**History of Pirates and Piracy**

History 2004

Dr. K. Wilson-Bowers

Spring 2016 / MWF 12:00-12:50 / Stewart 106

**Course Description:**

Pirates have long captured the popular imagination and remain a romanticized staple of Hollywood. Beyond these legends, piracy was a real and continual threat to all sea trading nations. This class will examine piracy from the ancient to the modern world, with a particular focus on the early modern Mediterranean and Caribbean during the “Golden Age” of piracy. Spain’s rise to imperial power in the sixteenth century encouraged waves of corsairs, pirates, privateers and freebooters who sought profit and freedom from state law on the high seas. We’ll look at a variety of firsthand accounts of piracy as well as historical interpretations of the motivations for and impact of piracy.

**Required texts:**

Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas 1500-1750* (Routledge 2015)  
Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age* (Beacon, 2005).

Joyce Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates and Sovereigns* (Princeton, 1994)

**Assignments:**

Reading response papers (3) 5% each

Midterm 20%

Primary source analysis 10%

Rediker paper 10%

Research write-up 10%

Final exam 20%

Participation 15%

**Grade Scale:**

A+ 97-100 C+ 76-79

A 93-96 C 73-75

A- 90-92 C- 70-72

B+ 86-89 D+ 66-69

B 83-85 D 63-65

B- 80-82 D- 60-62

F 59 and below

**Accessibility Statement**

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Center (<http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu> ), S5 Memorial Union, 573- 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

**Behavior Expectations**

As a member of this class you are expected to attend regularly, to arrive on time, and to participate during class. While 1-3 absences during the semester are acceptable, **repeated unexcused absences will be reflected in your final grade**. **In addition, continual late arrival or inattention during class (texting, doing other homework, chatting with others) will lower your final grade**.

**You are expected to abide by the Code of Academic Integrity**. The university’s official statement on academic integrity is as follows: “Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.” We will discuss paraphrasing and plagiarism in further detail in class, but if you have any questions please do come talk to me.

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**Class schedule**

**Week 1** What is Piracy? / Piracy in the Ancient World

**Bb Readings:** Ward, *Pirates in History*

1/20 What is piracy?

1/22 Ancient ships and trade

**Week 2** Piracy in the Ancient World

**Bb Readings**: Casson, “Raiders and Traders”;

**Online:** Homer excerpts (on Bb); Thucydides excerpts <http://www.classicpersuasion.org/pw/thucydides/thucydides-passages.php?pleaseget=1.7-11>

1/25 Ancient piracy

1/27 Greek and Roman piracy

1/29 Discussion of readings

**Week 3** Medieval Piracy

**Bb Readings:** Heeboll-Holm ch. 2 and Conclusion; Reyerson, “Identity in the Medieval Mediterranean World of Merchants and Pirates”; Pitcaithly, “Piracy and Anglo-Hanseatic Relations, 1385-1420”

2/1 Northern piracy

2/3 Mediterranean piracy

2/5 Discussion of readings

**Week 4** The Barbary Corsairs

**Text Readings:** Lane, intro and ch. 1; Thomson ch.1 (skim) and ch. 2

**Bb Readings:** Jamieson, “Vanguard of the Sultan”

2/8 Ottomans and their clients

2/10 Mediterranean conflicts

2/12 Discussion of readings

**Week 5** Corsairs, captives and ransoms

**Text Readings:** Thomson ch. 3

**Bb Readings:** Friedman, “Life in Captivity”; Davis, “Slaves’ Life”

2/15 Taking captives

2/17 Ransoming captives

2/19 Discussion of readings **1st reading response paper due**

**Week 6** Spanish New World Empire

**Text Readings:** Lane ch. 2; Thomson ch. 4

**Bb Readings:** Harding, “Pirates as Outlaws in the Early Modern Law of the Sea”

2/22 French corsairs

2/24 English privateers

2/26 Discussion of readings

**Week 7** Buccaneers

**Readings**: Lane ch. 3-4

**Bb readings:**

2/29 Dutch sea rovers

3/2 Buccaneers

3/4 Buccaneers

**Week 8** The “Golden Age” of Atlantic piracy

**Text Readings:** Lane 5; Rediker 1-2

**Bb Readings:**

3/7 **Midterm exam**

3/9 Golden Age pirates

3/11 Golden Age pirates

**Week 9** Shipboard life for sailors

**Bb Readings:**  Perez-Mallaína, “What Made a Man go to Sea” and “Ship as a Place of Work”; Turley, “Life on Board an Early-Eighteenth-Century Ship”

3/14 Life and work on a ship **2nd reading response paper due**

3/16 Structure and hierarchy

3/18 No class meeting

**Week 10** Why turn pirate?

**Readings:** Rediker ch. 3

**Bb Readings:** Tinniswood, “Making of a Pirate” Perez-Mallaína, “Discipline and Conflict”

3/21 Going “on the account”

3/23 Who turned pirate

3/25 Discussion of readings

**Week 11 Spring Break**

**Week 12** Shipboard life for pirates

**Readings:** Rediker ch. 4-5

**Bb Readings**:

4/4 Organizing pirates

4/6 Life aboard ship

4/8 Discussion

**Week 13** Women and piracy

**Readings:** Rediker ch. 6

**Bb Readings:** Appleby, “Women Pirates, Fact or Fiction”; Dugaw, “Female Sailors Bold”

4/11 Women and ships

4/13 Women pirates – Discuss readings **Primary source analysis due**

4/15 Women as accomplices

**Week 14** Fighting piracy in the Atlantic

**Readings:** Rediker ch. 7-concl.; Thomson, ch. 6

**Bb Readings:** Earle, “Extermination”

4/18 Naval efforts

4/20 Trials and executions

4/22 Discussion

**Week 15** Fighting piracy in the Mediterranean

**Readings:** Thomson ch. 5

**Bb Readings**: Earle, “Cleansing Home Waters” and “Containing Corsairs”; Tinniswood, “Fighting Back Against the Pirates”

4/25 18th C efforts

4/27 U.S. and Barbary wars **3rd reading response paper due**

4/29 U.S. and Barbary wars

**Week 16** Modern legacy of piracy

**Student research and oral presentations**

5/2 Presentations/discussion of research **Research paper due**

5/4 Wrap up and review

Final Exam: Monday Dec. 14 12:30-2:30