The University of Western Ontario Department of History 2014-2015

History 2188B:

Pirates & Piracy on the World's Seas and in the Public Imagination



Instructor: Michael Dove Email: mdove2@uwo.ca

Office: Lawson Hall 1202 Location: SSC 3014

Office Hours: Monday, 12:00pm - 2:00pm Class Time: Wednesday, 12:30pm - 2:30 pm

**PLEASE NOTE:

THIS IS A DRAFT SYLLABUS; READINGS AND TOPICS MAY CHANGE SLIGHTLY PRIOR TO THE START OF THE FALL TERM

Description:

Pirates have been the scourge of the seas since maritime trade and commerce began. From its classical origins to the modern day, piracy has had a significant economic, political, social and cultural effect on societies. The Jolly Roger, Long John Silver, the "prostitute pirate" Lady Cheng, Blackbeard, and Captain Jack Sparrow have informed popular depictions of piracy and stirred romantic visions of freedom, adventure, and buried treasure. This course seeks to separate myth from reality by tracing the history of pirates and piracy from antiquity through the medieval and early modern pasts to the present.

Among the chief questions explored throughout the course will be what constituted piracy in a given era; why people 'turned pirate'; what a pirate's life was like; and why pirates continue to generate public fascination. Changes in the definition of piracy, from violent robbery at sea to theft and murder of any kind, were driven by major societal transitions such as the rise of nation-states and their projection of political, military and commercial power through permanent navies. Privateering or state-sanctioned piracy, land versus sea-based piracy, as well as bootlegging and terrorism, will be discussed. Were pirates radicals or democrats? The motives for becoming a pirate and the nature of that reality will be discerned through examining themes of race, class, gender, labour, sex, and religion, as well as the democratic ideals of fraternity, equality, and liberty.

Pirates and piracy will be examined through an interdisciplinary lens, framing questions and using methodologies from history as well as archaeology, film studies, folklore, law, literature, sociology/criminology, visual arts, and music.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will have:

- an understanding of the origins, causes and major periods of piracy in world history;
- identified significant events and personalities in the history of global piracy;
- assessed the impact and enduring relevance of piracy on the economic, political, military, social, and cultural history of world societies;
- separated myth from reality through examining the depiction of piracy in popular culture (fiction, folklore, literature, film);
- a better understanding of how to critically assess both primary and secondary sources on the extensive history of global piracy;
- explored themes relating to the history of piracy through a variety of disciplinary approaches and methods;
- further developed highly transferable skills of critical thinking and both oral and written communication.

2.0 lecture hours, 0.5 course.

Required Text(s):

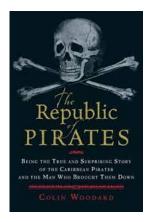
Benerson Little, *Pirate Hunting: The Fight Against Pirates, Privateers, and Sea Raiders From Antiquity to the Present* (Potomac, 2010)

[MAIN COURSE TEXT]



Colin Woodard, The Republic of Pirates: Being the True and Surprising Story of the Caribbean Pirates and the Man Who Brought Them Down (Houghton Mifflin, 2007)

[BOOK REVIEW]



Evaluation:

Review Essay (6-8 pages) 30%

Midterm Exam 30%

Final Exam 40%

Lecture & Reading Schedule:

Week 1: 07 January

Welcome to the Course!

No readings.



Week 2: 14 January

Pirates & Piracy: An Introduction

Reading: Little, "Of Black Flags and Bloody Banners," pp.

1-15.



Week 3: 21 January

Rovers of Antiquity

Reading: Little, "In the Age of Ancient

Empires," pp. 35-45; "Of Laurel

Leaves and Pirate Princes," pp. 47-69.





Week 4: 28 January

Medieval Corsairs: Moorish and Viking Invasions

Reading: Little, "The Scourge from the North: Standing

Against the Norsemen, 780-1066," pp. 71-86' "Of

Faith, Galleys, and Greed: Defeating the

Mediterranean Corsairs, 476-1492," pp. 111-131.

Week 5: 04 February

Sir Francis Drake and the Elizabethan Seadogs

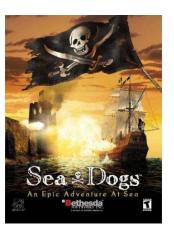
Reading: Little, "Spanish Galleons and Portuguese Carracks:

Plunderers Fighting Plunderers, 1492-1654," pp. 133-

151.

Week 6: 11 February

MIDTERM EXAM (in class)



READING WEEK!!!

(16-20 February)



Week 7: 25 February

Blackbeard & Piracy's 'Golden Age'

Reading: Little, "The Real Pirates of the

Caribbean: Pirate Hunting in the "Golden Age," 1655-1725,"

pp. 169-200.

Week 8: 04 March

The Female Buccaneer

Reading: Charles Johnson, Chapter VII: "The

Lives of Mary Read and Anne Bonny,"

A general history of the robberies and murders of the most notorious pyrates... (London, 1724),

pp. 118-134.

[WESTERN LIBRARIES ONLINE]





Week 9: 11 March

Captain Kidd & Sea Bandits of Atlantic Canada

Reading: Podcast: Dan Conlin, Curator of Marine History,

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Halifax, N.S.

http://www.canadashistory.ca/Magazine/Online-

Extension/Articles/Pirates (10:06)

"Pirates and Privateers," CBC's Land & Sea, 26 August

2012 Episode (21:49).

http://www.cbc.ca/landandsea/2012/08/pirates-and-privateers.html

Week 10: 18 March

Raiders of Africa's Barbary Coast

Reading: Little, "From the Mediterranean to

the North Sea: The War Against Pirates and Corsairs, 1493-1830,"

pp. 201-220.





Week 11: 25 March

Pirates in Chinese and Southeast Asian Waters

Reading: Little, "Pirates, Rebels, and Warriors: Pirate Hunting in the

East, 694 BC-AD 1896," pp. 235-250.

Robert J. Antony, "Bloodthirsty Pirates? Violence and Terror on the South China Sea in Early Modern Times," Journal of Early Modern History. Vol. 16, No. 6 (2012), pp.

481-501. **[OWL SAKAI]**

Week 12: 01 April

Modern-Day Hives of Piracy

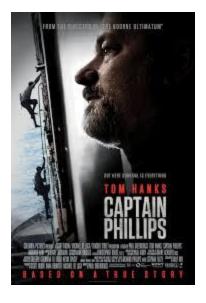
Reading: Little, Ships, SEALS, and Satellites: The Return of

the Pirate Hunters," pp. 269-286.

Max Boot, "Pirates, Then and Now: How Piracy Was

Defeated in the Past and Can Be Again," Foreign

Affairs 88, No. 4 (2009), pp. 94-107. **[OWL SAKAI]**





Week 13: 08 April

Myth, Folklore and Reality: Pirates in Popular Culture, from *Treasure Island* to *The Pirates of*

the Caribbean

Reading: Little, "Of Blind Eyes and Opportunity," pp. 153-168.

Howard Pyle, Chapter I: "Buccaneers and Marooners of the Spanish Main," *Howard Pyle's Book of Pirates:*

Fact, Fiction and Fancy...(New York, 1921).

[WESTERN LIBRARIES ONLINE]

