

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History

SEMESTER II YEAR 1974-5

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
284		Sewell

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the way historians work -- the questions they ask, the materials they use, the problems they face -- by letting students become historians themselves. The topics of analysis will be Nat Turner's slave revolt of 1831 and John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859. Each of the course's two units will begin with readings and discussions of appropriate background literature (e.g. historical accounts of slave resistance and antislavery radicalism). Thereafter coursework will consist of close study in primary, i.e. original, sources -- court records, newspapers, letters, diaries, Congressional hearings, etc. The course's purpose will be not so much to find out what happened in 1831 and 1859 as to find out how historians go about the process of finding out.

LECTURES

None. All work will be done in a weekly seminar, plus occasional conferences.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMS

Five or six short (3-4 page) papers based on weekly reading assignments. No exams.

GRADING SYSTEM

A-F

REQUIRED READINGS

Stanley Elkins, Slavery  
John Blassingame, The Slave Community  
Henry I. Tragle, The Southampton Slave Revolt  
William Styron, The Confessions of Nat Turner  
Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men  
Louis Ruchames, John Brown, The Making of a Revolutionary  
Richard Scheidenhelm, The Response to John Brown.