

WOH1432

Pirates & Power: A Global History

Professor Matthew Blake Strickland
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Office Hours

T/Th 1:40-2:40
FLI 233

Lecture Time & Location

TR Period 4 (10:40-11:30)
TUR L005

Course TA and Discussion Sections

Alexander McNeff
amcneff@ufl.edu

TBA

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A colorful map called "A True Chart of Pirate Treasure of Florida." The map depicts Florida, pirates, ships, treasure, and other images associated with piracy.

Course Description

"Every Man has a Vote in Affairs of Moment; has equal title to the fresh Provisions, or strong Liquors, at any Time seized, and use of them at Pleasure, unless a Scarcity make it necessary, for the good of all, to Vote a Retrenchment."

In popular imagination, pirates are most often depicted as robbers, murderers, and outlaws whose violent actions and plundering challenged established power structures. But as the excerpt above--extracted from the "Articles aboard Capt. Bartholomew Roberts' Royal Fortune"**--demonstrates, pirates abided by their own set of morals and rules. While their exterior actions clearly conflicted with habitual definitions of justice (such as the laws of empires, international law, etc.), an examination of the ulterior logic behind pirates' actions and their social organization reveals alternative understandings of justice and uncovers particular power dynamics within pirate communities. This course therefore raises a series of questions around the roles that justice and power played in shaping pirate communities and their actions across time and space. What motivated men and women to engage in pirate activities? Were pirates pariahs, or were they vigilantes seeking justice against tyrant monarchs? Can pirate crews be classified as democratic? What are the similarities and differences between those classified as pirates during the "Golden Age of Piracy," and contemporary pirate-like activities off the coast of East Africa? And to what extent is it accurate to use the term "piracy" to describe contemporary phenomena that circumvent copyrights and membership fees, such as online streaming and file sharing (Torrent, Sci-Hub, etc.)? This course examines these questions in a global framework, from the Ancient World to our own contemporary times.

*“Articles aboard Capt. Bartholomew Roberts’ Royal Fortune” (1720) in: Robert J. Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail* (Norton, 2007), 92.

Required Texts

Robert J. Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail* (Norton, 2007) ISBN-13: 978-0393927887

Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Global Piracy and the High Seas, 1500-1750* 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2015) ISBN-13: 978-0765638427

Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age* (Beacon, 2005) ISBN-13: 978-0807050255

Other required readings are listed in the course schedule below and will be available through Canvas.

Course Grading Policy

Attendance/Participation (10%)

Map Assignments (10% total / 5% each)

Primary Source Analysis (20% total / 10% each)

Midterm Exam (20%)

Capstone Project – Preliminary Steps (10%)

Capstone Project – Analytical Paper (30%)

Participation (10%):

Attendance: You are expected to attend all scheduled meetings, complete all the assigned readings, participate in discussion, and behave in a respectable and collegial manner. Attendance will be taken in all discussion sections. It is also important to arrive to class on time. Punctuality is a show of respect for your instructor and classmates, and it is important not just in class but in a job and your eventual career. Guidelines for excused absences can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#absencestext>

Readings: Please come to each discussion section having completed the assigned readings for that week. “To complete the readings” means allowing yourself sufficient time both to read through the assigned materials and to think about them. Please bring all assigned readings to class on the day for which the reading has been assigned.

Discussion: Active participation is essential for the success of this course. Bear in mind that “active participation” means asking good questions as well as proposing good answers. You are strongly encouraged to bring questions about the readings to class.

Map Assignments (10% total / 5% each):

You will complete two map assignments over the course of the semester. One will be on the Mediterranean basin, and another will be on the Atlantic Ocean. These will be due on Canvas on **Friday, January 30** and **Friday, 4/17** by 11:59pm on those dates.

Primary Source Analysis (20% total / 10% each):

In these short papers (500–750 words each) students will examine primary sources from the course. One of these sources should be from materials in the Library Special Collections. These papers will be **due Friday, February 6 and Friday, March 27** on Canvas by 11:59pm

Midterm Exam (20%):

The in-class midterm exam will take place on **Thursday, March 12**. Details to come.

Capstone Project – Preliminary Steps (10%):

This will be a building block towards the final essay. Students will identify and clearly indicate what specific work of fiction or popular culture element with which they plan to work. They will also indicate the relevant course material (readings and historical materials in Special Collections) that will help them analyze this work. Students will then write a preliminary description of the primary source material. The assignment is **due on Canvas Friday, April 3** by 11:59pm.

Capstone Project – Analytical Paper (30%):

For this assignment, you are asked to produce an analytical essay (1250–1500 words) contrasting popular depictions of piracy against historical materials. Students will select a work of fiction (novel, movie, TV show, play) OR elements of popular culture (maps, advertising materials, broadsides) and analyze it/them in light of the semester-long interactions with readings, lectures, and primary source materials. Detailed instructions will be provided. The assignment is **due on Canvas Friday, April 24** by 11:59pm.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Number Grade
A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
E	59-0

All non-whole number grades .5 and above will be rounded up (for example, an 89.5 will be rounded up to a 90)

See the UF Catalog's [Grades and Grading Policies](#) for information on how UF assigns grade points.

Note: A minimum grade of C is required to earn General Education credit.

University Assessment Policies

Requirements for make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the [Catalog](#).

Instructions for Submitting Written Assignments

All written assignments must be submitted as Word documents (.doc or .docx) through the "Assignments" portal in Canvas by the specified deadlines. Do NOT send assignments as PDF files.

Canvas

Class announcements will be made through Canvas, and all papers must be turned in via Canvas. Class handouts, lecture slides, assignment rubrics, readings, study guides, a writing sample, and a copy of this syllabus are on our Canvas site. Check your Canvas inbox daily, and read all Canvas announcements.

Technology in the Classroom

To respect a wide range of learning styles, I will permit the use of tablets and laptops in class so long as they do not distract you or your fellow students. However, abuses of this technology policy will be taken seriously. Students disrupting the lecture may be asked to leave, and anyone caught using tablets or laptops for purposes unrelated to the course during a discussion section will receive an unexcused absence and a failing participation grade for that meeting. No computers or laptops are allowed on exam days, and those who repeatedly violate the technology policy will be barred from bringing laptops and tablets to class. Cellphones should be on vibrate.

Class Communication Policy

The best way to get in contact with your professor or TA is through our UF emails, listed on the front page of the syllabus. We will do our best to reply within one business day, but there may be periods when we are slower to respond due to high email volume. Please also note that we will not answer emails at night, over weekends, or during university-scheduled holidays. Finally, when you email the professor, please carbon copy (cc) your TA to streamline communication.

Assignment Support Outside the Classroom

You are welcome to come to regular office hours or to schedule an individual appointment with your professor or TA. When needed, I also encourage you to seek support from the academic resources listed on this syllabus.

AI Policy

It is NEVER appropriate to use AI for assignments in this class. That is up to and including all of the following:

- ✗ Use an AI chatbot as a writing partner to help generate and develop ideas
- ✗ Ask generative AI to write an essay and submit that essay as your own work
- ✗ Write an essay then ask AI to sharpen the language but not modify, add to, or replace the main points
- ✗ Write an essay then ask AI to add additional points
- ✗ Ask AI to summarize a book or article then reproduce that summary in your own essay

If you are ever uncertain about whether you are using technology appropriately for this course, please ask your TA or Professor. Any student caught using generative AI for assignments in this course will receive a referral to the Dean of Students Office.

IV. University Policies and Resources

University Policies

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#).

Procedure for conflict resolution

Any classroom issues, disagreements or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact Seth Bernstein (Associate Chair) (sethbernstein@ufl.edu, 352-273-3399). Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (<http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1308) or the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1261).

Course Schedule: Due Dates for Readings

*This schedule may change.

T 1/13	- Access the Syllabus
Course Introduction & Defining Piracy	

Th 1/15	
Piracy in the Ancient World	

F 1/16	Discussion Section
Course Introduction	- Marcus Rediker, <i>Villains of All Nations</i> , 1–18
	- Kris Lane, <i>Pillaging the Empire: Global Piracy on the High Seas, 1500–1700</i> , xi–xv, 1–5
	- Kris Lane and Arne Bialuschewski, “General Introduction” and “Global Piracy and European Law” [Canvas]

T 1/20	
Piracy in the Ancient World & Piracy from the Middle Ages to the Sixteenth Century	

Th 1/22	
Piracy from the Middle Ages to the Sixteenth Century	

F 1/23	Discussion Section
Piracy in the Ancient World & Middle Ages	- Philip de Souza, “Piracy in Classical Antiquity: The Origins and Evolution of a Concept,” [Canvas]
	- Plutarch, “On Caesar and the Pirates” [Canvas]
	- Neil Price, “Sheep-Men and Slaughter-Wolves: Pirate Polities in the Viking Age” [Canvas]
	- “Three Sources on the Ravages of the Northmen in Falkland, c.843–912” [Canvas]
	- Lane, <i>Pillaging the Empire</i> , 6–13

- Robert J. Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail* (2007), “Maltese Corsairing License Issued to Knight Charles de Willers,” 94–95
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “An Episode at Estampalia,” 95–97
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, doc. 12 “European Renegade and Corsair John Ward,” 97–101

T 1/27

Portugal, Spain, and
the Rise of Global
Empires

Th 1/29

Portugal, Spain, and
the Rise of Global
Empires

F 1/30

Portugal, Spain, and
the Rise of Global
Empires

Discussion Section

- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, 6–11
- Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 13–28
- Cheryl E. Martin and Mark Wasserman, “The Iberians’ New World” [Canvas]

DUE: Map Assignment 1 by 11:59pm on Canvas

T 2/3

Piracy Elsewhere:
Wakō Piracy in China

Th 2/5

Piracy Elsewhere:
Francis Drake

In-Class Viewing:

Drake Documentary

F 2/6

Piracy Elsewhere

- Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 168–175

- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, 32–44

- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Cases of Wakō Piracy in Sixteenth-Century China,” 108–111

- Antony, *Pirates in the Ages of Sail*, “Francis Drake on the Pacific Coast,” 61–64

Due: Primary Source Analysis 1 at 11:59pm on Canvas

T 2/10

Smugglers, Pirates, and
Privateers: The
Elizabethans

Th 2/12

Smugglers, Pirates, and
Privateers: The
Elizabethans

F 2/13

Smugglers, Pirates, and
Privateers: The
Elizabethans

Discussion Section

- Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 29–56
- Antony, *Pirates in the Ages of Sail*, “Drake’s Island of Thieves,” 143–146
- “Contrasting Views from Francis Drake’s Famous Voyage,” in *Piracy in the Early Modern Era*, Lane and Bialuszewski, 21–25 [Canvas]

T 2/17

The Dutch Revolt and
the Sea Beggars

Th 2/19

The Spice War and
Early Modern
Globalization

F 2/20

The Dutch Revolt and
the Sea Beggars & The
Spice War and Early
Modern Globalization

Discussion Section

- Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 57–88
- Hugo Grotius, *The Free Sea*, 5–15, 49–51, 57–60 [Canvas]
- Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 152–168
- Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan*, 135–170 [Canvas]
- “Charter of the Dutch East India Company, 1702” [Canvas]

T 2/24

Piracy on the China
Coast

Th 2/26

Piracy on the China
Coast

F 2/27	Discussion Section
Special Collections Visit	Visit to Special Collections during Discussion Sections Students must meet their TA in Room 100 in Smathers. Be on time so the librarian can promptly begin their informational session.

Read:

- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “The Pirate Zheng Zhilong,” 111–114
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Imperial Edict Concerning the Problem of Piracy,” 120–121
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Chinese Pirate Pact of 1805,” 122–124

T 3/3	
The Buccaneers of the Seventeenth Century	

Th 3/5	
The Buccaneers of the Seventeenth Century	

F 3/6	Discussion Section
The Buccaneers of the Seventeenth Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lane, <i>Pillaging the Empire</i>, 89–151- Antony, <i>Pirates in the Ages of Sail</i>, 11–14- Antony, <i>Pirates in the Ages of Sail</i>, “The Manner of Buccaneers,” 64–67

T 3/10	
Midterm Review	

Th 3/12	Students will complete their Midterm.
Midterm	

F 3/13	No Class/Discussions
Discussion Sections Canceled	

M–F 3/16–3/20	No Class!
Spring Break	

The Golden Age of
Piracy

3/26

The Golden Age of
Piracy

3/27

The Golden Age of
Piracy

Discussion Section

- Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 19–59
- Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 176–213
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Deposition of Adam Baldridge,” 67–70
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “John Dann’s Testimony against Henry Every,” 70–75
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Captain William Kidd’s Royal Commission, 1695,” 75–78

DUE: Primary Source Analysis 2 at 11:59pm on Canvas

(Your source should be selected from UF Special Collections)

T 3/31

The Golden Age of
Piracy

Th 4/2

The Golden Age of
Piracy

In-Class Viewing:

Documentary on Anne Bonny and Mary Read

F 4/3

The Golden Age of
Piracy

Discussion Section

- Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 60–126
- Marcus Rediker, “Hydrarchy and Libertalia,” in Antony, *Pirates in the Ages of Sail*, 166–179
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Pirate Articles,” 91–94
- Jo Stanley, “The Women Among the Boys,” in Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, 153–166
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Captain William Snelgrave’s Captivity,” 78–85
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “The Life of Mary Read,” 85–91

DUE: Capstone Project Preliminary Assignment at 11:59pm on Canvas

T 4/7

Raiders, Warriors, and
Traders in Southeast
Asia

Th 4/9

Raiders, Warriors, and
Traders in Southeast
Asia

F 4/10

Raiders, Warriors, and
Traders in Southeast
Asia

Discussion Section

- Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 151–168
- Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 127–177
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, 44–56
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “An Oral History of Sea Dayak Raiding,” 134–138
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “The Pirate Ah’moi,” 138–142
- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, “Sulu Slave Raiding, early nineteenth century,” 146–148
- Watch *Raiders of the Sulu* (2013)
<https://uf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?20UF037275394> [in order to stream from our library website, you must either be on campus, or use a VPN for off-campus access]

T 4/14

Somalia and Modern
Piracy

In-Class Viewing:

- *Captain Phillips* (2013)

Th 4/16

Somalia and Modern
Piracy

In-Class Viewing:

- *Captain Phillips* (2013)

Finish the film at home. UF students can watch the film for free through the Swank Digital Campus database at: <https://digitalcampus-swankmp-net.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/ufl275793/watch/799FC405CA3F4927?referrer=direct>

[You must be connect to the campus Wi-Fi by physically being on campus or using the library vpn]

F 4/17

Discussion Section

- Antony, *Pirates in the Age of Sail*, 56–59

Somalia and Modern
Piracy

- Edward A. Alpers, "Piracy and Indian Ocean Africa," *Journal of African Development* 13, no. 1 (2011): 17–38
- Watch: *Stolen Seas* (2013)
<https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Stolen-Seas/405420>

Due: Map Assignment 2 by 11:59pm on Canvas

T 4/21

Cox v. Sony [and other cases related to digital piracy]

Global Piracy Today &
Course Conclusion

F 4/24

DUE: Capstone Project Essay at 11:59pm on Canvas

Final Project