

**HIST 1100W: THE HISTORIAN AS DETECTIVE**  
**“MUTINY ON THE WHALESHIP *JUNIOR*”**  
**Spring 2010**

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Drop-In Office Hours:  
M 10:00 - 11:30, T 2:00 - 3:30  
& by appointment

**Course Description:**

In this course, we do more than read about history; we will *do* history. Using historical documents related to a single incident in the past, students will reconstruct what happened, why it happened, what the incident meant to people in that place and time, and why it is significant and worth understanding today. In the process of researching and writing about this incident, students will acquire the skills of historical detection and, in future, be able to decipher historical records to explain cause and effect, understand how information is produced and circulated, appreciate the influence of larger historical contexts on everyday life, and develop an interpretation of the past that is historically sound, meaning that it is based on careful use of all available evidence. By the end of the course, the class as a whole will have produced an original contribution to our understanding of the past.

The incident for this section of HIST 1100W is the 1857 mutiny aboard the American whaleship *Junior*. Why did the mutiny happen? What can this incident tell us about American society in the mid-nineteenth-century? As we investigate the mutiny’s causes and larger context, each of you will learn a lot about American whaling history, just as every historical researcher comes to know his or her research topic intimately. The main objective of this course, however, is not to learn “facts” about whaling history but for students to acquire the skills of historical thinking and be able to apply those skills to other research topics. In other words, this course is about the process of historical research and writing, not about the content of whaling history.

All the materials we will read in this course are primary sources (writings produced in the time period we are studying), most of which are directly related to the *Junior* mutiny. These documents are the historical evidence. We will probe this evidence, figure out what it all means, and then tell a story about what happened aboard the whaleship *Junior*.

This course is a W course, meaning that it fulfills the general education requirement for a writing course and thus requires at least 15 pages of revised writing. In this course, students will do fifteen pages of revised writing in pieces, as each student will contribute to a large collaborative project (essentially, a short book) written by the entire class. We will frequently work in small groups in class, and students must expect to share their writing with the entire class. Each student’s writing should improve as the course progresses, but more importantly, participating in a collaborative writing project should help students become self-conscious about their own writing and aware of how, during the writing process, writers realize many possibilities and weigh alternative directions: What makes writing good? How do writers satisfy the needs of their readers? What kind of writing do you personally prefer? What kind of writing suits history as a genre?

## **Readings**

XEROX PACKET TO BE PURCHASED AT UCONN COOP (available 2/1/2010):

Sampson, Alonzo. *Three Times Around the World, or Life and Adventures of Alonzo D. Sampson.*

Buffalo: Express Printing, 1867.

“Trial of the Junior Mutineers,” from *Boston Courier*

OTHER READINGS: I will distribute other readings as class handouts or as postings on huskyct, which will be important material for class discussion and sources for the written assignments. These readings consist of the ship’s logbook, newspaper articles, manuscript census forms, correspondence, and other historical documents. You will also be required to read and comment on classmates’ writing.

## **Assignments**

Each student will contribute to a book that will be organized as follows:

The Lead (Paper #1: all)

The Whaling Industry (Paper #2: half the class, to be assigned)

Life of a Whaleman (Reading Responses: all)

The Mutiny (Reading Responses: all)

The Trial (Paper #3: half the class, to be assigned)

Consequences (Paper #4: all)

PAPERS. 4-6 pages, typed, double-spaced. Each student will write three of four papers. All papers must be based solely on the primary source materials I make available to you. DO NOT use any information you find online or from secondary sources. These papers must cite sources when quoting or using other specific information by using the author’s surname from the bibliography posted on huskyct and the page number in parentheses after the information or quotation is used. If the source has no author but is listed by its title, then cite the title and the page number in parentheses. Criteria for evaluating the papers:

- ➔ Depth, creativity, and care shown in the analysis of the documentary evidence
- ➔ Clarity, style, and polish of the writing

On the day first drafts are due, students must bring printed version(s) to class. The class schedule identifies when to bring in one copy for me or multiple copies for your working group. On the day final drafts are due, save it in .rtf (rich text format) and post it on huskyct by adding it as a discussion attachment and bring a hardcopy to class to turn in to me.

For each paper, students will write a first draft, receive feedback from either me or fellow students, revise the paper, and submit a final draft. Only the final draft will receive a grade, but students must complete each stage of the process (first draft and a revised final draft) to receive a grade for the paper. Any revised paper that receives a D or F grade must be revised one more time. Students cannot pass a W course unless they demonstrate satisfactory writing. Late first drafts will result in a penalty in the grade of the final draft paper, just as a late final draft paper will result in a penalty. (The penalty is 1/3 of a grade – e.g., A- to B+, C to C-, if the paper is less than one week late and an entire grade -- C to D, B to C – if more than one week late.)

**READING RESPONSES:** These are 1-2 pages responding to the two readings in the Xerox packet: Sampson’s memoir and the newspaper articles recounting the trial. You will pick one question to respond to from a list of questions posted on huskyct. These reading responses do not have to be revised but ultimately will be revised during the Final Revision. Be sure to cite your sources in parentheses in this assignment even if you only used one source, for example: (Sampson, 67). To submit these, bring a printed copy with you to class AND send a copy to me at my regular email address (nancy.shoemaker@uconn.edu) as an email attachment. Do not post these on huskyct. Your response is not fully submitted until you receive back from me an acknowledgment that I received it and was able to print it out successfully.

**FINAL REVISION.** By the end of the semester, we will have a book-length draft. This draft will be divided into sections, and each student will be assigned a section to revise.

**FINAL EXAM.** This is one essay question based on a reading that will be handed out to you. The essay question will require you to reflect on all the material we studied throughout the course. You may choose between a take-home exam, which will need to be typed and the writing polished, or a blue-book exam in our regularly scheduled exam period. In either case, you may use your notes and any course materials you wish. The final exam is due, at the latest, during our regularly scheduled exam period.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION.** This grade is based on contributions to in-class activities (both discussions involving the entire class and smaller group workshops), on postings students make to the online discussions on huskyct, and on the quality and quantity of feedback to fellow students when reviewing their writing. Students who come to class unprepared to discuss or work with assigned readings will receive a poor grade for class participation. Students who are not in class or who persistently arrive late or early to class are, of course, unable to participate in class discussions and will receive a poor grade for class participation. Active workshop participation is essential for this course since so much of class time is spent in workshop settings.

### **Grading**

Three 4-6 page Papers	45%
Four 1-2 page Reading Responses	15%
Final Revision	5%
Final Exam	15%
Class Participation	<u>20%</u>
	100%

### **Policies:**

- Do not leave the classroom when in session unless it’s an emergency. Even when we are working informally in groups, it is inappropriate to leave the room since absences and interruptions interfere with the group’s or the class’s ability to complete the task at hand.

- No electronic equipment may be used in class unless you have explicit instructor permission. Please turn off your cell phones before class.
- C means satisfactory completion of course requirements. A's are rewards for outstanding work, above and beyond course expectations. B's are for good work (demonstrating special effort, insight, creativity, thoroughness, clarity, etc.)
- To be fair to those students who turn their work in on time, late assignments will be marked down a notch (B to B-, C- to D+, etc.); more if the assignment is past due by more than one week.
- Academic dishonesty, whether cheating or plagiarism, is a serious offense and will result in automatic failure of the assignment and perhaps further action depending on the situation. See the section on "Academic Integrity" in *The Student Code*.

### Class Schedule

- Students are responsible for knowing of any changes to this schedule announced in class.
- Short readings, distributed as class handouts, will also be assigned occasionally but do not appear on the syllabus. Usually we will try to read such materials during the class itself, but if we do not manage to get through this material, you might have to finish it on your own for the next class.
- Whenever the syllabus says "READ," bring the assigned reading to class on that day, having already done the reading.
- This class is entirely workshop oriented. You will need to have materials with you to work on in class. I will let you know which of the accumulated course materials to bring to the next class. I recommend also that you keep a binder or file system for all your course materials for easy access and referral. The ideal would be for everyone to bring all their accumulated materials to class with them, but if you cannot bring all the accumulated materials to each class session, bring what is absolutely required for that day and whatever else you can easily carry.

### *MUTINY!*

#### WEEK 1

T 1/19 Course Introduction  
 Th 1/21 Class Discussion: Mutiny & Murder  
 READ & BRING TO CLASS: newspaper articles handed out on Tuesday

*SCENE OF THE CRIME: The Whaling Industry. Why Whale? How did the whaling industry operate? What were the risks & rewards of whaling?*

#### WEEK 2

T 1/26 Class Discussion: The Whaling Industry  
 DUE: The Lead (first draft, Paper #1), one printed copy for me  
 Th 1/28 Workshop

WEEK 3

- T 2/2 Workshop  
DUE: The Lead (final draft), post on huskycr & one printed copy for me
- Th 2/4 Workshop Presentations to Class

WEEK 4

- T 2/9 Writing Workshop  
DUE: Whaling Industry (first draft, Paper #2, tba), bring multiple copies to class for working group
- Th 2/11 Class Discussion  
DUE: Whaling Industry (final draft), post on huskycr & one printed copy for me

*MOTIVE* What would cause whalers to commit mutiny and murder? What were their expectations? What were the customs aboard ship? What was just and unjust in the world of whaling work?(Bring Sampson's memoir to class every day)

WEEK 5

- T 2/16 Class Discussion: Life of a Whaleman  
READ: Sampson, *Three Times Around the World*, pp. 3-74  
DUE: Reading Response #1, send as attachment to nancy.shoemaker@uconn.edu and give me a printed copy in class
- Th 2/18 Class Discussion: Life of a Whaleman, cont'd.  
READ: Sampson, *Three Times Around the World*, pp. 75-116  
DUE: Reading Response #2, send as attachment to nancy.shoemaker@uconn.edu and give me a printed copy in class

WEEK 6

- T 2/23 Class Discussion: Alonzo Sampson & the Mutiny  
READ: finish Sampson, *Three Times Around the World*, pp. 116-170  
DUE: Reading Response #3, send as attachment to nancy.shoemaker@uconn.edu and give me a printed copy in class
- Th 2/25 Class Discussion: Weighing the Evidence  
BRING Sampson to class & newspaper articles from week 1

*SOLVING THE CRIME* (Bring the "Trial of the Mutineers" from the *Boston Courier* to class every day)

WEEK 7

- T 3/2 Class Discussion: Sorting Out Who's Who & What Happened  
READ: "Trial of the Mutineers" (*Boston Courier*)  
DUE: Reading Response #4, send as attachment to nancy.shoemaker@uconn.edu and give me a printed copy in class
- Th 3/4 Workshop: Prepare for Trial

## SPRING BREAK

*BUILDING THE CASE: How did the lawyers construct their arguments? What did they consider just and unjust, right and wrong? How do we as historians construct our argument? (Bring the “Trial of the Mutineers” from the *Boston Courier* to class every day)*

### WEEK 8

T 3/16 Workshop: Prepare for Trial  
T 3/18 Trial Re-Enactment

### WEEK 9

T 3/23 NO CLASS  
Th 3/25 Writing Workshop  
DUE: The Trial (first draft, Paper #3, tba), multiple copies for working group

## CONSEQUENCES

### WEEK 10

T 3/30 Workshop  
DUE: The Trial (final draft, Paper #3, tba), post on huskycct & one copy for me  
T 4/1 Workshop

### WEEK 11

T 4/6 Workshop  
Th 4/8 Working Group Presentations to Class  
DUE: Consequences (first draft, Paper #4), one copy for me

### WEEK 12

T 4/13 Class Discussion: Refining our Purpose/Main Point  
Th 4/15 Class Discussion

### WEEK 13

T 4/20 Class Discussion  
DUE: Consequences (final draft, Paper #4), post on huskycct & one printed copy for me  
Th 4/22 Class Discussion: Revision Process  
READ: The draft of our book (on huskycct)

### WEEK 14

T 4/27 Class Discussion: Revision Process  
Th 4/29 Wrapping Up: guidelines for final exam, course evaluations, etc.  
DUE: Final Revision, post on huskycct

## FINAL EXAM