

A History of Seafaring in the Age of Sail
HITO 178
University of California, San Diego
Winter, 2015

Professor Mark Hanna
afternoon)
Office: H&SS #4059
“Galbraith Room”
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1:15-3:00

Tuesdays, 12:00-2:50 (or all
Room: H&SS #4025,
Office Hours: Wednesday

A whale ship was my Yale College and my Harvard
-Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*

The sea is a hostile environment unfit for human habitation yet for centuries people have risked their lives to travel the oceans. What makes people take to the sea and how did they manage the dangers and difficulties of shipboard life? Life at sea is at times radically different than life on land or it can magnify the struggles we all face (food, water, social peace and cohesion). The sea is a contested space where the laws that govern nation states do not always apply. Many people took to the sea not of their own choosing but through some form of kidnapping and bondage. This course forces students to imagine existence on a whole other plane of being afar from what they are accustomed. How does one survive at sea? What kind of social world is born out of close confinement in trying conditions? Taught in conjunction with the San Diego Maritime Museum and the UCSD Special Collections Library, this course investigates life at sea from the age of discovery to the advent of the steamship. We will investigate discovery, technology, piracy, fisheries, commerce, naval conflict, and seaboard life and seaport activity.

Readings

-W. Jeffrey Bolster, *The Mortal Sea: Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail* (2012)
-Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840) (Purchase or read online)
Everything else is in Special Collections or online.

Required Trips

This course is unusual in that it requires two daylong trips away from campus that will take place on Tuesdays. You will need to work this out with other courses.

Warning! On two occasions this class will be on board actual sailing vessels at sea. If this terrifies you or you know that you are chronically seasick please take this into consideration.

Academic Honesty: Students may work in groups and are encouraged to discuss paper topics. However, they are to write their own essays. If you copy material from assigned or unassigned texts you must cite the source by using quotation marks and indicating where the material came from. Every essay can be written using assigned readings or primary source documents found among the web links on the course web site. In-class exams are closed book with no texts or crib sheets. Cheating will be dealt with according to UCSD's policy on Academic Dishonesty.

Schedule

Tuesday, January 6

The Room is a Ship: Life at Sea

Reading: Ned Ward, *The Wooden World Dissected* (1707 or 1708)

Linda Colley's "The Sea Around Us"

Assignment: Come to class prepared to imagine the classroom as resembling a ship on a two month long voyage.

Tuesday, January 13

Cartography

Reading: 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; Article by J. B. Harley and web site on the historiography of cartography.

*Supplemental Reading: Martin Bruckner: *The Geographic Revolution in Early America: Maps, Literacy, & National Identity*

ASSIGNMENT: Write 2-3 pages on a map. Bring in a copy of a map from one of the databases.

Tuesday, January 20

Ship Design and Construction

*Maritime Museum Trip One (*San Salvador* Reconstruction)

Reading: Assorted Online Readings on Ship Building and Design.

Watch videos from Maritime Museum *San Salvador* building site.

Tuesday, January 27

Fishing the Seas

*UCSD Archive Visit

Reading: Jeffrey Bolster, *The Mortal Sea*

Tuesday, February 3

The Age of Sail in Print

*UCSD Archive Visit

Reading: Choose a printed text found in UCSD's Special Collections Library on the Age of Sail (before 1860) about life at sea, ship building, nautical science, or sail handling, etc.

Assignment: Write 2-3 pages analyzing your printed text and present what you found to the class.

Tuesday, February 10

Sail Handling

*Maritime Museum Trip Two

Reading: Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840)

Tuesday, February 17

Recording Life at Sea

*UCSD Archive Visit

Reading: Special Collections Logbooks

Assignment: Write 2-3 pages analyzing a manuscript logbook from UCSD's Special Collections Library and present what you found in class.

Tuesday, February 24

Pirates!

Reading: Reading: Marcus Rediker's "Under the Banner of King Death": The Social World of Anglo-American Pirates, 1716 to 1726."

Cotton Mather's *Instructions to the Living* (1717)

Trial of Eight Persons (1718)

Captain Charles Johnson, *The General History of the Pyrates* (1724)

Assignment: Write 2-3 pages

Tuesday, March 3

Commodities

Reading: Assigned to each student.

ASSIGNMENT: Each student is in charge of one commodity (sugar, bullion, rice, etc.) and must be able to show on a world map the movement of that commodity through global markets.

Tuesday, March 10

Debating the Port of San Diego Plan

Reading: San Diego "Port for All" Plan

Assignment: Visit the Port of San Diego. Write a proposal for how San Diego can best display and teach its historic maritime heritage.

FINAL PAPERS DUE

Friday, March 13

10-12 Pages Analyzing Primary Sources from the Age of Sail