7 - *10	(#5) A historical survey of American movies: amusement and social influence
11 - 12	(#6) The development of old time radio, television and the nostalgia urge
13 - 14 *15	(#7) The development of phonograph and popular music of the past: Light classics, ragtime, jazz and blues

(\*Examinations will be given part of weeks 5, 10, 15)

## II. General Objectives and Evaluation Method

The student will be able to:

1. Write essay examinations at least three times during the term. (75% of grade)
2. Write a special personalized essay of aesthetic and/or social criticism outside of class (student option) or
3. Write a library research paper outside of class (student option).

Both (2) and/or (3) above will be on a topic agreed to by student and instructor. The topic will naturally be relevant to the substance of the course (20% of grade).

4. Keep a clipping-file notebook on periodical articles dealing with popular culture. (5% of grade, together with oral participation).
5. Locate artifacts, pop icons and memorabilia of pop culture.
6. Bring such objects to classes for discussion and evaluation.
7. View films in and out of class.
8. Hear recordings, tapes, etc., both in and out of class to broaden one's contacts with popular culture.

## III. Specific Objectives

Topic #1 (See I)

In assigned readings, discussions, and periodic written examinations (at times indicated above), the student will be able to identify the leading personalities and concepts of the History of American Popular Culture. The student shall be able to explain what is meant by popular culture and traditional culture.

Topic #2

In the ways described above, the student will be able to identify and demonstrate awareness and understanding of leading practitioners and their ideas in the history of popular literature, "dime" novels, pulp fiction, science fiction, detective stories, western stories, fantasy fiction, the common man's poetry (e.g. - Robert Service, Edgar Guest, J. W. Riley) and popular illustration (e.g. - Charles Dana Gibson, J. M. Flagg, Currier & Ives, Norman Rockwell, etc.)

Topic #3

In similar fashion, the student will be able to identify and show awareness and understanding of the main forces and leading artists in the historical development of comic strips, comic books and political-social cartoons past and present. (e.g. - Jules Feiffer, Jack Kirby, Herblock, Chester Gould, Harold Gray, Superman, Li'l Abner, etc.) here the role of the comics in social and political criticism will be discussed and presented in lectures.

Topic #4

In similar fashion, the student will be able to identify and show awareness and understanding of the leading personalities, programs, themes and formats of the popular stage in the past and present. Such concepts as: vaudeville, burlesque, musical comedy, operetta, chatauqua lecture, revue, variety show, Dion Boucicault, minstrel show, "happening," melodrama, the "town hall" theater, etc. will be explored in lectures and discussions.

Topic #5

In similar fashion, the student will be able to identify and evaluate the significant personalities, events and concepts in the history and present life of the movies. Lecturers and discussions will deal with leading topics such as D. W. Griffith, the social conscience of the cinema, the influence of movies on fashion, speech, interior decoration, etc. The movies as escapism will be discussed as well. If possible, one or two feature-length film(s) will be shown, either in class or at a convenient time outside of class. Films such as "Greed" by E. Stroheim or "Grapes of Wrath" by J. Ford could be included. Use will be made of available shorter films - such as those of W. C. Fields and Chaplin. The student will view such films and be able to discuss them in terms of their ideas as

well as to write examination papers on them.

#### Topic #6

In similar fashion, the student will be able to identify the leading personalities and forces associated with the history radio and television as entertainment and information media. The student will hear excerpts from records and tapes dealing with the radio and television experience. He will be responsible for what he listens to and will have to demonstrate his awareness/understanding in writing as well as in class discussions. Such topics as Orson Welles' broadcast of War of the Worlds, Edward R. Murrow, the Army-McCarthy Hearings, Norman Corwin, serials, soap operas, etc. will be discussed.

#### Topic #7

In similar fashion, the student will be able to identify the leading personalities and themes in the historical development of popular music. The student will hear lectures and recordings dealing with the areas of ragtime, jazz, folk music, light classics and the blues. He will be able to identify such terms as: W. C. Handy, protest music, race music, work songs, King Oliver, Scott Joplin, flatted fifths, pop, soul, progressive jazz, Leadbelly, James Petrillo, sidemen, etc.

#### IV. Instructional Methodology and Media

There will be shorter films than those described above; moreover, the instructor will utilize sound tapes, slides, picture handouts and pop "artifacts" such as sheet music, post cards, comic books, old magazines, radio premiums, trading cards, movie advertising materials, photographs and memorabilia.

We hope to take up one cultural area per week. One third of each class will be reserved for student questions and discussion. Students will be encouraged to bring into class their own artifacts and icons of pop culture. If a lengthy film is scheduled, there will be no formal lecture that session, but perhaps a brief discussion will follow the film.

#### Media Used in Course

1. Feature films - (90 min. or longer) Erich Von Stroheim's "Greed", Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath"

2. Shorter films and filmstrips - C. Chaplin, W. C. Fields, "The Jazz Age" etc.
  3. Slides - All units
  4. Transparencies (with outlines of lectures) - All units
  5. Pictures - All units
  6. "Artifacts" and "Icons" of Pop Culture - all units
  7. Audio Tapes - Radio, popular music, T.V., etc.
- V. Bibliography: Recommended Readings
- A. General
    1. Rosenberg & Shite, Mass Culture Revisited
    2. McLuhan, Marshall, Understanding Media
    3. Wolfe, Tom, The Kandy-Colored, Tangerine-Flake, Streamline Baby
    4. Ortega Y. Gasset, Jose, Revolt of the Masses
    5. Journal of Popular Culture
    6. White, David, Pop Culture in America
  - B. Pop Literature
    1. Cawelti, John, The Six-Gun Mystique
    2. Fishwick & Browne, Icons of Popular Culture
    3. Dexter, The Pulps
    4. Compton, Michael, Pop Art
    5. Atheling, Wm., Critical Studies in Contemporary Science Fiction
    6. Novels by authors such as: Ian Fleming, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, Dashiell Hammett, Ray Bradbury, Robert Heinlein, Owen Wister, Vardis Fisher, Frank Yerby, the poetry of Robert Service, etc.
  - C. The Comics
    1. Feiffer, Jules, The Great Comic Book Heroes
    2. Thompson D. & Lupoff, R., All in Color for a Dime
    3. Becker, Stephen, Comic Art in America
    4. Steranko, James, History of Comic Books, 2 vol.
  - D. Film, Radio, T.V., Theater, Recording Industry, & Pop Music

1. Barbour, Allan, The Thrill of it All (Westerns)
  2. Barbour, Allan, Days of Thrills & Adventure (serials)
  3. Barbour, Allen, 1001 Delights, (B-Pictures)
  4. Higby, Mary, Tune in Tomorrow
  5. Harmon, James, The Great Radio Heroes
  6. Tyles, Parker, The Hollywood Hallucination
  7. Gillett, Chas. The Sound of the City
  8. Kael, Pauline, Kiss Kiss, Bang, Bang
  9. Esslin, Martin, Theater of the Absurd
- E. Youth Culture, Fashions & Fad
1. Klapp, Orrin, Symbolic Leaders
  2. Roszak, Theodore, The Making of a Counter Culture
  3. Tofler, Alvin, Future Shock
  4. Reich, The Greening of America
  5. Lipton, Lawrence, The Holy Barbarians
  6. Goldstein, Richard, The Poetry of Rock
  7. Gross, Theodore, Representative Men: Cult Heroes of Our Time
  8. Polsky, Ned, Hustlers, Beats & Others
- VI. Instructional Assumptions
1. The instructor reserves the right to make minor modifications of class format necessitated by variations in the number of class meetings per week. Such changes would not affect the course content materially, however,
  2. Recommended readings will be suggested in library

and paperback sources. The student will approach recommended collateral reading as being an opportunity to broaden his awareness of certain culture concepts. These are readings above and beyond the required texts.