

PIRACY: A GLOBAL HISTORY

Rutgers University, New Brunswick – HST (3 Credits)

Location TBD

Class Times – TBD – 01:506:2xx

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or by appointment

Course Description

Pirates are perhaps the most villainous and fearsome enemies of civilized society. And yet they are also beloved rogues that are considered appropriate material for children's cartoons and Disney theme parks. How can the same set of people be barbarous and beloved at the same time? This seeming contradiction is at the heart of what we are going to explore in this course. Piracy in the form of raiding and theft on the sea has existed almost as long as people have been able to sail. This class consequently attempts to cover the most important manifestations of piracy in world history from Ancient Egypt till the 21st century. While we can think of piracy as merely robbery at sea, it has also taken on profound social, political and economic meanings in different societies. Moreover it has been an important framework of how different groups have engaged with each other. We are interested not just in what pirates did, but how they thought, how they organized themselves, how they were viewed by the rest of society, how pirates were suppressed, and the effect of piracy on political and the economic systems. Our study of piracy opens up new insights into the history of international commerce, international law, colonialism, political sovereignty, race, gender and globalization.



This course **fulfills the HST Requirement** of the School of Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum. Specifically it fulfills the following learning goal:
L. Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Required Texts

Angus Konstam, *Piracy: The Complete History* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008).

This is available at Barnes and Noble and on reserve at Alexander Library, all other readings will be available on Sakai

Policies and Expectations

Attendance: You are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, having read the readings for the week and prepared to discuss them. If you have a legitimate reason that forces you to miss class you need to inform me as soon as you are aware of it. You will still be expected to cover the material and meet with me to cover any material from the lecture you missed. Unexcused absences will be penalized, and more than 5 unexcused absences from class will result in a failing grade. If you are late to class or ill-prepared, this will be reflected in your class participation grade.

Academic Honesty Policy: In all the classwork, assignments, papers and examinations in this course you are expected to uphold the university's standards for academic integrity. Lapses in

academic integrity include but are not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty, and I will take steps to address academic misconduct. As you study for exams or start writing your papers please go back and review Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>) Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent. If you have any questions feel free to speak to me.

Electronic Devices: All cell phones must be turned off or on silent (not vibrate) during class. Laptops and tablets are not permitted in class except by special permission from the instructor. Use of Facebook, Email or other non-class related applications during class time will also be penalized.

Evaluation

Paper: An essay prompt and further information will be provided two weeks before the paper is due. The paper should be 5-7 pages (double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1 inch margins), and should use information from lectures, discussions and the reading materials from the course. Papers must be uploaded onto Sakai promptly by 9:00am on the due date. Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade each day they are late (so from A to A- or B- to C+). Extensions will only be permitted for valid emergencies and must be requested before the assignment is due. Further information regarding expectations and grading for these papers will be provided in class.

Mid-Term and Final Exams: Will consist of a map quiz, identifications and short essays. Make-up exams will not be provided except in the case of a verified medical emergency.

Class Participation: You are expected to come to class everyday having completed the readings listed for that week and to thoughtfully engage with the readings and your classmates during class time. Every week you will also post a blog entry (1-2 paragraph response to the readings) and one discussion question based on the readings for the following week. Blogs/questions must be posted by 5:00pm on the Sunday preceding that week (for example: the blog responding to the readings for Week 3 should be posted on Sunday, January 29th). To ensure a diverse group of participants the class will be divided up into groups and each day one group will be particularly responsible for raising questions and responding to the readings in class.

Grading Breakdown		Grading Scale		
Class Participation	20%	Percentage Totals	Grade	Credit Points
Paper	25%	89.5-100%	A	4.0
Mid-Term Exam	25%	84.5-89.49%	B+	3.5
Final Exam	30%	79.5-84.49%	B	3.0
		74.5-79.49%	C+	2.5
		69.5-74.49%	C	2.0
		59.5-69.49%	D	1.0
		0-59.49%	F	0

This syllabus is subject to change, if any changes are made you will be immediately notified.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 - Introduction

1. Introduction

Week 2 – The Ancient Mediterranean

2. The Origins of Piracy: Ancient Egypt and Greece
 - Konstam, Ch. 1
 - Robert Fitzgerald, *Homer: The Odyssey* 14: pp. 222-234, 17: 424-433.
3. *Hostis Humani Generis*: Piracy in Ancient Rome
 - Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives* vol. 2. Pompey, pp. 24-30, 173-193.
 - Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives* vol. 7. Caesar, pp. 445-447.

Week 3 – Ancient Asia

4. Trading in Violence: The Early Indian Ocean world
 - *The Book of Marco Polo*, 2: p. 389.
 - *The Travels of Ibn Battūta*, A.D. 1325-1354, 4: p. 808.
5. Dwarf Bandits: Wo-Kou Pirates
 - “Japan’s Foreign Relations 1200 to 1392 A.D.: A Translation from ‘Zenrin Kokuhoki’”

Week 4 – The Medieval Mediterranean

6. In the Crusader’s Wake
 - Konstam, Ch. 3
7. Barbary Piracy
 - William Okely, *Ebenezer: Or a Small Monument of Great Mercy*, [1675]

Week 5 – The Barbary Coast

8. Economies of Ransom: Barbary Captivity
 - Konstam, Ch. 4
9. “To the Shores of Tripoli”
 - Narrative of Joshua Gee while He Was Captive in Algeria, pp. 7-30
 - Treaty between the Kingdom of Morrocco and the U.S.A. [1786]

Week 6 – Privateers or Pirates

10. Maritime Mercenaries: The Buccaneers of the Caribbean
 - Konstam, Ch. 5
11. Empire by Other Means
 - Exquemelin, Alexander O. *The Buccaneers of America* [1678] – Selections
 - John Hampden, ed., *Francis Drake, Privateer*, pp. 96-101

Week 7 – Raiding the Indian Ocean

12. The Greatest Pirate in History?: Henry Every
 - Documents from the Case of Henry Every
13. The Most Notorious Pirate?: Captain Kidd
 - *The arraignment, tryal, and condemnation of Captain William Kidd* [1701] – Selections

Week 8 – Pirates of the Caribbean

14. Midterm Examination

15. The “Golden Age” of Piracy

- Konstam, Ch. 6

Week 9 – Communists and Suffragettes on the Ocean?

16. Beneath the Jolly Roger

- Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Pirates*, “Edward Teach” and “Stede Bonnet”

17. Women on the Deck: Female Pirates in the Golden Age

- Johnson, ‘The Life of Anne Bonny and Mary Read’ in *General History of the Pyrates*

Week 10 – Pirate Utopias, Pirate Politics

18. Libertalia

- Cotton Mather, *The Vial Poured Out upon the Sea*, [1726]
- Johnson, ‘Of Captain Mission,’ in *General History of the Pyrates*

19. Piracy and Politics in the Indian Ocean

- Lakshmi Subramanian, ‘Of Pirates and Potentates’

Week 11 – Bedouin of the Sea

20. The Pirate Coast

- Buckingham, *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia*, [1829] pp. 356-8
- Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs*, [1840] Chapter 5

21. A Treaty of Perpetual Peace

- **No Readings Paper is Due**

Week 12 – Pirate Federations

22. Raiders of the South China Sea

- Konstam, Ch. 9

23. The Pirate Queen

- Fanny Lavoit, *A Lady’s Captivity* – Selections

Week 13 – Piracy and Colonialism

24. Pirates as Parasites

- Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java*, [1817] – Selections

25. Piracy and the Rise of Colonial Empire

- Letters of James Brooke Vol. I: pp. 223-235

Week 14 – Piracy Today

26. Somali Piracy

- Konstam, Ch. 10

27. Who Profits from Piracy?

- Podcast – “I am not a Pirate” *This American Life* No. 616

Week 15 – Conclusion

28. Conclusion

- Konstam, Ch. 11 and Conclusion