

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History

SEMESTER II YEAR 1973-74

| <u>COURSE NO.</u> | <u>COURSE TITLE</u> | <u>INSTRUCTOR</u> |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|
| 291 | A Laboratory Approach to the Study of American History | Sewell |

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course attempts to create an alternative to the traditional survey course as an introduction to the study of history. It is based ~~on~~ upon the premise that it is less important to transmit information to students than to lead them to draw their own conclusions from historical sources. It is, therefore, a course which stresses doing history rather than learning about history, and it aims at developing the students' capacities for creative and critical thought. Its method is to study intensively historical documents (diaries, manuscripts, court records, newspapers, maps, censuses, etc.) dealing with just two topics in the semester. The heart of the course lies in the weekly seminars. There are frequent short papers assigned to stimulate and focus class discussion, but no term paper or final examination.

LECTURES

Lectures are given only occasionally.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMS

6-7 short papers (3-4 pages) in the course of the semester. No exams.

GRADING SYSTEM

A-F. Grades are based primarily upon participation in seminar discussions, and to a lesser extent upon the papers.

REQUIRED READINGS

Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, eds., Salem-Village Witchcraft
Henry I. Tragle, ed., The Southampton Slave Revolt of 1831.