

## PIRACY: A GLOBAL HISTORY

Rutgers University, New Brunswick – 3 Credits

Asynchronous Online Course – 01:506:220

Canvas Site - <https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/66832>

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Office Hours: Thursday 1:00-2:30pm  
and by appointment (Held on Zoom)

Office Hours: Wednesday 10:00-11:00am  
and by appointment (Held on Zoom)

### 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 21<sup>st</sup> century. 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 semester the course will be taught online and asynchronously, which means you do not need to view lectures or do activities at any specific time during the week. You are expected to view lectures and complete activities within the assigned week for those course materials.



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

This course also counts toward the minor/certificate in "**Law and History.**"  
No Prerequisites and no prior experience in history courses necessary

### Required Texts

Angus Konstam, *Piracy: The Complete History* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008), ISBN-10: 0762773952; ISBN-13: 978-0762773954.

Robert J. Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007) ISBN-13: 978-0393927887; ISBN-10: 0393927881.

These are available at [Barnes and Noble](#) and on [reserve](#) at Alexander Library. I am sorry that these are not available as e-books but I hope that some time not looking at a screen will be a relief. All other readings will be available on Canvas.

## Evaluation

*5 Quizzes:* Five times during the semester you will complete a short quiz. The quiz will consist of multiple choice (or similar) questions about individuals, groups, events, and places covered in the previous weeks' course materials. Quizzes may include map questions, primary source IDs and image IDs. Since you have some freedom in when to take these quizzes, makeups will not be provided except in the case of a verified medical emergency.

*Analysis Exercises:* Six weeks during the semester you are required to contribute to a discussion forum, a collaborative annotation of a document, or some other activity that engages with the course materials. These should be substantive analytical engagements with the ideas in the text and discussions. Comments/responses like "I agree" or "I think you're wrong" are not sufficient as we are trying to approximate the quality of a real discussion and debate in class. More information on your responsibilities in each activity and grading rubric will be posted on Canvas.

*Final Paper:* An essay question and further information will be provided several weeks before the paper is due. The paper should be 5-7 pages, and should use information from lectures, discussions and the reading materials from the course. Papers must be uploaded onto Canvas promptly by 9:00am on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. 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.

*Class Participation:* Since this is a fully asynchronous course, there are no classes to attend at any specific time. However you are expected to view all of the recorded class lectures, podcasts and readings during the week in which they are assigned. Some lectures will include interactive activities like discussion boards, quizzes, and interactive videos that you are also expected to complete. I apologize for the monitoring, but Canvas already tracks the details of what files you have viewed and for how long. Your participation grade will be based on this data.

Grading Breakdown		Grading Scale		
Class Participation	15%	Percentage Totals	Grade	Credit Points
6 Analysis Exercises (5% each)	30%	89.5-100%	A	4.0
5 Quizzes (5% each)	25%	84.5-89.49%	B+	3.5
Paper	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, September 1-6

1. Introductions

Week 2 – The Ancient Mediterranean, September 7-13

2. The Pre-History of Piracy: Ancient Egypt and Greece
  - Angus Konstam, *Pirates the Complete History*, Ch. 1, pp. 10-22
  - Canvas: Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Ch. 1
3. *Hostis Humani Generis*: Piracy in Ancient Rome
  - Canvas: Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives*, Caesar, pp. 445-447; Pompey, pp. 173-193

Week 3 – The Middle Ages, September 14-20

4. Vikings
  - Canvas: Three Sources on the Ravages of the Northmen in Frankland, c. 843 – 912
5. Raiders of the Holy Land
  - Konstam, Ch. 3, pp. 37-72

### **ANALYSIS EXERCISE 1 – Religion and Piracy**

Week 4 – The Barbary Coast , September 21-27

6. Barbary Piracy
  - Konstam, Ch. 4, pp. 73-94
  - Canvas: Khalid Berkaoui, *White Women Captives*, Appendices
7. Economies of Ransom
  - Antony, pp. 20-32, 94-101 (Docs 10-12)

### **Quiz 1**

Week 5 – Pirates and Conquistadors, September 28-October 4

8. Sea Dogs, Sea Beggars and the Slave Trade
  - Konstam, Ch. 5, pp. 95-149
9. Buccaneers
  - Antony, pp 61-67, (Docs 2-3)

### **ANALYSIS EXERCISE 2 – Pirate or Hero**

Week 6 – The Law of Booty, October 5-11

10. Wo-Kou: Piracy in East Asia
  - Robert Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, pp. 32-39, 108-114
11. Trading in Violence: The Early Indian Ocean world
  - Canvas: *The Book of Marco Polo*, p. 380-91, *The Travels of Ibn Battūta*, extracts.

### **Quiz 2**

Week 7 – The Mughal’s Treasure, October 12-18

12. The Most Notorious Pirate?

- Konstam, Ch. 7 The Pirate Round, pp. 249-271
- Antony, Doc. 6, Captain William Kidd’s royal commission, pp. 75-78

13. The Greatest Pirate in History?: Henry Every

- Antony, Doc. 5, John Dann’s Testimony Against Henry Every, pp. 70-75

**ANALYSIS EXERCISE 3 – Law and Piracy (Hypothes.is)**

Week 8 – Pirates of the Caribbean, October 19-25

14. The “Golden Age” of Piracy

- Konstam, Ch. 6, The Golden Age, pp. 150-248

15. The Sailor’s Revenge

**Quiz 3**

Week 9 – Gender and Freedom on the Ocean, October 26-November 1

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

- Antony, “Life of Mary Read,” pp. 85-91; “The Women Among the Boys,” 153-166

17. Libertalia

- Antony, Docs 4 and 9, pp. 67-70, 91-94; “Hydrarchy and Libertalia” pp. 166-179
- Canvas: Johnson, *A General History of the Pirates*, ‘Of Captain Misson,’

**ANALYSIS EXERCISE 4 – Gender and Piracy**

Week 10 – Pirates’ Rule, November 2-8

18. Raiders of the South China Sea

- Konstam, Ch. 9, pp. 288-302

19. The Pirate Queen

- Antony, Docs 16-22, pp. 114-133

**ANALYSIS EXERCISE 5 – Poverty and Piracy (Hypothes.is)**

Week 11 – Piracy and the Rise of Colonialism, November 9-15

20. The Pirate Coast

- Canvas: Buckingham, *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia*, [1829] pp. 356-8

21. A Treaty of Perpetual Peace

- Canvas: Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs*, [1840] Chapter 5

Week 12 – Piratical Politics, November, 16-22

22. Imperialism as Piracy

- Antony: Docs. 23-28, pp. 134-152, “Discourse without Discussion,” 179-188

23. The White Rajah

**Quiz 4**

Week 13 – Thanksgiving Week, November 23-29

24. Tuesday, November 24 – **NO CLASS, HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

- Start working on your final paper

Week 14 – Somali Piracy, November 30-December 6

25. Somali Piracy

- Konstam, Ch. 10, pp. 303-310

26. Who Profits from Piracy?

- Podcast – “I am not a Pirate” *This American Life* No. 616
- **ANALYSIS EXERCISE 6 – Class and Piracy**

Week 15 – Piracy Today, December 7-10

27. Digital Piracy

- Work on your Final Papers

28. Conclusions

- **Quiz 5**

### **FINAL PAPERS DUE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 9:00AM**

#### **Policies and Expectations**

*Technical Issues:* Student **must regularly check Canvas and their Rutgers email** accounts, important information on assignments and class activities will be emailed to you. If you are having technical difficulties with any of the course materials please contact me as soon as possible. **If you do not have easy access to a laptop/desktop computer**, if your internet connection is slow or unreliable, or if you do not have a quiet space to do your class work please contact me so that we can make the necessary accommodations.

*Learning Accommodations:* If you have any learning disabilities or need other accommodations you must register with Disability Services and inform the instructor by the second week of class. See information here: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

*Academic Integrity:* In all course work you are expected to uphold the university’s standards for academic integrity, this is especially true in an online learning environment. Please review the University’s new policies for academic integrity here: <https://nbprovost.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-students>. Lapses in academic integrity include but are not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty – these will not be tolerated.

*Copyright and Content Distribution:* These videocasts and podcasts are protected by copyright laws. The copyright ownership of the videocasts and podcasts vests in either the Professor teaching the course, or to Rutgers University to the extent applicable. The copyright owner of the videocasts and podcasts grants you a non-exclusive and limited license only to replay them for your own personal use during the course. Sharing them with others (including other students), reproducing, distributing, or posting any copyright protected part of the videocasts or podcasts elsewhere—including but not limited to any internet site—will be treated as a copyright violation and an offense against the honesty provisions of the Code of Student Conduct.

*Turnitin:* Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (via Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com

reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

### **Student wellness resources**

*Rutgers University-wide COVID-19 Information:* <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/>

*Just In Case Web App:* <http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

*Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA):* (848) 932-1181

3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 ([www.vpva.rutgers.edu](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu))

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

*Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS):* (848) 932-7884

17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counselingservices/counseling/>

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professionals within Rutgers Health Services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

*Scarlet Listeners:* (732) 247-5555

<https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/scarletlisteners>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

*Report a Concern:* <http://health.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help>

*Basic Needs Security:* Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Also, if you are comfortable doing so, please notify the professor so that she can help however she can and connect you with campus resources.

*Office of the Dean of Students:* <http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu>

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848-932-2300

deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu

*Rutgers Student Food Pantry:* <http://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/food>  
39 Union Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
848-932-5500  
ruoffcampus@echo.rutgers.edu