

History of Exploration  
506:221  
Spring 2013

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:50-4:10 pm Frelinghuysen Hall A2 College Avenue Campus Rutgers-New Brunswick	Instructor: Dr. Tina Adcock Email: tina.adcock@rutgers.edu Twitter: @tinaadcock Office: 88 College Avenue, #205 Office hours: Tues 1:30-2:30 pm, Thurs 4:30-5:30 pm, or by appointment
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do not imagine that the exploration  
ends ... or that the map you hold  
cancels further discovery

when you see the land naked, look again ...  
I mean the moment when it seems most plain  
is the moment when you must begin again

Gwendolyn MacEwen, "The Discovery"

### Course description

Who counts as an explorer? What does it mean to undertake exploration? Has the age of exploration forever ended—or are we still living in an exploratory world? This course considers these questions through an examination of the identities, practices, objects, and spaces of exploration from the late fifteenth century through to the present day. It will focus selectively on (since it cannot treat comprehensively) voyages and journeys through the Earth's oceans, over its continents, and in the skies above. We will consider the different constellations of political, economic, religious, scientific, and intellectual factors that drove exploration in various places and eras. We will examine what happened when men and women of disparate cultures met in contact zones to trade objects and knowledge, and what kinds of "cultures of exploration" arose abroad and at home as a result of their actions. Students will encounter, interpret, and analyze exploratory genres such as the diary/logbook, the expedition narrative, and expeditionary art and cartography. They will also develop an appreciation of how recent scholarship in literary criticism, postcolonial studies, gender studies, historical geography, and the history and sociology of science has influenced and animated newer research on exploration.

### Course objectives

By the conclusion of this course, students will be able:

- 🌐 To compare and contrast different political, economic, scientific, and cultural motivations for exploration over the past five hundred years
- 🌐 To situate explorers and expeditions within local, imperial/national, and global contexts
- 🌐 To evaluate historical events from the perspective of different cultural systems of knowledge and belief
- 🌐 To make connections between past and present discourses of exploration
- 🌐 To analyze textual, visual, and material objects associated with the practices and representations of exploration
- 🌐 To practice and hone critical reading, writing, speaking, and thinking skills.

**Themes:** Exploration and cross-cultural contact; exploration and the construction of knowledge; exploration and material culture; exploration and biography; the commemoration of exploration; exploration, imperialism, and nationalism; race, gender, and exploration.

### Course organization

The course involves lectures by the instructor as well as class discussions and activities. Lectures will vary in length, taking up to 50 minutes of class time. Discussions based on the lectures and readings will sometimes be conducted with the entire class, and at other times we will break up into smaller groups for discussion. Students are expected to take an active role in the ways outlined in the section on participation below.

### Textbooks & readings

The following textbooks are required:

- 🌐 Felipe Fernández-Armesto. *Pathfinders: A Global History of Exploration*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2007 (paperback edition). \$21.95 new/\$16.45 used at B&N.
- 🌐 \*\*Felix Driver. *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire*. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000. \$54.80 new/\$41.10 used at B&N.
- 🌐 \*\*Johannes Fabian. *Out of Our Minds: Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Central Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. \$31.95 new/\$23.95 used at B&N.  
\*\*You will purchase *either* the Driver *or* the Fabian book for the book review assignment. You should not purchase both.

Used and new copies of textbooks are available at the Barnes & Noble bookstore. You may source your own copies on Amazon, abebooks.com, or elsewhere. All of these books have also been placed on course reserve at Alexander Library.

All other required readings are available as PDFs or links on the course's Sakai website. Readings should be completed by the date under which they are listed. Discussions depend on students having done their reading.

### Assignments and evaluation

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Participation	15%
Pinterest board on exploration	15%
Expedition narrative paper	15%
African exploration book review	15%
Midterm examination	15%
Final examination	25%

Your regular attendance and **participation** will enhance your enjoyment of this course, contribute to a dynamic and mutually profitable classroom environment, and greatly increase your understanding and retention of the material. I expect you to come to class with the readings in hand or with the files on your laptop or tablet, having read them carefully and thoughtfully. I will measure your participation in a variety of ways: through your regular attendance and preparation for lectures, your ability to reflect critically on lectures, readings, and primary sources in written and spoken form, your willingness to listen to your peers and to engage with

their viewpoints, and your ability to express your ideas and arguments clearly, concisely, and convincingly. I realize that everyone will enter this classroom with a different combination of life experiences, skills, and personal preferences as regards speaking in public. I hope that together we can create a fun and engaging space in which we all feel comfortable making regular contributions. I will watch for evidence of your initiative, improvement, and enthusiasm throughout the term. You'll also be able to complete a self-assessment of your performance in late April that I will take into account when determining your final grade for participation.

Throughout the term, you will continue your engagement with course materials outside the classroom by creating your very own **Pinterest board on exploration**. Pinterest is a visually-focused social media platform that allows you to curate collections of images and links on virtual bulletin or pin boards. We'll have a Pinterest tutorial early in the term, and I'll explain this assignment in more detail then. It is meant to make you think creatively, but also selectively, about the roles that visual and material objects play in discourses of exploration. It will also make you aware of the many and diverse ways in which exploration is still alluded to and invoked in contemporary culture. Your board should be completely finished and annotated by **Thursday, May 2**, the last day of class.

Historians of exploration use a wide array of primary and secondary sources in their research and writing. Yet published narratives recounting an expedition's events and results, often (but not always) written by its leader, remain key texts for us. The **expedition narrative paper** will give you an opportunity to immerse yourself in one of these fascinating, complicated—and yes, occasionally tedious—documents, and to practice using the interpretative methods that historians have developed to analyze them. You will be asked to choose a narrative from any expedition dating between the years 1490 and 1990, and you will write a **4-6 page paper** based on that narrative. Your paper should situate the expedition in its social, political, and scientific contexts abroad and at home, and note its key personnel, routes, and contributions to knowledge. You will also choose a short passage from the text and explain how it exemplifies the narrative's main themes and rhetoric. The paper is due on **Thursday, March 28**.

**\*\*Please note:** You must submit the bibliographic information (author, title, publisher, etc.) of your selected narrative via hard copy or email to me by **Thursday, February 28** so that I can approve your choice. If you fail to do so, I will deduct 20% from your final grade on the assignment.

The **African exploration book review** will have you read one of the more theoretically sophisticated books written on the history of exploration in the last 15 years. Coincidentally, both Fabian and Driver examine characters and events relating to nineteenth-century exploration in Africa. You will choose one of these books and write a **4-6 page review** of it. I will give you more information about the elements of the review later on in the term. We will also discuss the books in class so that you have a chance to air and thrash out some ideas with your classmates before you submit your final written review. This is due on **Tuesday, April 23**.

The writing assignments are meant to test your critical reading, writing, and thinking skills “vertically,” in the sense that you're delving deeply into one text. The **midterm and final examinations** will test your “horizontal” skills by asking you to place explorers and expeditions in their wider contexts, to draw comparisons and contrasts between different people, eras, and places, and to synthesize course material in order to make broad arguments about course themes. Exams will be cumulative, and they will contain a mixture of short answer and essay questions.

The **midterm** is scheduled for **Thursday, March 14**; the **final examination** is scheduled for **Friday, May 10** between 12-3 pm.

### **Policies regarding assignments**

Assignments are due at the beginning of class and must be submitted in **hard copy**. Please include your name and the title of the essay on the first page, and number the pages of the essay. All essays must be word processed, using standard 1" margins, double-spacing, and 11 or 12-point font. Methods of citation will differ slightly for the two written assignments. I will discuss the specific requirements for each in class when I give you additional information about each assignment.

All assignments and exams must be written in correct and concise English. I will gladly direct you to resources that will help you improve your writing skills. Please see me during office hours if you would like suggestions in this regard.

A **late assignment** will have **5%** of its final mark subtracted for each day it is late. Excuses will not be entertained unless you can produce relevant official documentation, such as a doctor's note. Extensions must be requested more than 24 hours in advance of an assignment's due date. Please do not request these unless personal or medical circumstances seriously warrant them.

**Plagiarism**—the misrepresentation of someone else's words or ideas as your own—is considered intellectual theft, and is punishable under the University's academic regulations. Please ensure that you know what constitutes plagiarism so that you may avoid it in your own written work. Ignorance is not an excuse!

Please see the History Department's statement on plagiarism:

[http://history.rutgers.edu/?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=109&Itemid=147](http://history.rutgers.edu/?option=com_content&task=view&id=109&Itemid=147)

Rutgers University Libraries gives some useful strategies to help you avoid plagiarism here:

[http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib\\_instruct/instruct\\_document.shtml](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml)

### **Classroom policies**

Given that we'll be learning about sex, drugs, madness, starvation, "explornography," and other captivating topics in this course, it is a mystery to me why you'd want to miss even one class! If you have to be absent unexpectedly, please send me an email explaining why, and provide documentation if appropriate. If you know you will have to miss class due to religious observances/practices or another such conflict (e.g. athletic competitions, interviews for professional programs) please let me know as soon as possible. Ideally you will not miss any classes, but you are permitted three unexcused absences. Any more of these will result in a grade of zero for the portion of your participation mark that reflects your attendance.

Please arrive to class in a timely fashion to avoid disrupting the learning environment for your classmates and for me. Please also do not leave the room during class unless it is absolutely, physically unavoidable.

In order that we may create an effective and respectful space for learning, I ask that you turn your cell phones to silent and refrain from using them during class. Feel free to use your laptop, notebook, or tablet to take notes, but please don't use such devices in ways (Facebook, YouTube, online poker, etc.) that will disrupt the attention of other students in your vicinity. You may bring beverages to class, but please don't bring food along. A little thoughtfulness toward your neighbours and me goes a long way.

I may make minor changes to this syllabus during the course. I will notify you if I do.

## Course Schedule

### Part 1: Columbian and Post-Columbian Travels

Tues Jan 22: Introduction & review of syllabus

Thurs Jan 24: **We will not meet today.** Please read the first two pages of *Pathfinders* to see how Fernàndez-Armesto defines exploration. Then read the following two blog posts, which are quite short:

“What is Exploration?”

<http://timetoeatthedogs.com/2008/06/09/what-is-exploration/>

“The Birth of Exploration”

<http://timetoeatthedogs.com/2008/08/12/the-birth-of-exploration/>

Spend a bit of time looking around this website, if you can. Its posts and especially links will be a useful resource for you throughout the course.

Tues Jan 29: What is exploration? & the maritime turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century

Reading: *Pathfinders*, chapter 4

Thurs Jan 31: Columbus: voyages and visions

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 153-71

Stephen Greenblatt, “Marvelous Possessions,” in *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (1991), 52-85

Tues Feb 5: **We will not meet today.** You will be completing a self-guided tutorial about commemorations of Columbus’s voyages in the 1890s and 1990s. I will provide further instructions in class and on Sakai.

Thurs Feb 7: Columbus: commemorations and aftermaths

Reading: William D. Phillips Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips, “The Post-Columbian World,” in *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* (1992), 241-73

Tues Feb 12: Spanish & Portuguese exploration after 1492

Reading: *Pathfinders*, pp 174-214, 222-37, 239-42

\*‘How to read an expedition narrative’ tutorial

Thurs Feb 14: French and English exploration in sixteenth-century North America

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 171-4, 237-42, 254-60

Stephen Hornsby, “Creating an English Atlantic, 1490-1620,” in *British Atlantic, American Frontier: Spaces of Power in Early Modern British America* (2005), 8-25

Conrad Heidenreich, “Early French Exploration in the North American Interior” (excerpts) in *North American Exploration: A Continent Defined*, ed. John Logan Allen (1997), 65-71, 144-48

\* Pinterest tutorial

Tues Feb 19: The search for the Northwest Passage, part 1

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 218-22

“Inuit and Englishmen: The Nunavut Voyages of Martin Frobisher” (1999):  
<http://www.civilization.ca/cmc/exhibitions/hist/frobisher/frint01e.shtml>

Thurs Feb 21: The Northeast Passage, Siberia, and the Pacific

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 187-90, 263-75

Valerie A. Kivelson, “‘Exalted and Glorified to the Ends of the Earth’: Imperial Maps and Christian Spaces in Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth-Century Russian Siberia,” in *The Imperial Map: Cartography and the Mastery of Empire*, ed. James R. Akerman (2009), 47-91

## Part 2: Voyages of Enlightenment

Tues Feb 26: Mapping, navigation, & scientific travel

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 246-54, 278-86, 289-98

Thurs Feb 28: Global networks of enlightenment

Readings: Bruno Latour, “Centres of calculation” (excerpt), in *Science in Action: How to follow scientists and engineers through society* (1987), 215-47

**Due:** Email with your choice of expedition narrative

Tues Mar 5: Captain Cook and his Pacific encounters

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 298-307

Daniel Clayton, “Captain Cook, the Enlightenment, and Symbolic Violence,” in *Islands of Truth: The Imperial Fashioning of Vancouver Island* (2000), 6-16, 245-50

Thurs Mar 7: Alexander von Humboldt: new methods for a new century

Readings: Michael Robinson, “Why We Need a New History of Exploration,” *Common-Place* 10:1 (2009): <http://www.common-place.org/vol-10/no-01/robinson/>

Excerpts from Aaron Sachs, *The Humboldt Current: Nineteenth-Century Exploration and the Roots of American Environmentalism* (2006)

Tues Mar 12: Midterm review

Thurs Mar 14: **Midterm**

Tues Mar 19 and Thurs Mar 21: **Spring Recess**

## Part 3: Final Frontiers...?

Tues Mar 26: Manifest destiny

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 319-32, 369-77

Michael S. Reidy et al., “Scientific Exploration of a Manifest America,” in *Exploration and Science: Social Impact and Interaction* (2007), 135-60

Thurs Mar 28: The search for the Northwest Passage, part 2

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 307-13

Russell Potter, "Visuality in the Arctic Regions" and "The Killing Glitter of the Stars: Spectacles of the Search for Franklin," in *Arctic Spectacles: The Frozen North in Visual Culture, 1818-1875* (2007), 1-12 and 71-99

**Due:** Expedition narrative paper

Tues Apr 2: Hidden histories of exploration

Reading: Kapil Raj, "When human travellers become instruments: The Indo-British exploration of Central Asia in the nineteenth century," in *Instruments, Travel and Science: Itineraries of Precision from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*, eds. Marie-Noëlle Bourguet et al. (2002), 156-88

Thurs Apr 4: Guest lecture by Dr. Julia Fein on 19<sup>th</sup>-century Siberia and Russia

Tues Apr 9: Women travelers and explorers

Reading: Sidonie Smith, "On Foot: Gender at Ground Level," in *Moving Lives: Twentieth-Century Women's Travel Writing* (2001), 29-72

Thurs Apr 11: Exploring the "dark continent"

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 212-14 (review), 275-78, 332-42, 351-56

\* We will be discussing Driver, *Geography Militant* and Fabian, *Out of Our Minds* today. Please bring your copies and notes to class. Please read your chosen book by this date, or at least ensure that you have read part of it. The more of it you have read, the more helpful this session will be in preparing you to write your book review.

Tues Apr 16: Travelers and travel liars: Peary, Cook, and the North Pole

Reading: Beau Riffenburgh, "Peary, Cook, and the war of the New York press," in *The Myth of the Explorer: The Press, Sensationalism, and Geographical Discovery* (1993), 165-93

Thurs Apr 18: Scott of the Antarctic

Readings: *Pathfinders*, pp 378-85, 394-400

Excerpt from Max Jones, *The Last Great Quest: Captain Scott's Antarctic Sacrifice* (2003)

Tues Apr 23: Deep sea exploration

Reading: Reidy et al., "Human Exploration under the Sea," in *Exploration and Science*, 189-217

**Due:** African exploration book review

Thurs Apr 25: Exploration in outer space

Readings: Daniel F. Lester and Michael Robinson, "Visions of exploration," *Space Policy* 25 (2009): 236-43

Asif A. Siddiqi, "Competing Technologies, National(ist) Narratives, and Universal Claims: Towards a Global History of Space Exploration," *Technology and Culture* 51 (2010): 425-43

Tues Apr 30: Is twenty-first century exploration possible—or is it just "explornography"?

Readings: John Tierney, "Going Where A Lot of Other Dudes With Really Great Equipment Have Gone Before," *New York Times Magazine*, July 26, 1998: <http://goo.gl/ktz1A>

Felix Driver, "Modern explorers," in *New Spaces of Exploration: Geographies of Discovery in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Simon Naylor and James R. Ryan (2010), 241-49

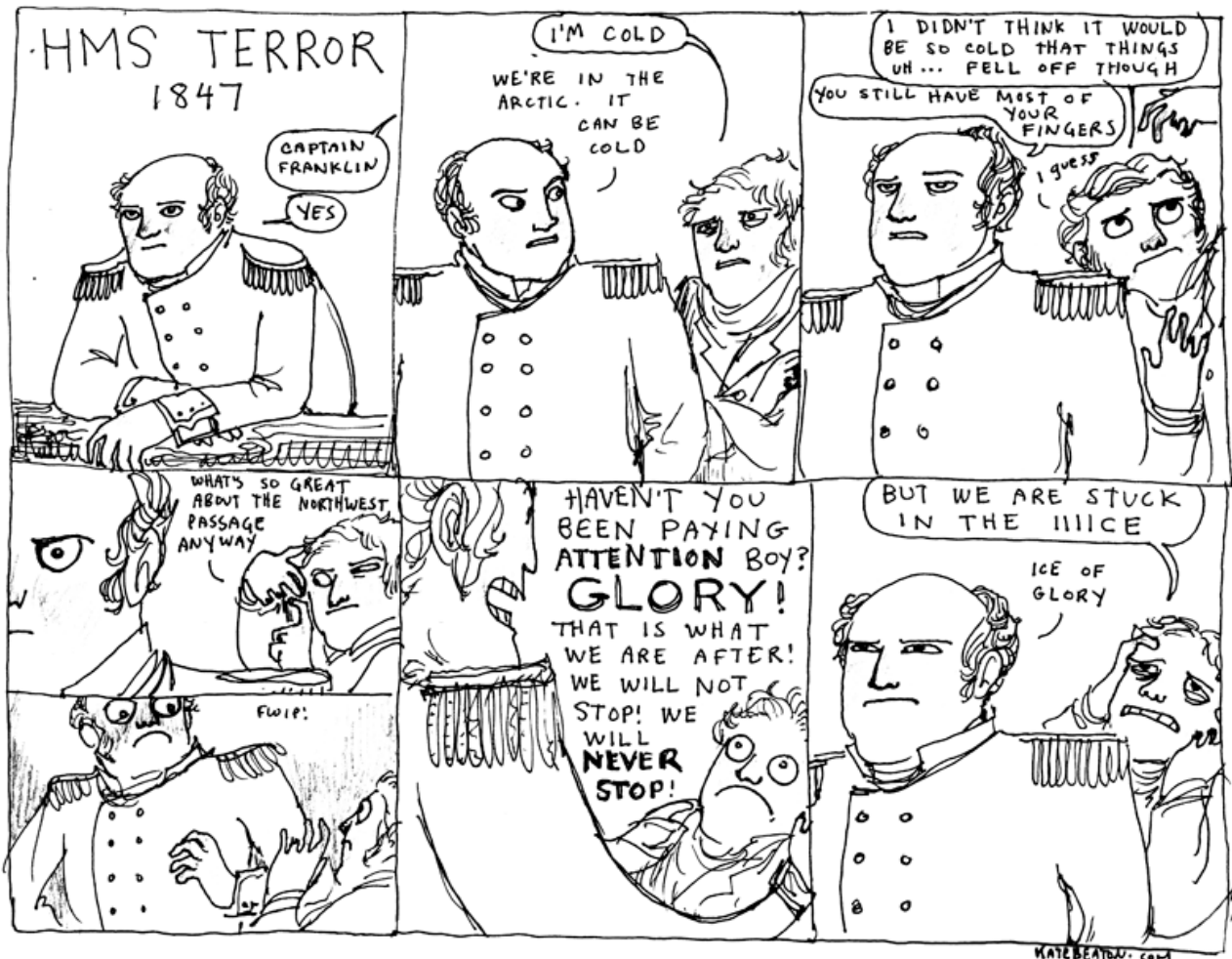
Thurs May 2: Review

**Due:** Pinterest board on exploration

**Name and contact information of two classmates:**

**A final note**

I look forward to exploring the history of exploration with you! And unlike Sir John Franklin's hapless crew member below, I can virtually guarantee that you will not lose any fingers to frostbite by the end of the semester. Or be subjected to cannibalistic attentions, for that matter.



Comic by the fabulous Kate Beaton. For more, see [harkavagrant.com](http://harkavagrant.com).