

The Golden Age of Piracy
HIUS 133

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Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:50
Pepper Canyon Hall 122
Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00-3:00

This upper division lecture course is an interdisciplinary study of the Golden Age of piracy in the Anglophone world. In his tale, *The Water Witch* (1830), James Fenimore Cooper noted two of the most enduring mythologies of early American history: "We have had our buccaneers on the water, and our witches on the land." While the unfortunate women of Salem have been the subject of intense scholarly scrutiny, pirates remain on the margins of historical and literary studies. This course places pirates on center stage as a lens through which to study the massive transformations of the late sixteenth to the nineteenth century that marked the early phases of what is today called "globalization." The rise and fall of global piracy correlated with a number of watershed events including the consolidation of the first British Empire, the integration of American colonial communities with global commerce, the formalization of international law, the rise of the novel, the first use of paper money in the Anglophone world, and the beginning of a local American press. This course introduces students to interdisciplinary studies and the use of primary sources. We will focus on a range of topics including global economics, international law, imperial politics, gender, literary studies, social class, journalism, and religion. Lastly, we will explore the construction of the Golden Age in historical memory in readings by James Fenimore Cooper, Edgar Allan Poe, and Washington Irving. We will also look at contemporary images of piracy in modern American culture including Disney's movie series *Pirates of the Caribbean*. The course will conclude with a reading about modern day piracy in relation to globalization.

Readings: (All books are sold at the UCSD bookstore)

- John Burnett, *Dangerous Waters*, Penguin Books (2003)
- Daniel Defoe, *The General History of the Pyrates* (edited by Manuel Schonhorn)
- John Alexander Esquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America*
- Robert Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (1986)

Suggested Readings:

- Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island 1630-1641: The Other Puritan Colony*
- Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*
- C. R. Pennell, ed., *Bandits at Sea: A Pirates Reader*
- Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*
- Russell K. Skowronek and Charles R. Ewen, eds., *X Marks the Spot*

****All other readings can be found online or provided in class**

Assignments: The assignments for this class are intended to give you a sense of the primary sources historians use to understand “The Golden Age of Piracy.” Fortunately, many of these sources have been digitized so you can see them in their original form online. For example, working with primary sources (newspapers, trial records, correspondences, and sermons) we will reconstruct the story of John Quelch, a Boston man executed for allegedly committing piracy against the Portuguese. Another assignment will ask students to follow the movements of a specific pirate captain through the Atlantic by searching through *Early American Newspapers Online*. The intention of this project is to show the impact colonial newspapers had on how the denizens of colonial communities understood their relationship to actions beyond their own communities. For the final paper, you will focus on analyzing one primary source (pre-1800) chosen from online material.

1. Assignment One: Esquemeling Response Paper (10%)
2. Assignment Two: Buccaneer Journals (10%)
3. Assignment Three: Quelch Trial (10%)
4. Assignment Four: Newspaper Trail (10%)
5. Midterm Exam: (20%)
6. Final Paper: (40%)

NOTE: You should present two copies of each written assignment, one for me and one for the course readers.

Sections: There are no sections for this course but I will arrange informal *voluntary* dinners once a week at one of the college dining halls.

Course Schedule (readings may be subject to change)

April 1 (Tuesday)

Introduction to *The Golden Age of Piracy*

*Reading: Briefly skim online: ICC International Maritime Bureau, “Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships” *Annual Report*, January 1-December 31, 2007.

Hand out of definitions.

April 3 (Thursday)

The Myth and Romance of Piracy (what we were taught as children)

April 8 (Tuesday)

Who Owns the Sea?

*Reading: Introduction to Robert Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates*, pp. 1-26. Daniel Defoe, *A General History of the Pyrates*, pp. xliii-xlvi

April 10 (Thursday)

Elizabethan Seadogs, Early Colonization and Militant Protestantism

April 15 (Tuesday)

Captain Morgan and the Pirates of the South Sea

*Reading: Alexander Esquemeling, *The Buccaneers of America* (1684) (Selections)

Assignment #1: Write a 2 to 3 page response paper about the translator's letter to the reader.

April 17 (Thursday)

The Adventures of Sir William Phips

April 22 (Tuesday)

William Dampier: Pirate/Hydrographer

*Readings: Gregory H. Nobles, "Straight Lines and Stability: Mapping the Political Order of the Frontier," *The Journal of American History*, Vol.80, no.1 (June 1993): 9-35; Search *Early English Books Online* (EEBO) for Lionel Wafer, William Dampier, Bartholomew Sharp

Assignment #2: 2 to 3 page response paper on one of the buccaneer journals

April 24 (Thursday)

The Darien Expedition and Cartography

April 29 (Tuesday)

Piracy and the Colonial Currency Crisis

*Readings: Robert Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (pp. 27-126)

May 1 (Thursday)

Pirate Ballads: *Every's Verses*

May 6 (Tuesday)

The Politics of Piracy

*Readings: Ritchie, *Captain Kidd* (pp.127-238)

May 8 (Thursday)

MIDTERM EXAM

May 13 (Tuesday)

The Story of Captain Quelch

*Reading: Read sections in *A General History of the Pirates* on law. Will hand out readings including newspapers articles, trial records, correspondences, and sermons. Search for Cotton Mather's *Faithful Warnings to Prevent Fearful Judgments* (1704) in *Early American Imprints*.

Assignment #3: List ten key events leading to the 1704 capture and execution of "Captain" John Quelch (using quotes from the primary sources).

May 15 (Thursday)

The Fall of the Pirate Nests

May 20 (Tuesday)

The General History of the Pyrates (Daniel Defoe and Cotton Mather)

*Reading: Daniel Defoe, *The General History of the Pyrates* (selections)

Assignment #4: Using newspaper articles, from *Early American Newspapers Online* try to trace the movement of one pirate captain through the Atlantic World.

May 22 (Thursday)

The General History of the Pyrates and the Rise of the Novel

May 27 (Tuesday)

The Barbary Wars

*Reading: Alan Taylor, "The Early Republic's Supernatural Economy: Treasure Seeking in the American Northeast, 1780-1830," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 38, no. 1 (Spring, 1986), pp. 6-34; Groups of students will read selections from James Fenimore Cooper's, *Red Rover*, Cooper's *The Water-Witch*, Pieces by Washington Irving, or Edgar Allan Poe, *The Gold Bug*; Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Captain Kidd's Money*

May 29 (Thursday)

The Golden Age Remembered in Gothic Style

June 3 (Tuesday)

Modern Piracy

*Reading: John Burnett, *Dangerous Waters*, Penguin Books (2003)

ICC International Maritime Bureau, "Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships" *Annual Report*, January 1-December 31, 2007.

June 5 (Thursday)

Final Thoughts

FINAL PAPER DUE (Monday, June 9)

In 10-12 pages, analyze a primary source that illuminates something about the Golden Age before 1820. You may use either *Early American Imprints* or *Early English Books Online* or *Early American Newspapers*. You must include a copy of the original with your paper.