

Fall, 2013

Anthropology 603

Seafaring Life and Maritime Communities 1450-1950

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Office hours: Friday 1-5 p.m. or by appointment



Seafaring is among the most complex and labor-intensive of all human endeavors, and those who follow the sea must adapt to a life of privation and peril. The era between 1450 and 1950 saw the expansion of seafaring to a worldwide scale. This seminar-format course will use primary documents, archaeological evidence, contemporary images, and scholarly studies (and, in three instances, 20th-century cinematic interpretations of sailor's lives) to investigate the mariners who sailed the ships: their origins, work routines, living conditions, common attitudes, and varied experiences. The course will also seek to understand broader trends in maritime communities and global seafaring in the early-modern era.

Week 1. Introduction to Seafaring Life and Maritime Communities.

1. Objectives of seminar, course requirements, assignment of seminar topics. [Crisman]
2. **Special Feature: *BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN*** (or, Abused sailors lead a proletarian revolt; 1925, 67 minutes).

Week 2. Profiling a Profession: Group Identity, Origins, Gender, Class and Race of Seafaring Populations.

1. "To Sea Once More": The Group Identity of Mariners (Appearance, Speech, Behavior, and Motivations).
2. Passengers, Pirates, Wives, and Sailors: Women at Sea.
3. Assimilation and Discrimination: The Multi-Ethnic, Multi-Racial Nature of Seafaring Communities.

Week 3. Shipboard Hierarchy, Living Quarters, and Work Routines.

1. Patterns of Shipboard Hierarchy, Occupational Organization, and Discipline in the early-Modern Era.

2. Divisions of Shipboard Living and Working Space as Seen in the Documentary and Archaeological Record.
3. “Stamp the Capstan ‘Round””: Daily Work Routines on Sailing Ships (presentation to include discussion of music as a tool for synchronizing group labor).



Week 4. The Diet and Health of the Sailor.

1. Scourge of Sailors: The Causes and Treatments of Scurvy, Yellow Jack and Other Diseases or Injuries of Mariners.
2. Pipe All Hands to Dinner: Archaeological and Documentary Evidence of the Shipboard Diet: Storage, Preparation and Consumption of Food.
3. Waste Disposal and Hygienic Practices.

Week 5. Deprivation and Sensuality, Life and Death.

1. Sing Ho! for the Pipe and Bowl: The Sailor’s Shipboard Diversions and Comforts.
2. “A Trip Ashore, He Does Adore”: Interactions Between Sailors and Shore-Side Communities.
3. *Memento Mori*: Attitudes towards Death and Remembrance in Seafaring Communities.

Week 6. To the Ends of the Earth: European Mariners of the 15th-17th Centuries.

1. Over the Edge: Sailors on Voyages of Discovery and Trade: 1450-1650.
2. Ambassadors of Change: The Role of Seafarers in the Worldwide Exchange of Flora, Fauna, Technology, and Knowledge.
3. Evidence of Crew and Passenger Life from VOC Shipwrecks.

Week 7. Archaeological Clues to Seafaring Life.

1. Pathology of a Profession: Studies of Human Remains from Shipwrecks.
2. **Special Feature: CAPTAIN BLOOD** (or, Pirate life as it should have been, with Errol Flynn and Olivia de Haviland; 1935, 119 minutes).

Week 8. Bloodthirsty Pirate, Menial Laborer, Noble Proletariat.

1. Narratives of the Most Notorious Pyrates: Fact and Fiction.
2. **MUTINY!** : Famous Incidents from the Capitalist-Proletariat Struggle on the High Seas.
3. Gentle Lad, Merry Mischief-Maker, Sage Observer, Drunkard, Buffoon and Brawler: Contemporary Images of the Sailor. [Crisman]

Week 9. Jack Tar the Seagoing Warrior: Naval Life in the Age of Sail.

1. The Experience of Battle in the Era of the Broadside.
2. Press Gang and Rendezvous: Manning the Wooden Walls from the 16th to the Early 19th Centuries.

3. Forming the Upper Crust: The Royal Navy and U.S. Navy Officer Corps.

**Week 10. The Sea Harvesters: Fishermen and Whalers.**

1. Fishermen and Fishing Communities in the 18th and 19th Centuries.
2. “Blubber Boilers”: Manning and Work Routines on 19th-Century American Whalers.
3. Occupational Therapy: Arts and Handicrafts of the Sailor.

Week 11. “Seafaring” on the Inland Waters of North America.

1. Freshwater Salts: The Lake and Canal Sailors of the 19th Century.
2. Mirror of the Times: Work, Race, Class, and Gender on the Western River Steamboats.
3. “O Tale of Woe!”: The Influence of Fatal Steamboat Accidents on American Travel, Politics, and Society. [Crisman]

Week 12. Booming Times, Changing Technology.

1. Temporary Mariners: The Variable Lot of 19th-Century Passengers.
2. Temperance, Finding God, and the ‘Red Register’: Efforts to Improve the Lives of 19th-Century Sailors.
3. Engineers, Stokers and Sailors in the New Age of Steam, Iron, and Coal.

Week 13. Seafaring Experience in the First Half of the 20th Century.

1. Sailors in the New Steel Navies of the Early 20th Century.
2. **Special Feature: *THE CRUEL SEA*** (based on the novel by Nicholas Monserrat, who served on R.N. corvettes during World War II; 1953, 121 minutes).

Attendance of all classes and active participation in discussions are strongly encouraged. Chronic unexcused absences will result in a lower grade.



Course Requirements

1) Seminar Presentations and Discussions (40% and 10%, respectively, of final grade)

During the semester each student will be assigned several seminar topics to research and present in class (there are 30 seminar topics available; the number you are assigned will depend upon the size of the class). Presentations should be about 40-45 minutes in length, followed by 10 minutes of questions and discussion. Prepare and distribute a bibliography of the sources consulted for your seminar presentation (*make sure it has the presentation title, your name, and that the professor gets a copy*). Use of visual and auditory aids such as Powerpoint™ projections, photocopied handouts, chalkboard illustrations, slides, musical selections, and interpretive dances is strongly encouraged. A concertina is available for sea shanty singers.

Seminar presentations will be graded on the basis of their thoroughness, organization, and clarity, as well as their inclusion of illustrations (where appropriate) and the distribution of a bibliography of sources consulted in preparing the presentation.

2) Project 1. Read and review of a primary account of seafaring life. (10% of final grade)

Select an original journal or memoir describing a voyage, a series of voyages, or a career at sea (see the Hakluyt Society publications for examples). Your selection must be approved by Dr. Crisman beforehand. Prepare a 6 to 8 page review (plus citations and bibliography) that provides a brief historical context for the account and summarizes the book's contents, highlighting references to seafaring life and maritime communities. This might include, but does not have to be limited to, the seminar themes listed in your syllabus. What does this account tell us about contemporary maritime society, shipboard life, routines, and material culture? What is the writer's viewpoint – officer, ordinary sailor, or passenger? What motivated the author to write this account? How reliable does it appear to be? And, how useful is it likely to be for nautical archaeologists?

Be scholarly and informative, yet succinct. Reference specific pages in your text. Maps or tables summarizing voyages, vessel types, duties, or other types of data are welcome. Be sure to follow my 'Guidelines for Term Papers'! Begin looking for your book Week 1. Complete selection and approval by Week 3. Review due by **5 p.m. on Friday, October 18, 2013**. Late papers will receive a lower grade.

3) Project 2. The term paper. (40% of final grade)

Research, write, edit, and submit a professional, publishable-quality term paper on a subject that relates to seafaring life and maritime communities between 1450 and 1950. The first step, after selecting a topic and researching sources, will be to prepare a *three page* term paper proposal modeled on a thesis proposal; in the proposal you will state the nature and importance of the topic, discuss previous research and potential sources, outline your plan for analysis of the data, and summarize the significance of the proposed research. A *separate* bibliography of primary and

secondary sources that you intend to use in preparing the term paper must be included. The term paper proposal is due by **5 p.m. on Friday, September 27, 2013.**

The term paper text can be no longer than 20 pages (12-point font, double spaced); citations, bibliography, illustrations, and appendices do not count as the 20 pages. The paper should adhere to the requirements and recommendations provided in my “Guidelines for Writing Your Term Paper” handout. The paper is to be submitted on or before **5 p.m., Friday, December 6, 2013.** Submitting your paper after this date, unless you have an compelling excuse for the delay, will result in a lower grade.

My paper grading criteria are as follows: (“A”) research, analysis, writing, and citation are professional and with minimal editing the paper could be published as a journal article or book chapter; (“B”) paper is good in most respects, but due to shortcomings in one or more areas would require significant editing before publication would be possible; (“C”) paper is at lowest levels of acceptability, and would require major new research or re-writing to achieve publishable standards; (“D”) paper falls below lowest levels of acceptability in research, analysis, writing, and citation; (“F”) paper fails to meet all professional standards, or the professor has found evidence of plagiarism.

- **Please note:** I read term papers carefully, which means I read them slowly. It is possible that I may not be able to read your paper and grade it before the deadline to turn in the Fall, 2013 grades (December 16); if this occurs you will receive a temporary “Incomplete” until the paper is graded and I can submit a “Change of Grade” form. Do not be alarmed by an “Incomplete” unless you failed to turn in your paper. If you need to get the final grade on your transcript by December, 2013 (for job or graduate school applications, for example), please let me know when you submit the paper for grading.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact the Office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities in Room 126 of the Student Services Building. The telephone number is 845-1637.

Academic Integrity Statement:

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

Any questions about this?

See the Student Honor Council Rules and Procedures on the web at <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>

Texas A&M Anthropology Department Diversity Statement

Respect for cultural and human biological diversity is a core concept of Anthropology. In this course, each voice in has something of value to contribute to our discussions. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by your fellow students and instructor, and refrain from derogatory comments about other individuals, cultures, groups, or viewpoints. The Anthropology Department supports the Texas A&M University commitment to diversity, and welcomes individuals of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, disabilities, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities, geographical locations, languages, military experience, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences (See <http://diversity.tamu.edu/>).

Fall, 2013 Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
1)	August 30	Introduction, course requirements. Movie: <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> .
2)	September 6	Profiling a Profession: Identity, Origins, Gender, Class, and Race.
3)	September 13	Shipboard Hierarchy, Quarters, and Work Routines. ● Project 1 book selected and approved.
4)	September 20	The Diet and Health of the Sailor.
5)	September 27	Deprivation and Sensuality, Life and Death. ● Project 2 (term paper) proposal due.
6)	October 4	To the Ends of the Earth: European Mariners 15th-17th C.
7)	October 11	Archaeological Clues to Seafaring Life. Movie: <i>Captain Blood</i> .
8)	October 18	Pirate, Laborer, Proletariat. ● Project 1 paper due at 5 p.m.
9)	October 25	Jack Tar the Warrior: Naval Life in the Age of Sail.
10)	November 1	The Sea Harvesters: Fishermen and Whalers.
11)	November 8	“Seafaring” on the Inland Waters of North America.
12)	November 15	Booming Times, Changing Technology.
13)	December 2 (Mon)	Seafaring Experience in the First Half of the 20th Century. Movie: <i>The Cruel Sea</i> .
	December 6	● Project 2 (Term Paper) due at 5 p.m.

