CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Three Sheets to the Wind: The Jolly Jack Tar and Eighteenth-Century British Masculinity

by

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Abstract

My dissertation traces the development of the Jolly Jack Tar, a widespread image of the common British sailor, beginning with the formal establishment of Royal Navy in 1660 and ending in 1817 with the publication of Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, a novel devoted to presenting a new model of the professional seaman. I also analyze Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Charles Johnson's *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates* (1724), Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748), and Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative* (1789) in conjunction with ephemeral cultural artifacts like songs, cartoons, newspapers, and miscellany to fill in the variable, uneven history of the novelistic Jack Tar over the course of the long eighteenth century.

My analysis seeks to answer the following questions: How do fictionalized accounts of sailors (like those found in novels) reflect, challenge, or reinforce the portrayal of sailors in other cultural texts, like songs or plays? How does print culture inflect the construction of Jack Tar, particularly regarding the figure's connection to Britain and an emergent national identity? How do literary and cultural texts represent seamen's complicated relationship to the home and the family, particularly when seamen were, by the nature of their profession, typically far from Britain? To answer these questions, I bring together print history, performance studies, post-colonial studies, maritime history, and disability studies. I contend that the complex image of Jack Tar was a tool authors employed to advocate for a new type of British man, one who is brave, patriotic, and supportive of the homefront, but also destructive, a drunkard, and sexually promiscuous. I argue that the Tar was used by black and white sailors to craft their own self-representations and carve out a place in British society. Lastly, portrayals of Jack Tar on the British stage, in images, and in novels, particularly those

published at the end of the long eighteenth century, seek to contain and reframe the potentially destabilizing effect of demobilization which resulted in thousands of seamen, many of whom disabled, returning home and lacking a clear path for reintegration. In essence, complex and often contradictory literary and cultural representations of the Tar reflected eighteenth-century Britons' concerns over emergent masculine identities as well as anxieties of and hopes for the expanding nation.

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Introduction

The figure of the unrefined, boisterous, hard-drinking everyday sailor who bravely laughs in the face of impending death rose to prominence in the British cultural imagination during the long eighteenth century. This complex cultural icon, known as the Jolly Jack Tar, was ubiquitous, appearing in songs, poems, newspapers, political essays, novels, plays, and images. Jack Tar was multifaceted, often displaying competing ideas of British masculinity: although some versions of this character stressed sailors' propensity for brawling, others portrayed the mariner as a gentle, loving father. Still other texts projected the idea of sailors as randy youths who frequented brothels, a version of Jack Tar that contrasted with depictions presenting seamen as forlorn, star-crossed lovers wrenched from the loving arms of their bonny English lasses. This study investigates how and why Jack Tar emerged as a national figure in the long eighteenth century. To do so, this dissertation examines representations of the Tar in novels and plays, bringing these texts into conversation with traditionally-understudied ephemeral cultural artifacts, like songs and joke books. By tracing the complex web of Jack Tar representations that inundated British life in the colonial center and periphery, my dissertation seeks to elucidate the cultural work being done by this figure throughout the long eighteenth century.

The Rise of the British Maritime State

The development of Jack Tar into a cultural icon was intimately tied to the growth of the Royal Navy and Britain's subsequent maritime dominance in the eighteenth century. Formally established in 1660 by Charles II, the Royal Navy grew in size and influence throughout the long eighteenth century, the number of its seamen ebbing and flowing

alongside Britain's near-continuous conflicts with its colonial rivals (namely, France, Spain, and the Netherlands). Samuel Pepys noted that the Navy in 1660 employed 19,551 men (Lloyd 80), and 75% of the national income was devoted to maintaining the Restoration fleet (Lloyd 79). By the 1690s, "the Royal Navy had become England's greatest employer of labor, its greatest consumer of material, and its greatest industrial enterprise" (Linebaugh and Rediker 148). Its influence on the nation and its size continued to increase precipitously as Britain's colonial reach extended around the Atlantic, resulting in the need for a larger naval force to defend the nation's trade routes and colonies. For example, in 1755, before the start of the Seven Years' War, the Navy paid 33,612 seamen. During the war, that number rose to 84,797 in 1762 before dropping to 17,424 in 1764 after the cessation of hostilities (Lloyd 288). This type of rapid rise and demobilization occurred on an increasingly large scale as the eighteenth century progressed. In 1792, the Navy paid 16,613 sailors, a number that continuously rose nearly each year until reaching over 130,000 men in 1813 (near the end of the Napoleonic Wars) (Lloyd 288-289). Although these numbers are not exact, due to the difficulty in tracking men as they moved between ships from injury, illness, or impressment, they speak to the Navy's general growth over time, the rapid increases and decreases in size in relation to war, and the human cost of Britain's maritime dominance.

In response to the rapid rise and demobilization of the Navy, the Tar becomes a figure through which cultural representations confront governmental policy regarding the manning of ships. To feed the Navy's unquenching thirst for able-bodied men, the British government relied on impressment.[1] Impressment was a long-standing issue that had pitted sailors against their fellow citizens since the Middle Ages, but it became increasingly common and

[1] "Naval ships (like sugar plantations) consumed men at a voracious rate, and Britain's much-vaunted fleet could be manned only at the expense of sailors' liberty" (Bolster 30).

problematic in the eighteenth century.[2] During times of peace, lower-class men were attracted to naval service because, compared to the merchant marine, the Navy offered better food, a pension system, the opportunity for prize money, and the prospect of less labor (Bolster 31). Wartime, in contrast, drew men to the merchant fleet because of increased life expectancy and higher wages.[3] Since Britain was at war through most of the long eighteenth century, manning the Navy was critically important: as historian Niklas Frykman writes, "By the 1780s, the French and British war fleets both had manpower needs that were equivalent to all domestically available supply, thus theoretically stripping all non-military shipping of its workers if they were to man all their warships" (68). Impressment was one tactic for coercing men into joining the Navy.[4] It is impossible to know just how many men were impressed in this time period, or how long these men served, because most records only indicate seamen's ranks (able, ordinary, or landsman), not whether the sailor volunteered or was impressed. However, historian Denver Brunsman, in his comprehensive book *The Evil Necessity: British Naval Impressment in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (2103), conservatively estimates 150,000 men were pressed into service between 1689 and 1815

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[2] For more on impressment, see Christopher Lloyd's *The British Seamen 1200-1860: A Social Survey* (1968), Marcus Rediker's *Outlaws of the Atlantic: Sailors, Pirates, and Motley Crews in the Age of the Sail* (2014), Jeremy Bolster's *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (1997), N.A.M. Rodger's *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (1986), and Niklas Frykman's "Seamen on Late Eighteenth-Century European Warships" (2009).

[3] Depending on the war, a Navy sailor earned approximately half to a third of what a merchant sailor made. A Navy sailor earned approximately 24 shillings per month during the eighteenth century. "The scarcity of maritime labor and opportunities available from smuggling made merchant seamen's wages skyrocket. An able seaman could make 45-55 shillings per month in the 1690s, 50-55 in the 1740s, and 60-70 in the 1750s and 1770s" (Brunsman 25).

[4] Other tactics included conscription and crimping. Crimps would offer money to a man or pay off his debts, then sell the man to the Navy, and get paid the man's wages until the debt was paid off (Frykman 69).

(22). Whereas maritime work before the long eighteenth century had followed the natural pattern of the seasons (with sailors returning home during the winter), imperial trade as well as advancements in ship design meant that the Navy could winter ships in southern ports, thereby changing the sailing season: impressment was no longer a "seasonal wartime practice" in which sailors would be pressed into service in Spring but then released in September (Brunsman 16). Thus, seamen were forced into service until the end of a war, a debilitating injury kept them from working on ship, or they deserted. More likely, though, pressed mariners perished at sea since "three out of four pressed men died within two years" in the early eighteenth century (Linebaugh and Rediker 151), with disease (rather than battle) being the most common cause of fatalities. We see the public's unease with this policy of impressment displayed and mapped onto the Tar's body. Jack Tar had a contradictory relationship with impressment, being often represented as either a victim or agent of the state. While some texts present the tar as part of a nefarious press gang terrorizing poor husbands and fathers, others focus on the impressed sailor embracing his new identity that springs from the conviviality of maritime life. These images of impressment raise the reality of the state acting against its citizens. Whereas mariners normally inhabit spaces far from the colonial center, depictions of impressment speak to the unleashing of the full force of the state on British subjects. In other words, the Jack Tar figure plays a role in the management of social problems that emerge from the fluctuation of numbers in the Royal Navy, and impressment is part of the hostile relationship between the working poor on land and the professional Navy.

In addition to reflecting poorer Britons' troubling relationship with the British government, the image of the Jack Tar imposes a homogeneity and "Britishness" on what was a diverse body of men. The Navy's manning problems contributed to ships becoming

ethnically diverse spaces as men were drawn from geographically-disparate locations. Historians Jeffrey Bolster, in *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (1997), Paul Gilroy, in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993), and Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, in *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (2000), explore how the wooden world was a multiethnic place with sailors from different nations laboring alongside each other on British ships. Bolster and Gilroy, in particular, speak to the roles, opportunities, limitations, and social positions of black sailors, both enslaved and freed, in the maritime world. While often a contemptible occupation for many lower-class white men, seafaring offered black sailors financial opportunities not found on land (Bolster 5). Moreover, racial boundaries, while still present on a ship, were less significant than skill in determining the social hierarchy aboard deep-sea vessels (Bolster 73), making sailing one of the few options through which ship slaves could experience a measure of personal freedom. Although some plantation slave owners were suspicious of boat work, believing it "made slaves 'insolent' and 'independent'" (Bolster 17), the Navy was indebted to ship slaves and freedmen: as Gilroy writes, "it has been estimated that at the end of the eighteenth century a quarter of the British navy was composed of Africans" (13). Any consideration of the eighteenth-century maritime world and how people understood the men who inhabited that place, therefore, must consider how the Royal Navy's dominance resulted from the forced labor of thousands of black sailors.

Much historical scholarship has also elucidated the material conditions of life aboard deep-sea vessels, conditions that impacted sailors' behavior at sea and in port—thereby influencing how Britons on land understood seamen. Historians Marcus Rediker, whose

work informs much of my own scholarship, N. A. M. Rodger, and G. J. Marcus outline the daily lived experiences of Royal Navy and merchant mariners throughout the long eighteenth century.[5] A rigid hierarchy resulted in sailors feeling like prisoners, a sentiment compounded by the fact that they were often not paid on time and shore leave was denied for long stretches. Successfully running a deep-sea ship meant dividing seamen into manageable units under an elaborate hierarchy, ensuring that each officer could more easily distinguish and control his seamen.[6] Days were rigidly structured with each hour marking another task, like drilling, target practice, and cleaning. (Lloyd 237). Everyday, seemingly mundane, tasks, were incredibly dangerous on the open rolling seas, particularly when a ship's compliment of men was filled with inexperienced landlubbers. According to Rediker, "the maritime labor process was extraordinarily dangerous" with cargo crushing men's limbs or seamen losing their footing while aloft and tumbling to the deck (92-93). It is no wonder, then, that seamen yearned "to taste the sweets of liberty on shore, when in any harbour" (Lloyd 248) if they were lucky enough to survive a voyage without injury, illness, or brutal punishment. Sailors' enjoyment of pleasures in port contributed to the dominant impression that seamen were uncontrollable drunkards wasting their money on prostitutes. British cultural production responded to the potential of the Tar's unruly behavior with narratives and images that describe a more charming version of the Tar as young, attractive, masculine, brave, and virile. The Jack Tar's sexuality and portside antics are framed as youthful exuberance

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[5] I am particularly referring to Rediker's *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* (1987), Rodger's *The Wooden World* (1986), and Marcus' *A Naval History of England* (volume 1 and 2, published in 1961 and 1971, respectively) and *Heart of Oak* (1975).

[6] First, the men were organized into two or three watches and then subdivided based on ability: able (the most skilled common sailors), ordinary seamen, or landsman (Lloyd 232). Afterwards, mariners were further divided into gun crews of approximately five men (Lloyd 232).

associated with having a lust for life: phrases like “a girl in every port” or “mind your p’s and q’s” (which refers to paying off a bar tab) are residual linguistic artifacts related to eighteenth-century mariners’ behaviors and how the landlocked responded to those behaviors.

Eighteenth-century British culture also reflected the Tar’s fraught relationship with officers and the Admiralty, often taking the form of work stoppages, desertion, or mutinies. The regimented life aboard an eighteenth-century ship was ensured through harsh discipline that resulted, unsurprisingly, in an occasional enflamed conflict. Part of the tension between officers and crew that is evidenced in cultural texts stems from the Naval Discipline Act, adopted in 1661, which outlined various offenses and their corresponding punishments: 25 out of the 39 violations, for instance, carried the death penalty. Punishments, like floggings, were brutal spectacles that sailors were required to witness (Frykman 81-82). While sailors certainly accepted some punishments in due course, problems arose when discipline was unreasonably harsh. For example, after the Seven Years’ War,

> the material conditions (food, wages, discipline) of naval life deteriorated, causing many to desert. The Admiralty responded with terror. In 1764 deserters John Evans, Nicholas Morris, and John Tuffin took seven hundred lashes on the back; Byrant Diggers and William Morris were hanged. . . . Such deadly punishments at sea imparted a desperate intensity to shoreside resistance” to the press gangs. (Rediker *Outlaws of the Atlantic* 96)

The reality of sailors’ displeasure at being unpaid, consistently denied shore leave, and having to withstand brutal discipline burst spectacularly into the public consciousness again during a string of mutinies that occurred around the British fleet in the late eighteenth

century. First, in 1787, sailors aboard the HMS *Bounty* (which was bound for Tahiti on a mission to acquire breadfruit plants) seized control of the ship, placed Captain William Bligh and 18 of his supporters in a lifeboat with few supplies, and then returned to Tahiti and Pitcairn Island. Many factors contributed to the mutiny: indeterminate voyage length, a late departure date leading to increasingly inclement weather, Bligh's capricious and sarcastic disposition and deteriorating relationship with Acting Lieutenant Fletcher Christian (who would lead the mutiny), dwindling food supply, and the lack of commissioned officers other than Bligh (Lavery 198-200). One captured sailor, Boatswain's Mate James Morrison, later recounted that he witnessed Bligh "in his nightshirt with his hands tied behind him and Mr. Christian standing by him with a drawn bayonet in his hand and his eyes flaming with revenge" (qtd. in Lavery 200).[7] This startling testimony and Bligh's *A Narrative of the Mutiny on board His Majesty's Ship "*Bounty*"* (1790), which details Bligh's 3,618 nautical-mile journey to Timor in the longboat and the subsequent disastrous and deadly attempt to bring the mutineers to justice, contributed to the sensational nature of this mutiny and revealed the tenuous social order aboard deep-sea vessels.[8] The Jack Tar figure must be read in relation to this type of conflict: his acceptance of danger and punishment, often framed as

[7] Morrison claimed that he was one of the few loyal sailors who were forced to stay with the mutineers because the longboat could not hold any more men. Morrison stated, "A boat alongside already crowded, those who were in her crying out she would sink, and Captain Bligh desiring no more might go in, with a slender stock of provisions; what hope old there be to reach any friendly shore, or withstand the boisterous attacks of hostile elements? … by staying in the ship an opportunity might offer of escaping, but by going in the boat nothing but death appeared" (qtd. in Lavery 200). Despite his arguments, Morrison was convicted of mutinying, but later pardoned.

[8] Of the 45 sailors on board, 19 were released in the longboat and, according to Bligh, four or five loyal men remained on the *Bounty*, which means that approximately 47% of the men on ship decided to mutiny. For more on the HMS *Pandora*'s ill-fated journey to capture the mutineers, see Lavery (201-202).

patriotic spirit and duty, obscured the real tensions and unrest that simmered in the wooden world.

The public's perception of mutiny, though, shifted over the course of the century to a more sympathetic approach to seamen's plight. Although the mutiny on the *Bounty* was partly personal in nature, the mutinies of 1797 were more focused on systemic problems with sailors' treatment in the Royal Navy, and these mutinies challenged the general public's view of sailors. The Spithead mutiny, which lasted from April 16th to May 15th, generally had Britons' support and sympathy. At the start of the mutiny, the crew of the flagship *Queen Charlotte* raised a red flag of dissent and the leaders travelled to the other ships in the channel fleet to form a delegation (Marcus *A Naval History* 84). The sailors then issued their demands, which included pay raises (pay was on the same scale as it was in the 1680s), a more equitable division of prize money, better food, and more humane treatment of the sick (Marcus *A Naval History* 84).[9] Importantly, officers were treated with respect: even when an officer was removed from his ship, he was courteously asked to leave (Marcus 84). Although there was some suspicion that the sailors were influenced by revolutionary ideas from France, the consensus is that the Spithead munity was not politically motivated (Lloyd 201). The Admiralty consented to most of the demands, but the suspicious sailors continued the strike, in part because an Admiral cast aspersions on the sailors' masculinity, bravery, and

[9] This issue of pay was particularly problematic because merchant marines had received a pay increase two years earlier (Lavery 214), earning four times as much as Navy seamen. Scholars also note that impressment most likely contributed to the rash of mutinies in the 1790s. Lloyd writes that that the "sudden expansion [in the Navy between 1793 and 1797] goes far to explain the outbreak of the great mutinies that year, since at least [thousands of new sailors were] landmen brought into the service by devious means" (194).

patriotism (Lloyd 85).[10] Tensions increased when officers aboard the *London* attacked some mutineers, fatally wounding them. The public, particularly those living in Portsmouth, were witness to this continuing spectacle: "they assembled in hundreds on the ramparts and beaches to watch the coming and going of boats laden with officers who had been summarily dismissed from their ships, guarded by piratical figures each armed with a brace of pistols and a cutlass" (Lloyd 86). *The Morning Herald* wrote, "every countenance betrays the most evident anxiety" (qtd. in Lloyd 86). Parliament swiftly passed the seamen's bill and the Admiralty sent Admiral Howe, who was greatly trusted and respected by the seamen, to convince the crews that official promises would be kept. The mutiny ended, and pardons were given to all the collaborators. It is important to note that the public supported the sailors for three reasons. First, the sailors were generally non-violent, showing deference to rank even when they were asserting their rights. Second, the clear and well-publicized demands helped frame the mutiny as a work stoppage or strike rather than an overthrow of social norms.[11] Last, the seamen publicly stated that they would weigh anchor if French ships were spotted, thus reaffirming their patriotic sentiments and alleviating some of the public's fear over a French attack. These events emphasize, in legal and political terms, a growing public acceptance of seamen as entitled to the rights and privileges of "Britons." Jack Tar's

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[10] Admiral Gardner told the seamen that they were "skulking fellows, who knew the French were ready for sea, and yet were afraid of meeting them; that their reasons for disobedience were mere pretences [*sic*]; their conduct sheer hypocrisy; for that cowardice, and cowardice alone, has given birth to the mutiny" (Lloyd 85).

[11] William James, a contemporary historian, writes, "The complaints of the Portsmouth mutineers having been, for the most part founded on justice, the sympathy of the nation went with them, and very few persons throughout the kingdom did or could grudge the additional allowances (many of them a mere exchange of the real for the nominal) which the British sailor, after a hard struggle, got permanently secured to him" (qtd. in Marcus *Heart of Oak* 153).

lovability and stalwart patriotism, combined with numerous texts extolling how terribly the tars of old England were treated, contributed to this shift.

Public sympathy towards sailors was not, however, a simple historical narrative of progress. Although the public generally supported the seamen at Spithead, the mutiny at the Nore challenged Britons' view of sailors as sympathetic patriotic defenders of the nation. On May 12, 1797, sailors climbed the rigging and gave three cheers, signaling mutiny. Unlike at Spithead, the mutineers at Nore, led by Richard Parker, did not have a specific set of demands and were uninterested in negotiating. The rebels held officers hostage, leading to a souring of public opinion and the cutting off of provisions to the ships. In retaliation, the mutineers barricaded the Thames and plundered merchant ships trying to enter or leave the river (Marcus *A Naval History* 91). The mutiny eventually ended when Parker called for the ships to flee to France; rather than defect to the enemy, most of the ships deserted the mutiny. Parker and 29 other mutineers were hanged, and others were flogged around the fleet, imprisoned or transported to Australia. There are some key differences between the Spithead and Nore mutinies that shed light on how people viewed sailors and these mariners attempted to take control of that narrative. First, the sailors at the Nore, unlike those at Spithead, tried to cultivate public support by marching through the streets or rowing around the harbor singing "Rule, Britannia," "God Save the King," and "Britons, Strike Home" (Marcus *A Naval History* 88). This blatant attempt at presenting themselves as loyal tars contradicted their imprisonment of officers, an obfuscation that the public saw through. Second, the Nore sailors stole supplies from their fellow countrymen and suspended trade, directly impacting civilians' lives. One writer to the *Oracle and Public Advertiser* stated that they were in a "besieged town" (Marcus *A Naval History* 91). Further strengthening the idea that lower-

class sailors were uncontrollable, even in the rigidly defined social world of the ship, was the mutiny aboard the HMS *Hermione* on September 21, 1797, one of the bloodiest mutinies in Royal Navy history. The mutiny began after Captain Hugh Pigot, known for being tyrannical, said on September 20th that the last two topmen down from the yards should be flogged. The resulting panic led to three men falling to their death, and Pigot ordered their bodies thrown overboard. The topmen who voiced their concerns were flogged. The next day, mutineers brutally killed Pigot and nine officers, throwing the bodies overboard, and then sailed the ship into Spanish waters. According to Lavery, "Even the most discontented seaman . . . was unable to defend the crew's actions, which terrified the ruling classes, both afloat and ashore. They were told of a 14-year-old servant . . . who had urged the murder of his master . . . enough to horrify [anyone] who could afford a servant" (238). Eventually, the mutineers were hunted down: 24 were hanged and one transported (Lavery 238). Although the mutineers were eventually brought to justice, the events of September 21st changed how people viewed the common sailor. The mutinies, combined with the French Revolution, meant that it was harder to view tars as adorable mascots of British nationalism. Instead, they were viewed as people who could be exceedingly dangerous to the social order. Depictions of Jack Tar contain this power, suggesting that the everyday sailor is loyal with simple desires, easily pacified with grog or roast beef. However, even in the face of these incredibly well-publicized breakdowns in naval social order and resultant distrust of the common sailor, the idea of Jack Tar as a national hero persisted. It is within this cultural moment that the image of the Tar started to shift to that of a professional sailor, a family man who went to sea out of duty to his country and desire to support his family. This is not to say that the lower-class caricature disappeared; instead, that version of Jack Tar existed alongside the image of

the professional mariner. In both of these cases (the emergent professional sailor and the well-established lower-class caricature), the Tar embodies an ideal Britishness that acknowledges but also contains the violence and unruliness of real seaman.

Scholarship on Representations of Jack Tar

As I have indicated, much scholarship has explored the historical reality of sailors' lived experiences, but the cultural figure of Jack Tar, a reflection of how Britons imagined the maritime world, has received much less attention. In addition to works by Rediker, Lloyd, Rodger, Bolster, Marcus, Gilroy, Charles Napier Robinson's *The British Tar in Fact and Fiction* (1909) provides a historical narrative of the Royal Navy alongside a helpful catalogue of Jack Tar images. While many drawings of Jack Tar have been digitized, locating them is a challenge made easier by Robinson's catalogue. Although the images and the historical information about sailors' lived experiences are helpful in resurrecting aspects of the seaman's life and locating rare texts, Robinson's text does not shed much light on either the connection between the depictions of the Tar and historical events, or the development of the figure in literature and popular culture throughout the long eighteenth century.

Building on much of the historical research previously mentioned, a wealth of studies of the eighteenth-century theater provide insightful cultural studies' approaches to understanding depictions of sailors on the British stage. In *Theatres of War: Performance, Politics, and Society, 1793-1815* (1995), Gillian Russell explores how the theater, through its representations or reenactments of war, became a political site in which patriotism was contested. She examines how the theater shaped performances of patriotism, how the theater influenced the development of the Jack Tar figure, arguing that the Tar was "largely a

creation of the theatre" (99), and how sailors responded to fictional seamen on the stage. In addition to Russell's work, the role of the theater in shaping Jack Tar is explored by Terrence Freeman in *Dramatic Representations of British Soldiers and Sailors on the London Stage, 1660-1800* (1995). Freeman provides an exhaustive list of performances with sailor characters that informs much of my work. Like Russell, he argues that theatrical representations of the Tar pushed a patriotic agenda and connected with the actual sailors in the audience (27-41). David Worrall's "A Working Theatrical Assemblage: 1790s Representations of Naval Conflict" (2013) argues that the theater was a site in which Britons engaged with geopolitics and where "national ideological aims were habitually reiterated in song and chorus" (124). These studies pave the way for exploring how representations of sailors in the theater pick up aspects of Jack Tar appearing in various other genres and the role of actors themselves in influencing the popularity as well as the various versions of the Tar.

Recent critical works have shown how novels shaped Britons' understanding of the maritime world and the sailors who inhabited it. Margaret Cohen, in *The Novel and the Sea* (2010), argues that sea fiction, by merging genres like ships logs and guidebooks, narrowed the distance between the "armchair sailor" and the maritime world. Janet Sorensen's *Strange Vernaculars* (2017) offers a compelling analysis of the Tar's language in Smollett's *Roderick Random* and Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*, the figure's stereotypically indecipherable nautical jargon, what Cohen refers to as "plain style," reinforcing the characters' free spirit, masculinity, national identity, and, importantly, authenticity. Similarly, Jerry C. Beasley in *Tobias Smollett: Novelist* (1998) explores Smollett's use of technical nautical language when crafting his sailors: according to Beasley, seamen's nautical lingo both "traps" the sailor in

the wooden world and "expresses a profoundly attractive exuberance associated with his innate good-heartedness" (46). Thus, Beasley argues that the sailor's language, even as it separates him from people on the home front, humanizes him, making him an adorable and likeable figure. Lastly, any discussion of important research related to depictions of sailors in British novels must include John Peck's *Maritime Fiction* (2001). For Peck, the maritime adventure "becomes an expression of the national character" (5) with the ordinary sailor made safe by "rendering him as 'Jack Tar'" (28), a conclusion that I also reach in my work. His analysis of Austen's *Persuasion*, situating her representations of sailors within the historical context of Britons' waning support for (and faith in) the Royal Navy provides a useful framework for understanding how the shift to a professional sailor in Austen relates to broader social concerns about Britain's capability of maintaining maritime dominance.

Although theatrical and literary texts have received much critical attention, few scholars have investigated Jack Tar as he appeared in political cartoons, songs, and miscellany. Research on songs in the eighteenth century, particularly Dianne Dugaw's work on balladry in *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650-1850* (1989), is helpful in understanding how music infused public and private spaces, with ballad singers belting out nautical-themed tunes and printed collections of songs making their way into people's homes. Literary depictions of the Tar must account for not just how the sailor was a stock figure on the British stage or in the novel but how those textual representations pick up, respond to, or reflect other conceptions of the patriotic seaman. In my dissertation, I seek to extend Paul A. Gilje's impressive *To Swear Like a Sailor* (2016), which creates a cultural history of how the American Jack Tar sprang from the British figure by examining logbooks, songs, and images. Whereas Gilje is concerned with articulating the similarities and

differences between the two nationalistic figures, my interest lies in how the British Tar developed over time and in response to shifting cultural concerns regarding the impact the expanding empire, and its resultant warfare, could have on the British homeland.

To create a more complete picture of Jack Tar's role in British culture of the long eighteenth century, I ask the following questions: What type of cultural work was being done by Jack Tar at various times during the long eighteenth century? How did literary texts reflect or change the stereotypical figure of the Tar? Moreover, how does genre influence the construction of this unstable figure? How did sailors respond to Jack Tar, using the character for their own gendered self-representation? Lastly, how can bringing literary sources into conversation with ephemeral cultural artifacts speak to Jack Tar's role in a changing British home front?

The Chapters

This dissertation traces Jack Tar from approximately 1660 to 1820, investigating how Britons imagined the maritime world and the sailors who inhabited it during a time of near continuous naval warfare. Novels and plays provide unique insight into how people perceived the men on whom Britain's economy and security rested. I consider how these literary texts reinforce or challenge conceptions of the common sailor found in a multitude of ephemeral cultural artifacts, like songs, cartoons, newspapers, and jokes. This dissertation, in addition to focusing on different literary sources at distinct historical moments, brings together scholarship related to print history, performance theory, postcolonial theory, and disability studies.

Chapter 1 examines the role of print culture in shaping Jack Tar into a national figure in the early eighteenth century. Representations of Jack Tar in this historical moment reveal pervasive concerns over controlling sailors and, by extension, the colonial periphery. I explore Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) primarily in relation to Edward Ward's collection of vignettes titled *The Wooden World Dissected* (1707) and Charles Johnson's true history *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates* (1724). *Robinson Crusoe* portrays sailors as impious, self-serving, dangerous drunkards too easily swayed to turn against their social superiors and their far-distant country. Like Defoe's novel, Ward's and Johnson's texts reinforce the link between unrestrained sailors and lawless vagabonds who roamed the seas in search of easy plunder. Depictions of the common British sailor were influenced by a sense that the maritime world was uncontrollable, that sailors could easily move between lawful service and mutinying or even piracy. This impression of the wooden world and colonial periphery was due, in large part, to a proliferation of print sources across the Atlantic that corresponded with the Golden Age of Piracy (1650-1730): newspapers, trial transcripts, and true histories fueled Britons' insatiable hunger for timely updates about drunken pirates, privateers, and mutineers. Debates raged in British culture about how to control seamen, ensure their loyalty, and impose order on the maritime world. The figure of Jack Tar, as much as it further solidified seamen's reputation for drunkenness, turned the potentially dangerous common sailor into a loveable caricature who is devoted to the nation. In other words, nationalistic ideology reframed Jack Tar's love of grog into a less-threatening, even valuable, characteristic. Moreover, depictions of the Tar paint him as a sympathetic patriotic figure whose innate

loyalty to the nation, present even when mutinying, can be assured through better treatment and timely compensation.

In the second chapter, I investigate how sailors' social mobility was considered in British literature and culture. I analyze how Jack Tar develops in the mid- to late eighteenth century by exploring Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748), specifically focusing on the understudied character Tom Bowling, an uncouth and loveable old sea dog who, when we meet him, had risen through the ranks to become an officer and a new type of gentleman. In the first part of the chapter, I explore how Bowling reflects anxieties related to sailors' lower-class origins, capacity for violence, and potential to transcend their original social station. Seafaring offered men the opportunity for wealth and promotion to the rank of officer, giving skilled lower-class seamen entrance into a different social class on land, thereby disrupting the established social hierarchy in Britain. Rather than presenting the seafarer as a dangerous force (like in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*), Smollett suggests that mariners' unique perspective gained from life at sea can right social wrongs on land: Jack Tar, in Smollett's novel, is a domestic hero as much as he is essential to Britain's colonial success. Moreover, by showcasing how English, Welsh, and Scottish sailors embody stereotypical Tar characteristics, Smollett presents a truly British Jack Tar, a nationalistic message that reflected the Royal Navy's reliance on Scottish and Welsh labor during the Seven Years' War.

In the second section of this chapter, I analyze the role of the British theater in crafting the Jack Tar figure by tracing how Bowling reappeared on the British stage in the late eighteenth century, resonating with sailors in the audience. Portrayed primarily by Henry Woodward and John Bannister, Bowling symbolized the everyman: depending on the

productions, he is presented as either an old, gruff sailor or a young, handsome dancing musician. This seeming discontinuity in the character reveals how the theater transformed both Bowling and Jack Tar. The eighteenth-century British theater alongside the corresponding print industry that thrived off the publishing of plays, songs, and images was essential in crafting, disseminating, and uniting various versions of the Jack Tar figure. By the end of the eighteenth century, Tom Bowling and Jack Tar are, at times, indistinguishable; actors' celebrity contributed to this conflation of Smollett's character with the more mutable cultural icon. Using performance theory, especially Marvin Carlson's concept of ghosting and Joseph Roach's surrogation, I argue that Bowling transforms into a humorous and beloved nationalistic figure that eases Britons' anxieties over sailors' troubling behaviors during war.

In Chapter 3, I explore how Jack Tar imposed a fictitious racial and ethnic homogeneity on the maritime world, obscuring the roles that ship slaves and freedmen inhabited in the Royal Navy and the merchant marine. Building on Chapter 2, I extend my investigation of Jack Tar in the late eighteenth century, focusing on how the Tar identity can be utilized by sailors like Olaudah Equiano in their self-representation as they argue for a place in British society. Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* (1789) has been widely studied with much scholarship addressing how Equiano shapes an African and British hybrid identity. To more fully understand Equiano's hybrid identity, analysis of the *Interesting Narrative* must consider how Equiano's self-representation is inflected by the distinct masculine culture of the wooden world and the figure of Jack Tar. This chapter is divided into three sections, each focusing on an aspect of the stereotypical Tar with which Equiano engages in his performance of a hybrid identity. First, Equiano's *Narrative* contrasts with common

depictions of the sailor as a jovial jokester that is found in drawings and miscellany. Highlighting the cruelty behind this seemingly innocuous teasing, Equiano positions himself as a cultural informant even as he criticizes this aspect of maritime culture. Second, Equiano reinforces the image of the brave Tar as being uniquely British and masculine. He stresses the fellowship that arises from resolutely fighting for one's country, thereby asserting his own position in this nationalistic fraternity. Lastly, I argue that Equiano accentuates how the economic agency afforded by seafaring is constrained by race, differentiating Equiano's performance of the Jack Tar identity from white sailors. Ultimately, I contend that Equiano reinforces and critiques qualities associated with the stereotypical Jack Tar, suggesting that seafaring provides black sailors with an opportunity to cultivate an ideal British masculinity.

My fourth and final chapter investigates reactions to demobilized and disabled sailors in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, a time when the Royal Navy discharged more men than ever before. Whereas many portrayals of Jack Tar in the long eighteenth century stress his youthful vigor and strength, the turn of the century witnessed a surge in depictions of physically disabled sailors, their missing limbs visible reminders of the personal toll taken by imperial expansion. This chapter questions how seamen's social status influenced the representation of their disabled bodies and how the novel of manners, a genre concerned with the home and familial relationships, confronts concerns over veterans' reintegration. To address these questions, I analyze the representation of Captain Harville, an injured veteran, in Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (1817), a novel that focuses on the effects of demobilization on the British home, in conjunction with contemporary drawings of disabled veterans. I show how demobilized seafarers were imagined as sympathetic vagrants, devoted fathers, or as Greenwich pensioners safely tucked away from society. The disabled mariner

signifies the damage sustained by performing his patriotic identity, inhabiting the margins of British society in which he can no longer resume his pre-war role. Austen's novel reflects a wide-spread concern over how demobilized seamen can reintegrate into the domestic space of the home and nation. I argue that Austen's novel is similar to other depictions of seamen that reflect a gradual domestication of the sailor, reframing Jack Tar as an essential component of British familial life. That said, representations of sailors' physical disabilities, even as they construct a new Tar that is more compatible with the home, are bound to the stereotypical Jack Tar caricature prevalent throughout the long eighteenth century.

Chapter 1: Defoe and the Emergent, Nationalistic Jack Tar

Jack Tar, like John Bull, was a powerful national figure embodying a version of ideal Britishness. His lighthearted nature, gusto when fighting the French, and bravado in the face of nature's fury endeared him to large swaths of the British populous, particularly those whose brothers, sons, fathers, or husbands inhabited deep sea ships. Print genres helped create this beloved national figure, but textual and theatrical representations of the early eighteenth-century maritime world contributed to the numerous assumptions about sailors' dubious morality and these ideas regarding mariners became both commonplace and pervasive in literary and cultural texts throughout the long eighteenth century and into the Romantic period. One of the most significant contributing factors to this general aura of suspicion surrounding sailors was the fact that these men had the potential to destabilize the established social order at sea and, by extension, on land. Common Admiralty strategies for controlling these wayward seamen included restricting shore leave, withholding pay, and codifying naval discipline standards. Sailors, particularly those who were pressed into service, were flight risks apt to take advantage of being on land to escape the Navy's clutches. In terms of pay, the reigning theory throughout the long eighteenth century was that sailors needed incentives to return to their ship; therefore, captains would withhold pay for months at a time to ensure seamen returned. Lastly, the Naval Discipline Act that was modified throughout the long eighteenth century strictly regulated sailors' behavior at sea. The Admiralty, in 1661, adopted the Naval Discipline Act to maintain the established social hierarchy at sea by threatening harsh punishments.[12] These measures were designed to

[12] The Naval Discipline Act commonly refers to An Act for the Establishing and Orders for the Regulating and Better Government of His Majesties Navies Ships of Warr & Forces by Sea. The Articles of War had originally been instituted in 1652 and were adopted by the

control an exceedingly mobile and valuable labor force on which Britain depended for its maritime supremacy.

In the public imagination, there was a thin divide between sailors who were loyal and those who were dangerous villains, as Britain's expanding colonial frontier created the conditions for piracy. The high seas were seen as lawless, volatile spaces where men could desert or mutiny, turning against their officers and their nation for the opportunity for quick riches. Essentially, Britons viewed lawful sailors in the merchant marine and Royal Navy along a moral continuum with privateers and pirates. Privateers were private sailors and ships that had received a government commission granting them permission to prey on enemy naval and merchant vessels during times of war. Although operating on the right side of the law, privateers were conceived as little better than pirates, the "villains of all nations" (to use Marcus Rediker's term), an association that tainted the sailing profession and the Navy until the Victorian period. Many seamen on privateering ships were former merchant or Navy sailors, and the divide between sailing in the Navy or merchant marine, privateering and pirating was porous with sailors moving between different ships, either by choice or by force.

Although far from the home front, seafarers' actions were well-known to the public through widespread print/publication. In the sixteenth century, writers like Richard Hakluyt detailed the adventures of privateers such as Francis Drake and captured the British imagination by painting sailors' encounters with the new world as triumphs of an emerging imperialist nation.[13] In the early eighteenth century, the maritime world starts to be

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Restoration government in 1661. The Act of 1749 was in effect with few alterations until 1866.

[13] Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations, Voiages, Traffiques and Discoueries of the English Nation* (1589–1600) catalogued the escapades of adventures, both maritime and on land, from antiquity to the sixteenth century. His description of Drake, in particular,

constructed as an imaginative space where audiences encountered the New World's unfamiliar geographic locations and people through the lens of men who are both similar and vastly different from those back in Britain. Much scholarship, like Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979), Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983), and Kathleen Wilson's *The Sense of the People* (1995), has explored the importance print culture had in building the ideological underpinnings that united disparate parts of the British nation.[14]

To determine how Jack Tar develops into a well-known patriotic figure central to British nationalism, I address the following questions: How is social status negotiated when sailors inhabit, both literally and figuratively, the outskirts of polite society? How does print culture inflect the construction of Jack Tar, particularly regarding the figure's connection to Britain and an emergent national identity? Why, or to what extent, does Jack Tar matter in understanding nationalism in Britain? How do fictionalized accounts of sailors (like those found in novels) reflect, challenge, or reinforce the portrayal of sailors in other cultural texts, like songs or plays? How are the assumptions of sailors' propensity for drunkenness and economic self-interestedness transformed into patriotic selflessness and British masculinity? How did actual seamen interact with maritime narratives or depictions of Jack Tar more broadly? To answer these questions, I analyze depictions of sailors as drunkards and dangerous villains in Edward Ward's collection of vignettes *The Wooden World Dissected* (1707), Charles Johnson's history *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the*

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highlighted how privateering was state-condoned piracy wielded to ensure national supremacy.

[14] Other scholarship that investigates eighteenth-century print culture include, to name a few, Linda Colley's *Britons* (1992), Patrick Parrinder's *Nation & Novel* (2006), Jack Greene's *Evaluating Empire and Confronting Colonialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2013), and Joseph Monteyne's *From Still Life to the Screen* (2013).

Most Notorious Pyrates (1724), newspapers, plays, songs, and images.[15] I also examine Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), analyzing stereotypical tars in the novel as well as exploring how Crusoe works as a representation of the seaman for actual sailors who were reading about him. Defoe's widely popular "maritime picaresque," to use Margaret Cohen's term, is particularly important in understanding how Jack Tar was contested in the popular imagination of the early eighteenth century in part because the novel brings together various maritime genres (like log books), was read by actual sailors, and sets the stage for Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748), another maritime picaresque.[16] These texts from various genres reinforce the prevalent cultural image of sailors as unreliable, disloyal, and self-interested, yet some texts also utilize nationalistic language to define Jack Tar as a patriot, thereby controlling his disruptive potential by ideologically tying sailors to the nation.

Portrayals of sailors in the early eighteenth century show how nationalism becomes the glue that holds Britain's social hierarchy together across cultural and geographic distance: Jack Tar contains many of the potentially problematic qualities (like bellicosity, greed, and individualism) that had long-defined seafarers, but he was tethered to the nation, and even constrained, by a rising nationalistic discourse in a variety of genres.[17] For example, Defoe's

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[15] There is some debate as to the author of *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates*. Some scholars attribute the text to Defoe, possibly because reprintings of book in the 1760s list Defoe as the author. There may be earlier editions that have Defoe listed as author, but 1765 is the earliest version that appears in *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*. Arne Bialuschewski argues that a sailor turned printer named Nathanial Mist is the actual author. Since I am more concerned with the types of representations of sailors swirling in the cultural imagination at the time, I refer to the author by the name printed on the first edition of the book: Charles Johnson.

[16] For my analysis of Smollett's *Roderick Random*, see Chapter 2: "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins."

[17] Each of my central texts in this chapter represent a different genre. Ward's text can best be described as a series of vague character sketches. Defoe's novel straddles the "true history"

Robinson Crusoe depicts the immorality inherent in maritime culture as evidenced by dissolute and drunken tars. Similarly, Ward's *The Wooden World Dissected* and Johnson's *A General History* present sailors as morally ambiguous, self-serving, and mercenary. Unlike Defoe's novel, though, Ward's and Johnson's histories speak to how seafarers, particularly those in the Navy, began to be associated with ensuring the success of Britain's colonial enterprise and, to some extent, imposing British civilization around the Atlantic. For Defoe, the sailor is a necessary evil, someone who must be controlled for the good of the nation; other authors, though, publicly recognize the structural problems that contribute to sailors' dubious behavior, seeking institutional change and presenting tars as noble bastions of the British nation. Thus, literary and cultural texts reveal how authors in the early eighteenth century balanced the increasing necessity for sailors to brave the stormy seas far from Britain with pervasive concerns over seamen's potential to disrupt the nation's colonial expansion. In other words, depictions of Jack Tar in novels, newspapers, and on the stage reflect how the discourse of seafaring in the early eighteenth century were bound to competing cultural debates surrounding alcohol consumption, colonialism, and emergent nationalism.

Drunk and Disorderly Conduct

Early eighteenth century texts reflect concerns over sailors' questionable behavior at sea and on land. For instance, Ward describes the deep-sea sailing vessel as an "Academy . . . where the seven liberal Sciences of Swearing, Drinking, Thieving, Whoring, Killing, Cozening, and Backbiting . . . are taught to full Perfection. It's the mighty Guardian of our Island, defending us all around, from foregn [sic] Dangers, as watchfully as a Mastiff does an

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genre as well as the logbook and the novel form. Charles Johnson's text is a series of "true histories."

Orchard" (2). This quote, which I discuss more fully later in this section, gestures to how the maritime world was perceived as a veritable den of iniquity, with seamen indulging in a wide range of morally-questionable behaviors. I am interested in how drinking is tied to these other behaviors because the Tar's propensity for alcohol later becomes part of the exalted national hero that was a stock figure on the British stage and in print. Sailors' drunkenness in early eighteenth-century texts takes shape in different ways: as a part of mariners enjoying life to the fullest, a coping strategy necessary for facing a dangerous profession, and a gateway to challenging social hierarchies. Texts like Ward's *The Wooden World Dissected* and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* reinforce the popular image of the drunken tar by presenting alcohol as an essential component of maritime culture. These depictions, by highlighting seafarers' propensity for drunken revelry, invariably correlate drinking with other problematic behavior at sea, namely turning mutineer or impiety. These literary texts emphasize sailors' drinking as a problematic and necessary component of a masculine seafaring identity. Yet, Ward's analysis of the different types of sailors and other cultural texts at the time, like plays, songs and David Garrick's famous performance as a drunken sailor in the prologue for David Mallet's masque *Britannia* (1755), reveal how Jack Tar's drunkenness became less threatening when tied to the nation. Ideology, thus, constrains sailors' disruptive potential. Defoe's novel, in contrast, does not contain the sailor through nationalistic sentiment, instead accentuating the power of institutional control while presenting Crusoe, a pseudo-sailor, as a worthy model of British masculinity.

Theater and print portrayals of sailors at the turn of the eighteenth century continually reinforce the idea that drinking is an essential part of the tar's identity. One of the most famous depictions of drunken sailors during the Restoration appeared in William Davenant

and John Dryden's operatic adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Davenant and Dryden's *The Tempest; Or, the Enchanted Island*, first performed in 1667 and then revised with Thomas Shadwell's music in 1674 was enormously successful, appearing frequently in the theaters around London (Dobson 99-102).[18] The play is infused with the specter of the drunken sailor. First, the play opens with a scene in which Stephano, a seaman, tells a cabin boy to "Give the Pilot a dram of the Bottle," presumably to buttress the nerves and stalwartly face a gathering storm (Davenant and Dryden 2). After their ship wrecks on the island, the sailors promptly become inebriated, thinking they will shortly die: Ventoso, a seamen, says, "We cannot live long in this barren Island, and we may Take a soop before death," after which the scene is filled with the fellow mariners requesting additional servings (e.g. "fill me the other soop") (15). The sailors lament the women they will never see again, and one sings a bawdy tune about a lass named Kate who shunned sailors in favor of a tailor "who might scratch her where e're she did itch" (17). This song begins and ends, according to the stage notes, with sailors drinking (17). This scene also shows the drunken mariners, debating their new government and potential social roles, repeatedly drawing swords to assert their worthiness of being named Duke or Vice-Roy (17-18). This humorous moment brings together some prominent stereotypes commonly wrapped up in the image of Jack Tar in the long eighteenth century: namely, that tars were boozy brawlers. Rather than their quick turn to violence and brandished swords being frightening, however, these intoxicated seamen are made ridiculous as they drunkenly negotiate the social positions that they had created only moments prior. Dryden and Davenant's inebriated tars reinforce, in performance after

[18] Various versions of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* appeared on the British stage throughout the eighteenth century: in addition to Davenant and Dryden's opera, David Garrick developed an operetta (1756), there was a puppet version (1780), and John Philip Kemble's 1789 revival appeared on the British stage until 1838 (Dobson 99).

performance, the popular image of the drunken sailor, expanding the reach and prevalence of this version of Jack Tar. The actors' staggering bodies make visible the sailors' ineffectuality and, by extension, alleviate audiences' anxiety over lower-class tars in the colonial periphery.

Print texts reflected this theatrical image of the simple-minded mariner whose joie de vivre is encapsulated by his indulgence in alcohol. In *The Wooden World Dissected*, Ward writes, "when [the sailor] does get ashore . . . for knowing his Time to be but short, he crowds much in a little room, and lives as fast as possible" (100). Ward imagines sailors as being devoted to two specific pleasures: getting "reeling drunk ashore" and visiting brothels. The phrase "knowing his Time be but short" references how shore leave was extremely limited, sometimes no more than a day, if it were permitted at all, and it refers to how seafaring was rife with mortal danger. Ward also states that that sailors are "commonly . . . elevated with Flip" (101). Flip, a hot sweetened mixture of beer and spirits, was famously associated with sailors in large part because it is mentioned by Ben the Sailor in William Congreve's tremendous hit *Love for Love* (1695).[19] Ben characterizes sailors as "merry Folk, we Sailors, we han't much to care for. Thus we live at Sea; eat Bisket, and drink Flip" (Congreve 64).[20] Ben frames sailors' drinking in terms of both a carefree attitude and their

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[19] *Love for Love* was a sensation: between 1704 and 1729, for instance, it was performed at Drury Lane, Queen's Theatre, and Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Richmond over 120 times (Avery). Ben the Sailor was famously played first by Thomas Doggett (for whom Congreve wrote the part of Ben), by Colley Cibber in 1708, and later by John Bannister. Charles Lamb claimed that Bannister was successful in making the audience feel that Ben was a real sailor by combining "naivety, warm good-heartedness, and blithe indifference" (qtd. in Russell 105). For more on Bannister and his influence on sailors' portrayals on the British stage, see Chapter 2: "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins."

[20] This dialogue is repeated in "The Amorous Seaman and the Disdainful Mistress" in *The Town Spy, or, The Devil's Factors Discover'd* (1704), a collection of short dialogues between different recognizable cultural figures (101). Additionally, in Richard Head's novel *The English Rogue, or Witty Extravagant* (1665), the narrator tells of "merry drunken Sailors . . . who, when they had Liberty to come ashore, would lustily booz it; and sing and dance, all

wandering lifestyle that precludes attachments or commitments. In Congreve's play and Ward's *The Wooden World Dissected*, as in Davenant and Dryden's *The Tempest*, mariners are defined by an affinity for libations—their hedonistic behavior framed as a lighthearted approach to life. All these texts, then, reinforce in the cultural imagination the image of the jolly drunken tar, a man whose intoxication is amusing rather than troubling or threatening.

In addition to presenting drinking as relatively harmless, Ward suggests that drinking is a component of sailors' bravery. According to Ward, alcohol is the sailor's "Sovereign Charm against Fear in an Engagement; the more he drinks, the warmer he fights, tho', God knows, his Shots fly all at random" (Ward 99). The drunken sailor is an object of humor: while he can fight with more vigor, the sailor's shots "fly at random." He is, to some extent, impotent: his drunkenness is less threatening because he is partially ineffectual. Although an amusing image, this scene stresses how alcohol becomes essential to the masculine performance of bravery and nationalism. Again, Ward presents drinking as a vital component of maritime culture—in this case, drinking is not for revelry but for fortifying the nerves in a sea battle. Ward's seamen are not devoid of fear: instead, they numb their reactions to a hostile and terrifying environment. Alcohol, then, is a central component in the performance of masculine bravery. By describing alcohol as a "Sovereign Charm," Ward invokes God and the monarchy, thereby satirically sanctioning drunkenness when it is in service to Britain. Here, hints of nationalistic ideology that later define the tar as a patriotic hero emerge to reinscribe seamen's well-known and potentially-problematic behavior as essential to the sailor's unique identity and the nation's safety. This is not to say that Ward's text does not criticize sailors for their debauchery as potentially affecting Britain's security: he writes that

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Weathers" (2). This repetition shows how Britons were interacting with this ubiquitous idea of sailors as lighthearted drunkards in many genres.

ships are an “Academy . . . where the seven liberal Sciences of Swearing, Drinking, Thieving, Whoring, Killing, Cozening, and Backbiting . . . are taught to full Perfection. It’s the mighty Guardian of our Island, defending us all around, from foregn [sic] Dangers, as watchfully as a Mastiff does an Orchard” (2). What this text importantly reveals is ambiguity towards sailors’ behavior. On the one hand, Ward is suspicious of a maritime world that is a veritable den of inequity. Yet, Ward’s discussion of drinking leading to more fearless fighting (however ineffectual) shows seeds of the humorous drunken tar that later becomes a patriotic figure. In many ways, this tension regarding sailors’ drinking possibly leading to other morally-dubious behaviors is always present or wrapped up in representations of Jack Tar throughout the long eighteenth century and into the Romantic period.

Like Ward’s *The Wooden World Dissected*, Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* reinforces this idea that sailors’ relationship to alcohol was part of the culture of a wooden world marked by debauchery. After surviving a frightful storm at sea, Crusoe is invited to share a “Bowl of Punch” with fellow sailors: “we went the old way of all Sailors, the Punch was made, and I was made drunk with it, and in one Night’s Wickedness I drowned all my Repentance, all my Reflections upon my past Conduct, and all my Resolutions for my future” (10). In this moment, young Crusoe is conflicted about being at sea, and the frightful storm forces him to confront his mortality as well as his rejection of his parents’ wishes. Whenever thoughts of returning to land and his family arose, Crusoe “applying my self to Drink and Company, soon master’d the Return of those Fits” (10). Defoe, unlike Ward, portrays the moral depravity of the maritime world evidenced by rituals of masculinity that incorporate drinking. Crusoe laments how getting drunk is “wickedness” that “drowned all my Repentance”: from Crusoe’s perspective, drinking is contrasted with religious growth and

adherence to patriarchal will.[21] In this way, Defoe's novel diverges from other maritime narratives: Margaret Cohen writes, "sea fiction gives pride of place to communities of laboring men, bonded in the struggle for survival, rather than communities of private sociability, strongly associated with women, shaped by passion, virtue, and taste" (11). Whereas other texts popular with sailors reinforce a masculine community that arises from shared trauma, Defoe's novel highlights the individual, a focus that frames drinking as a personal failing. Moreover, Crusoe's speech pattern separates him from the stereotypical tar: he does not use any nautical jargon that was so alluring and entertaining for landlocked readers. Literary scholar Janet Sorensen writes, "the opacity of [sailor's technical language] . . . seems to have made it strangely alluring, something readers wanted to learn and make their own, strange and yet increasingly more familiarly British" (232). By not conforming to typical technical jargon, or plain speech, Crusoe further distinguishes himself from the tar identity. In this way, the tar is more alien and other, not one with whom the reader identifies from other maritime literature, constructing his drunkenness as morally damaging, rather than framed as harmless community enrichment or even laudable behavior.

Crusoe's perspective aligns with moral arguments against drunkenness typified by Josiah Woodward in *The Seaman's Monitor* (1701), a guide book that seeks to improve sailors' behavior and Christian piety: "And how many too have been seen disorder'd in Drink in their way of rejoicing so soon as their Danger is over; as if the odious Vice of Drunkenness

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[21] Literary scholar J. Paul Hunter, in *The Reluctant Pilgrim* (1966), argues that Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* was written in the tradition of guide literature, an argument that I find to be particularly persuasive when one considers Defoe's treatment of sailors. According to Hunter, one common theme in guides was the idea that "obedience to an earthly father, God's deputy in the family, preserves the divine order, and rebellion against him is equivalent to rebellion against God" (39), a sentiment illustrated at the start of the novel when Crusoe goes to sea against his father's wishes only to be immediately faced with a life-threatening storm.

were a proper *Thank-offering* to the All pure God. O monstrous Impiety!" (3).[22] What Woodward and Defoe object to is the absence of religious piety in the maritime world. Woodward's stringent rebuke of sailors' drinking in relief or celebration of surviving in the face of mortal peril similarly reflects Crusoe's belief that drunkenness is antithetical to Christian values. Crusoe illustrates the common belief presented in guide literature that sailors, rather than turning to God, lean on booze to exert a measure of control in a maritime environment marked by inconsistency.[23] This concern over excessive drinking was tied to the debates about liquor; perhaps the best-known depiction of the tension surrounding drinking in the mid-century can be seen in William Hogarth's *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane* (1751). Drinking beer is correlated with prosperity and the future of Britain, as evidenced by the dilapidated pawnshop, the romance budding between two healthy young couples, and smiling Britons holding tankards of ale. Gin consumption, on the other hand, is related to abject poverty and the breakdown of the fabric of society: the pawnshop's business is booming, numerous brawls take place in the background, and in the foreground a skeletal ex-soldier sits barely clothed in a drunken stupor, and, most strikingly, a syphilitic woman drops a baby head-first over the side of a staircase. Texts like these gesture to the fierce debate raging in British society about liquor consumption and its relationship to the nation. Defoe's novel, then, reflects a prominent (and decidedly negative) side of the common cultural debate concerning the role of alcohol in sailors' and, more generally, Britons' lives, a particularly fraught topic in the early to mid-eighteenth century.

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[22] Other guides directed toward seamen include *Navigation Spiritualized* (1664), *The Sea-Mans Direction* (1640), and *The Religious Mariner* (1700) (Hunter 29).

[23] Hunter writes that guides urged people to keep promises made in distress: "This obligation was especially urged upon those who had escaped disasters at sea, for seamen were notorious for making rash promises in distress, but, like Crusoe and his comrades on the first voyage, for breaking them once danger had passed" (70).

Theatrical and textual depictions of Jack Tar's drunkenness, particularly when connected with lawlessness, further emphasize how sailors were imagined as walking a fine line between revelry and criminality. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* underscores the ever-present threat of sailors becoming unruly, rebelling against God and country, in the scene where mutineers land on Crusoe's island. Crusoe witnesses eleven men come ashore, three of whom are unarmed prisoners. Two mutineers set to watch the longboat, "having drank too much Brandy, fell a-sleep," causing the vessel to become stuck in the sand; upon awakening, "like true Seamen who are perhaps the last of all Mankind given to fore-thought," they try to free the boat, eventually quit, and proceed to further encroach on Crusoe's island (213). For Defoe, the mariners' lack of foresight, compounded by their propensity for drink, is further evidence of seamen's immorality or rejection of a Christian worldview that frames sailors' experiences in terms of religious tests and redemption. First, this scene draws attention to dissipation—the drinking evidenced here is tied to laziness and unproductivity, beyond the insubordination at the heart of the mutiny. In this way, these sailors, like those with whom Crusoe shared a bowl of punch at the outset of his journey, choose debauchery rather than "high resolutions" like duty to God and country (Hunter 30). Second, Defoe reflects a typical characterization of mariners as men who live in the moment. Like the representation of Jack Tar in *The Wooden World Dissected*, Defoe's mutineers, like the sailors at the start of the novel and even the younger Crusoe himself, are concerned with immediate pleasure, lacking the ability or interest to think beyond their individual desires and failing to see role of providence in the maritime world.[24] By presenting sailors as simultaneously strange and

[24] Hunter states, "Like Crusoe [after he embraces religion], the sailors of the providence books attribute their miseries to previous wickedness and their deliverances to divine mercy" (64). Whereas Crusoe eventually learns that his rebellion against his father and reliance on

familiar, as both dastardly villains and common sailors besieged by temptation, Defoe suggests that the wooden world was an inherently suspicious social space—that the sea was a place of both redemption and dissipation.

The many representations of the drunken tar reflect a pervasive concern in eighteenth-century Britain about the massive amounts of alcohol consumed in the Navy both by officers and common sailors.[25] The worry over drinking was not drunkenness, per se. Officers were primarily concerned with a breakdown in that community at sea: potential problems included fighting, theft, or being unable to complete watch duties. As maritime historian N. A. M. Rodger notes, "the midshipmen were not 'to interrupt the men in mirth and good fellowship, while they keep within the bounds of moderation, the intention of it being to prevent excessive drinking, which is not only a crime of itself, but often draws men into others which when sober they would most abhor'" (74). Once again, drinking is depicted as a necessary for community building in the wooden world. The Articles of War (1661) reflect how drunkenness was viewed as a relatively minor offence: "Every person and persons in his Majesties pay using unlawfull and rash Oathes Cursings Execrations Drunkennes Uncleannes or other Scandalous Actions in derogation of Gods Honour and corruption of good manners shall be punished by Fine Imprisonment or otherwise as the Court Martiall shall thinke fitt" ("Charles II"). In comparison, sleeping during watch and theft could be punished with

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alcohol contribute to being stranded on the island, the mutineers reflect a different ideology, one that guide literature warned against.

[25] Before rum rations, officers brought extraordinary amounts of liquor aboard. For example, in 1749, the captain of the *Harwich* had "over 600 gallons of spirits, and nearly as much wine" on board (Rodger 74). While some of that was for trade, much would have been drunk by the officers. And, officers would reward sailors with liquor. Types of available booze depended on route: for shorter voyages, sailors enjoyed beer or watered wine. In the West Indies, sailors had watered rum; in the East Indies, arrack was the most common spirit. Brandy was also a popular option (Rodger 73).

death.[26] Of course, flogging was much more likely than a death sentence, but it is important to note that drunkenness is grouped with mundane concerns like cursing.[27] Categorizing drinking with cursing suggests that drinking was, perhaps reluctantly, accepted as an integral component of life at sea that could not be eradicated. Ultimately, representations of sailors' drinking reveal unresolved tension around sailors' behavior and the limits of controlling this group of men on which the nation heavily relied.

The grog ration was one way in which the Navy sought to control sailor's alcohol consumption, but this further reinforced the popular connection between seamen and drinking. Admiral Edward Vernon intended to combat drunkenness, "the eternal vice of seamen" (Lloyd 256), by controlling the amount of liquor sailors would drink. Starting in 1740, sailors were given half a pint of rum that was diluted with a quarter of a pint of water twice a day (at noon and 6:00pm).[28] Sailors viewed their grog ration as sacrosanct, and various lyrical depictions of Jack Tar weave the ration into the sailor mythos throughout the long eighteenth century. For instance, the song "Grog is the Liquor of Life" connects drinking with national identity and bravery:

> For grog is the liquor of life,
>
> The delight of each true British tar,

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[26] The Articles of War states that "no man in or belonging to the Fleet shall sleep upon his Watch or negligently performe the Duty imposed on him or forsake his station upon pain of death or other punishment as the circumstances of the Case shall require" and "All Robbery and Theft committed by any person in or belonging to the Fleet shall be punished with death or otherwise as the Court martiall upon considerac[i]on of circumstances shall finde meete" ("Charles II")

[27] This particular article seems to be a catch-all, grouping disparate "scandalous" behaviors together. For instance, oaths are lumped in with "uncleanness," a term that could have referred to homosexual activity (Malcomson 163).

[28] The evening ration was abolished in 1824, and the remaining ration reduced to one gill in 1850 (Lloyd 256). It was not until 1970 that the grog ration was completely discontinued.

It banishes sorrow and strife,

And softens the hardships of war

. . . . . .

Now war is declar'd, let's advance,

May the flincher be hang'd like a dog,

Who yields to proud Spain or vain France,

Is a stranger to freedom and grog (*The New Liverpool Songster* 237-239)[29]

Grog is presented as essential to sailors' joviality and ability to cope with life at sea: it is a "delight" that "banishes sorrow and strife." Grog is also tied to sailors' patriotic identity, since it is the joy of "each true British tar." Jack Tar, then, was a character whose inebriated behavior defined him as uniquely British, and mariners' usefulness to the nation is defined in conjunction with their alcohol consumption. Moreover, in the cultural imagination, grog is correlated to patriotic machismo as tars, because they have grog, will never flinch in the face of a sea battle or yield to Britain's foes. Popular tunes like these that depict alcohol as essential to the Jack Tar figure and national security, to some extent, condone this behavior while constraining the drunken sailor's disruptive potential.[30]

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[29] It is difficult to determine when this song originally appeared. In addition to being printed in *The New Liverpool Songster* (1786), this song also appears as "Grog" in 1760 (*The Muse's Delight* 146-147).

[30] Songs and ballads were pervasive in eighteenth-century British life with the increasing availability of cheaply printed songsheets and song collections that brought together tunes from the theater and musicians like Charles Dibdin (in the second half of the century): "Composers, musicians, and singers achieved prominence equal to that of the writers and actors with whom they collaborated [in the theater]. The publishing of songs and music rivaled that of playtexts" (Dugaw "Critical Insights" 159). Prevalent in the late eighteenth century, some song collections even proport to contain songs actually "Sung by Brave Tars of Old England" (*The Jovial Songster*), although that claim is difficult to verify. In addition to song collections, songs appeared in scattered across miscellanies. Traditionally, these songs have received little scholarly attention. Some scholarship has focused on ballads, like Dianne

The theater also reflected the image of the drunken tar as patriotic hero. On the stage, the tar's drunkenness is presented as humorous and laudable, like in print. This non-threatening sauced sailor was solidified in the cultural imagination with David Garrick's famous portrayal of a sailor in the prologue to David Mallet's masque *Britannia,* which debuted on May 2, 1755, during the French and Indian War and on the eve of the Seven Years War.[31] A "fuddled" Garrick "staggers forward" onto the stage and debates fighting the French or staying out of the fray:

> Shall I again to sea—and bang Mounseer?
>
> Or stay on shore, and toy with Sall and Sue—
>
> . . . . . .

Dugaw's *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650-1850* which explains how broadsheet ballads were a ubiquitous commodity in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British life (even appearing in privies) (17). Although many of the sea songs and chanties I reference in my work are not ballads in the traditional sense in that some do not tell a story or may have only appeared in collections, what this productive trade in cheap printed music speaks to is a prolific amateur musical culture in which the public voraciously consumed music. For more on music's role in everyday people's lives, see Dugaw's "On the 'Darling Songs' of Poets, Scholars, and Singers: An Introduction" (2006) and Robertson, Pickering, and Korczynski's "'And Spinning So With Voices Meet, Like Nightingales They Sung Full Sweet': Unravelling Representations in Pre-Industrial Textile Production" (2008). Angela McShane's "Drink, Song and Politics in Early Modern England" (2016) also speaks to how ballad singers would craft tunes outside of alehouses, tailoring their material to customers, like seamen, likely passing by, a practice that may have resulted in large numbers of ballads depicting lighthearted drunken sailors.

[31] Mallet also co-wrote with James Thomson the hugely-popular "Rule, Britannia!" which first appeared in *Alfred* (1740). For more on "Rule, Britannia!", see Chapter 2: "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins." Since Garrick's portrayal of the drunken sailor was such a sensation, I focus on Mallet's prologue. Freeman writes, the prologue debuted days after Admiral Boscawen sailed for America (April 27th), "creat[ing] interest in the Tars through a topical reference that contrasts their forthright performance of duty with the confused, 'fuddled' wrangling of different factions in the government" (58). Garrick's prologue received much attention, in part because of Garrick's own celebrity, but drunken sailors on the stage were certainly common before 1755. For instance, in addition to Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest; Or, The Enchanted Island*, which I have already discussed, Richard Yates portrayed, on August 22, 1741, a drunken sailor in "A Drunken Epilogue in the Character of an English Sailor" (Freeman 57-58).

There's nothing better, faith—save flip and fighting:

I must away—I must—

What! shall we sons of beef and freedom stoop,

Or lower our flag to slavery and soop?

. . . . . .

Still shall old England be your Frenchman's butt?

Whene'er he shuffles, we should always cut. (Mallet)

Mallet combines different elements of Jack Tar's characterization to present the stereotypical sailor as both a whoring drunkard and a patriotic defender of the nation: Jack Tar is defined by his love for "flip and fighting."[32] Rather than contrasting drunkenness with effectiveness (as seen in Ward's *The Wooden World Dissected* and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*), Mallet repackages drunkenness as masculine patriotism at its finest. In other words, in this prologue, these two aspects of the Jack Tar figure co-exist, particularly since Garrick chooses to fight ("I must away—I must"). Mallet places the individual sailor's decision to go to war within the framework of national identity: without "we sons of beef and freedom," the nation will be reduced to slavery, thereby losing an essential element of British identity—that Britons enslave but are never themselves enslaved.[33] Additionally, Mallet's prologue uses the language of dance to contrast the effeminate French with the masculine British tar. The French "shuffle" (dance) and the British "cut." Because cut can indicate a rapid dance step

[32] This representation of sailors frequenting prostitutes and drinking in excess was common on the eighteenth-century stage. For example, in Thomas Boulton's play *The Sailor's Farewell; or the Guinea Outfit* (1768), the character Tom Bowling refers to grog as "the liquor of life, the soul of a sailor" while sitting in a tavern with other sailors and prostitutes (11). Tom Bowling, as I discuss in Chapter 2: "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and 'Tarpaulins'" is an important Tar in eighteenth-century culture.

[33] This sentiment is more explicitly articulated in songs like "Rule, Britannia!": "Rule, Britannia! rule the waves / Britons never will be slaves" (*The Blackbird* 37).

while alluding to the physical act of fighting with bladed weapons, the prologue suggests that wherever Frenchmen move, British tars will meet them with deadly force. Thus, Garrick's fuddled state does not detract from the nationalistic message of British naval dominance (Freeman 57). Instead, as literary scholar Gillian Russell writes, "in representing the 'Jolly Jack Tar' in this way, Garrick was communicating a powerful message about the proper role of the sailor in Georgian society as someone to be respected but who also needed to exercise self-restraint, constantly monitoring his own public role" (100). What Mallet and Garrick do with the drunken sailor prologue, then, is show the general public and the sailors in the gallery how seamen's identity is tied up in fighting for the nation, that sailors had a specific role to perform. By presenting sailors in way, Garrick's seaman reassures civilians while also encouraging the tars to serve their country.

Linking drunkenness with patriotic fervor and national defense also appeared in visual representations of sailors into the Romantic period. For instance, Charles Williams' *John Bull threatened by Insects from all Quarters!!* (1807) depicts a sailor's fighting ability literally supported by grog (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Charles Williams' John Bull threatened by Insects from all Quarters!! (1807)

The sailor in this image is referred to as John Bull, an appellation commonly used with representations of soldiers but comes to represent an "archetypical Englishman" (Teal 31). He wears Jack Tar's tell-tale striped pants, carries a cutlass, and stands over the Navy's anthem "Rule, Britannia!" written on a sheet of paper in the lower right corner.[34] Published during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) when Britain was in a fierce battle for colonial

[34] According to caricaturist Adrian Teal, the character John Bull emerged in the early eighteenth century and developed into a recognizable figure, like Jack Tar, that symbolized the British nation: at times, John Bull was a depicted as a "plain-speaking, beer-quaffing mouthpiece, suspicious of politicians and anything that wasn't English and who was unshakeably patriotic" (31). At other times, he was "a course dull-witted, victimized yokel" with a "foaming pot of ale" and a "ruddy, bumpkin's face" (31). For more on John Bull, see Miles Taylor's "John Bull and the Iconography of Public Opinion in England c. 1712-1929" (1992), Roy T. Matthews' "Britannia and John Bull: From Birth to Maturity" (2000), and Tamara Hunt's *Defining John Bull* (2003).

dominance with France, Russia, the Netherlands, and America, Britain is depicted as besieged on all sides. Protecting “The Tight Little Island,” the Tar sits astride a barrel of grog that is supporting his valiant efforts warding off Britain’s enemies who take the form of insects (e.g. the French Dragon Fly and the American Hornet) flying toward the sailors’ head above approaching ships. A speech bubble reads, “Come on my Lads - give me but good sea room, and I dont care for any of you why all your attacks is no more than a gnat stinging an Elephant . . .”. The tar bravely taunts his enemies—the nation’s mighty defender compared to whom all other nations’ forces are miniscule. Images like this show how sailors’ drinking, although concerning, was reframed as a patriotic characteristic that was necessary for Britain’s continued maritime dominance.

Greedy Pirates or Needy Patriots

In addition to depicting drunken seamen as either problems or patriots, early-eighteenth century representations of Jack Tar were heavily inflected by concerns over sailors rebelling. A widening range of print culture shone a light on sailors’ actions in the colonial periphery, making their behavior more frightening and immediate. Texts like *The Wooden World Dissected*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and Johnson’s *A General History* construct the wooden world as a space rife with violence and barely-controlled men with rapidly-changing loyalties, but they also depict sailors as national figures essential for Britain’s security and economic future. Much of the cultural discourse revolved around how sailors’ unruly behavior (mutinying or turning pirate) resulted from seafarer’s dire economic need. These texts, and others in the early eighteenth century, suggest, first, that unruly sailors threaten world order, and, second, that seafarers’ loyalty can be ensured by prompt payments. By

presenting sailors as economic victims of the state, eighteenth century literary and cultural texts, like the ones listed above, reinforce the notion that there is a reciprocal relationship between seaman and nation, that Britain owed these men for their allegiance. I argue that while novels, newspapers, and trial publications reveal Britons' concerns springing from sailors and the barely-controlled maritime world, print culture helped reframe the dangerous tar into a beloved patriotic figure who was a downtrodden victim of the state. In other words, the behaviors and characteristics that defined sailors are repeated alongside a discourse of the tar's place in the nation. In this way, early eighteenth-century print culture reinforced the idea that Jack Tar was a non-threatening everyman who was vital to ensuring the national interests at home and in the colonial periphery.

Many early-eighteenth century representations of sailors stress the tar's wavering loyalty, or his capacity to turn against his officers or fellow crewmembers. As previously noted, the mutiny scene in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* presents sailors as men whose allegiance constantly shifts in a world where the state's influence is tenuous, but the scene also shows a tension between a legislative body enacting laws at the colonial center and enforcing those laws in the colonial periphery. According to the imprisoned captain, the blame for the mutiny seems to rest on two "incorrigible Villains" who flip the crew's loyalty (215). Other than placing the blame on those two sailors, the novel does not reveal the motivations behind the mutiny, giving the impression that sailors can turn mutinous at any time: the line between honest tar and mutineer is blurry at best. Significantly, the captain argues that the mutineers should not, on the whole, be killed because most would return to their duty once captured (215). Other than the ringleaders, the men were "easily perswaded, not only to yield, but afterwards to joyn very sincere with us" (223). The captain reveals two

important aspects of managing the colonial periphery: first, applying laws in the maritime world was often up to the discretion of individual captains, and second, the need for able seamen ensured men who had mutinied would go unpunished.[35] Law and order on the high seas was inconsistent depending on the ship, leading to constant tension throughout the eighteenth century between the Admiralty, captains, and crews.[36] Furthermore, captains could choose, with an eye towards retaining as many man as possible, to make an example out of a select few sailors. Defoe's captain, then, shows how loyalty shifts in the wooden world as men can vacillate quickly between mutiny and loyalty.

While sailors are presented as living on the fringes of civilization and occasionally acting against the best interest of the state by rebelling, the novel suggests that Britain can bring order to the maritime world. The captain states that the mutineers "entered into a cursed Conspiracy, by which they had all forfeited their Lives to the Law" (217). He fears that these desperate sailors would fight all the harder "knowing that if they were reduc'd, they should be brought to the Gallows, as soon as they came to *England*, or to any of the *English* colonies" (217). Defoe's captain alludes to the penalty of death for mutineers that was established in the Naval Discipline Act. Unlike other offenses, like not chasing the enemy, where the choice of punishment was at the discretion of the captain or court, mutiny

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[35] To indicate the discretionary powers of the captain or court, the Naval Discipline Act contains phrases like the following: "pain of death or such other punishment as the Court martiall shall thinke fitt to impose" ("Charles II").

[36] The most well-known events stemming from crews violently objecting to inconsistent punishments occurred at the end of the eighteenth century. As discussed in the Introduction, in 1797 on the HMS *Hermione*, the crew mutinied after enduring exceedingly harsh punishments from Captain Pigot, who the mutineers hacked to death and threw overboard. In contrast, some of the problems leading to the mutiny on the HMS *Bounty* (1789) stemmed from Captain Bligh's inconsistency: he was either too lenient or too harsh, causing chaos on the ship, thereby creating the conditions that lead to fomenting dissent. The issue of draconian captains was also represented in Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748).

threatened the tenuous hierarchy at sea, and was, at least in the eyes of the law, framed as necessitating capital punishment (although as I previously noted, this punishment was not always enforced).[37] Moreover, in Defoe's novel, control in the colonial periphery is framed as English, creating the impression that England's presence in the maritime world leads to order. In other words, individual desire is reshaped by the state's colonial power. This depiction of England as a civilizing influence is reinforced when Crusoe adopts the appellation of governor. The captain tells the mutineers that the island's governor "was an *English* Man . . . that he might hang them all there, if he pleased," and upon being told this, the mutineers beg the captain for mercy and to not be sent to England (226). Crusoe and the captain, by using the title of governor, give Crusoe an aura of institutional authority. Additionally, the sailors' immediate terror and acquiescence suggests that England's draconian stance towards mutineers can rein in wayward seamen. By articulating a broader conflict between individual sailors and the nation's colonial apparatus, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* reinforces the image of the lawless maritime world and mariners as disloyal potential criminals untethered to the nation.[38] Moreover, the captain's pardon of all but the ringleaders speaks to the tension inherent in Britain's maritime supremacy: the necessity for thousands of able-bodied men needed to be balanced with controlling this highly mobile and valuable

[37] According to the Naval Discipline Act, "Noe Person in or belonging to the Fleete shall utter any words of Sedition or Mutiny nor make or endeavour to make any mutinous Assemblies upon any pretence whatsoever upon pain of death" ("Charles II").
[38] My reading of the mutiny scene reaffirming the ability of Britain to control the colonial frontier aligns with Christopher Flynn's argument that "Crusoe's repeated efforts to control his surroundings . . . echoes an eagerness Defoe showed in his fiction and political writings concerning the Americas, for securing North America and the island in the Caribbean to the British Crown . . . as imperial possessions bound by loyalty and tamed to British desires and uses" (14).

labor force. This mutiny scene, then, highlights the importance of a colonial system that, at least to some extent, can accommodate sailors' vacillating allegiance.

Similar to Defoe's novel, texts like Charles Johnson's *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates*, published five years after *Robinson Crusoe*, sensationalized sailors' ability to vacillate between legal seafaring and criminality (mutiny or piracy), suggesting that these maritime desperados are not wholly dissimilar from the Navy seamen who hunted them throughout Britain's colonial periphery.[39] Johnson's account of Captain Edward Teach, also known as Blackbeard, demonstrates how the noble qualities associated with the Navy sailor are the same characteristics that lead to successfully pilfering merchant vessels and outfoxing the Royal Navy.[40] Johnson narrates the conflict between Blackbeard and Lieutenant Robert Maynard of the *Pearl* who commanded the mission to capture or kill Teach. The two men are depicted as being remarkably similar. After Maynard locates Blackbeard's *Queen Anne's Revenge*, Teach says, "Damnation seize my Soul if I give you Quarters, or take any from you" (94). Upon hearing this, Maynard responds, he "expected no Quarters from him, nor should give him any" (94). Here, as in the rest of Blackbeard's story, the two foes mirror each other: there is little linguistic difference

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[39] The print history of this text is complex. There are many versions of *A General History* (1724) published throughout the eighteenth century, and some versions are virtually identical while others contain different information. Adding to this complexity, Johnson's *The History of the Pyrates* (1728) is quite similar to *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates* (1724). Published in two volumes, *The History* contains much of the same information as can be found in *A General History*; however, *The History* contains material that does not appear in the 1724 version *A General History* nor later editions, like the 1734 edition. For example, while Kidd's death is mentioned in passing in the first edition of *A General History*, a more extensive account of Captain Kidd appears in *The History of the Pyrates*. Added to this complexity is the fact that later reprintings do not have an author listed or have been attributed to Daniel Defoe. I primarily use *A General History* (1724), but I indicate any places that I draw from different versions/editions.

[40] Teach is sometimes spelled Thatch, as in Johnson's *A General History*.

between moral sailors and amoral pirates. Their language and later their actions reinforce the continuity between Royal Navy sailors and pirates: both fight bravely. Maynard attacks the pirates "with as much Bravery as ever was done upon such an Occasion" and Blackbeard fights "with great Fury" till the bitter end.[41] Later, Johnson writes:

> Here was an End of that couragious Brute, who might have pass'd in the World for a Heroe, had he been employ'd in a good Cause; his Destruction which was of such Consequence to the Plantations, was entirely owing to the Conduct and Bravery of Lieutenant *Maynard*, and his Men. . . . What seems a little off, is, that some of these Men, who behaved so bravely against *Black-beard*, went afterwards a pyrating themselves, and one of them was taken along with *Roberts*. (96-97)

Both Maynard and Blackbeard are defined by their courage and fighting ability. For Johnson, Blackbeard contains some of the noble qualities that would have made him a "heroe," but what separates Maynard from Blackbeard is, to some extent, circumstance. Blackbeard operates against Britain's interest, therefore losing the opportunity to be a national hero. By calling Maynard "Lieutenant" when prior to this moment he was referred to as "Mr. Maynard," Johnson further articulates the nationalistic divide between these two men: whereas Maynard's actions are sanctioned by the British state, Blackbeard, because he operates on the fringes of British civilization, is destined to remain a "Brute." This passage additionally points to how sailors can easily change from hero to villain in the maritime world: the sailors who "behaved so bravely against *Black-beard*" later turned pirate, one even

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[41] Johnson's description of Blackbeard's last moments contributes to the enduring mythos surrounding the pirate captain: having received "a terrible Wound in the Neck and Throat" and a "Shot into his Body, from the Pistol that Lieutenant *Maynard* cock'd, yet still stood his Ground and fought with great Fury, till he received sixteen Wounds, and five of them by Shot" (96). See Appendix A for a drawing of Blackbeard from Johnson's first folio edition (1734).

joining Bartholomew “Black Bart” Roberts, whom I discuss more fully later in this section. Therefore, while courage is certainly presented as a laudable masculine quality necessary in the wooden world, Johnson’s text suggests that bravery is not an inherently nationalistic quality separating Jack Tar from sea robbers, the scourge of the high seas.

Further accentuating the disturbing similarity between pirates and those sailing with the Navy is Johnson’s depiction of a relatively civilized pirate culture. In his chapter on Bartholomew Roberts, Johnson presents Black Bart as a gentleman who has a “Haughty and Magisterial Behavior” (*A General History* 188) and “made a gallant Figure . . . being dressed in a rich crimson Damask Wastcoat” (213). Roberts even refers to himself and the other pirates as “Gentlemen of Fortune” (*A General History* 163). The drawing of Roberts from the first folio edition of Johnson’s text reinforces the idea that Black Bart as a wealthy gentleman and a bit of a dandy (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Isaac Basire's "Capt Bartholomew Roberts" (1734) (Johnson "Capt Bartholomew Roberts").

This engraving shows a handsome Roberts on the African coast, his fellow pirates in the background raiding the slave fort at Ouidah.[42] Unlike the image of Blackbeard in which Teach, with smoke rising from the sides of his head, a brace of pistols wrapped around his

[42] Roberts was killed a month after the events depicted in this image when Captain Chaloner Ogle, of the HMS *Swallow*, caught up with him off the west coast of Africa near Gabon.

body, and a long black beard reaching half-way down his chest, appears wholly unlike other sailors (See Appendix A), Roberts wears only two pistols, is clean shaven, and is dressed like a gentleman with a feather topping his cap. By presenting Roberts and the other pirates as gentlemen, Johnson frames these sea robbers in terms that were familiar to readers: these villains, from their behavior to their dress, reflect British society, consequently highlighting the absurdity of class divisions. These men who were "bred to the sea," as Johnson styles each pirate, can obtain wealth and power outside of the traditional land-based society in Britain, becoming civilized in relation to a foreign land.[43] Maritime historian Marcus Rediker argues that, by calling themselves "Gentleman," pirates "flaunt their certitude" of their social organization (*Outlaws* 82); Johnson's emphasis on pirates utilizing this language and appearing like gentlemen reinforces the text's broader argument—that pirates, because they are similar to other sailors (officers and common seamen) and their way of life is seductive, are all the more terrifying and threatening to the world order.

In addition to presenting Roberts like a gentleman with whom readers could either identify or would recognize, Johnson further represents pirate culture as a modified version of sailing in the Royal Navy. Johnson enumerates the pirate articles that were an essential part of the "roguish Common-Wealth" (*A General History* 172) and somewhat overlapped with the Naval Discipline Act. For example, both the pirate articles and the Naval Discipline Act prohibit removing any goods or money from a captured ship before everything is tallied and officially distributed.[44] Additionally, sailors (pirates and Navy mariners) were prohibited

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[43] This phrase "bred to the sea" is a common appellation applied to sailors and appears in other examples of sea fiction, like Defoe's *Captain Singleton* (1720).

[44] The pirate articles state, "Every Man to be called fairly in turn, by List, on Board of Prizes . . . But if they defrauded the Company to the Value of a Dollar, in Plate, Jewels, or Money, Marooning was their Punishment" (Johnson *A General History* 170). Similarly, the Naval

from directly robbing each other or refusing to fight.[45] The pirate articles also restricted fighting amongst themselves while on board: "No striking one another on Board, but every Man's Quarrels to be ended on Shore, at Sword and Pistol" (Johnson *A General History* 171). While dueling was not codified in the Naval Discipline Act, the approach to settling disputes amongst gentleman in the Royal Navy was remarkably similar to what is outlined in the pirate articles.[46] By co-opting this aspect of honor culture that traditionally took place amongst gentleman, pirates reinforce how they have created an egalitarian and orderly society. By engaging in this highly class-based performance of masculine honor, pirates paradoxically strip the ritual of its relationship to class while imbuing themselves with a gentlemanly aura. Thus, by describing how pirates have created an alternative society, one that is informed by their time as Navy sailors and British citizens, Johnson reinforces the image of pirates as both legitimate threats to Britain's colonial rule and an extension of that rule. In other words, these men are not presented as lone wolves that the Navy can easily dispatch, but instead are an organized opposition of honorable "gentlemen" springing from

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Discipline Act states, "None in his Majesties pay shall take out of any Prize or Ship or Goods seized on for Prize any Money Plate Goods Lading or Tackle before Judgement thereof first past in the Admiralty Court but the full and intire account of the whole without imbezlement shall be brought in and Judgement past intirely upon the whole without fraud upon pain of such punishment as shall be imposed by a Court martiall or the Court of Admiralty" ("Charles II").

[45] The restriction against robbing in the pirate articles is the second item on the list (the punishment includes slitting the ears or nose and marooning somewhere the guilty party "was sure to encounter Hardships" (Johnson *A General History* 170), and robbery in the Naval Discipline Act, the 29th item, is punishable by death or as the captain sees fit. As for cowardice, the Naval Discipline Act has many articles devoted to punishing sailors who abstained from fighting, and this is the only infraction that could result in capital punishment in the pirate articles.

[46] For more on dueling in the eighteenth-century Navy, see Chapter 2: "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins."

the Royal Navy, the logical result of the systemic and long-standing abuses inherent in the brutal hierarchical system governing the British maritime world.

It is difficult to overstate the effect print culture had on shaping the impression that British sailors could easily turn against the nation. Print culture sensationalized pirates, in newspapers and collections of trials during and after the Golden Age of Piracy (1650-1730).[47] Seventeenth and eighteenth-century print culture contributed simultaneously to the ideas that wayward sailors were dangerous villains and, at other times, were patriotic victims of the state, that Britain's mismanagement of the maritime world contributed to, or was directly responsible for, the lawlessness. The turmoil in the colonial periphery captured the British public's imagination, and the sheer number of texts and newspaper articles devoted to pirate trials speak to how concerned Britons were about the power these swashbuckling criminals had on the nation's security and economic well-being. Johnson's *The History of the Pyrates* (1728) sensationalized pirates like Captain William Kidd, whose story captivated the British nation.[48] Kidd (1654-1701) was a Scottish privateer commissioned by the governor of New York in 1695 to attack, kill, or capture French and pirate ships (in addition to the specifically looking for the pirates Thomas Tew, John Ireland, Thomas Wake, and William Maze) when England was in the midst of the Nine Years' War, also known as the War of the Grand Alliance (1688-1697). Johnson recounts Kidd's struggle with mutineers and his

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[47] The Golden Age of Piracy refers to a time when the rise in colonial trade, particularly in the Caribbean, led to a corresponding growth in piracy. Unprotected merchant ships were easy pickings, and corrupt or inept governments in colonial ports ensured pirates could offload their spoils. This timeframe is contested in pirate studies, with some scholars stating that the Golden Age lasted from 1716-1726. I use Marcus Rediker's timeline that is stated in *Outlaws of the Atlantic*.

[48] As previously noted, Johnson's *The History of the Pyrates* (1728) is quite similar to his *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates* (1724). While Kidd's death is mentioned in passing in the first edition of *A General History* (179), a more extensive account of Captain Kidd appears in *The History of the Pyrates*.

eventual descent into piracy.[49] In 1698, the *Adventure Galley*, Kidd's ship, attacked the *Quedagh Merchant*, an Indian ship with French papers that was captained by an Englishman. Upon discovering that the Captain was English, Kidd ordered his crew to release the ship, but his crew refused, resulting in Kidd being labeled a pirate. Arrested in 1699, Kidd was imprisoned for nearly a year, then sent to England and tried for murder and piracy. At his trial, Kidd's arguments reveal legal uncertainty within the nation's tenuous control over the colonial periphery. First, Kidd argues that the *Quedagh Merchant*, because it had French papers, was covered under his commission (Kidd 25-28, 47-48).[50] Second, Kidd claims that the killing of William Moore (the ship's gunner), whom Kidd struck on the head with an iron bucket, was justified because Moore was a mutineer; thus the killing was a legal punishment under the Naval Discipline Act and not murder.[51] Kidd was convicted of murder and piracy based on legal ambiguity: for instance, although the trial revealed that Moore mutinied a month prior to his death, he could not be punished later nor could his urging to turn pirate and insubordination be viewed as mutinying. Ostensibly, Kidd's defense and his trial in general capture how the lines between privateer and pirate, and disciplinarian and murderer,

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[49] After months of little success locating his quarry, Kidd was constantly hounded by his crew to turn pirate and attack Dutch and English vessels, and the crew repeatedly threatened mutiny and even mutinied at one point.

[50] The prosecutors stated to the jury, "He has told you he acted pursuant to his Commission; but that cannot be, unless he gives you satisfaction that the Ship and Goods belonged to the *French* King, or his Subjects, or that the Ship had a *French* Pass, otherwise neither of them will excuse him from being a Pirate; for if he takes the Goods of Friends he is a Pirate, he had no Authority for that: There is no colour from either of his Commission for him to take them. And as to the *French* Passes, there is nothing of that appears by any Proof, and for ought I can see, none saw them but himself, if there were ever any" (Kidd 34).

[51] According to Kidd, Moore urged his captain to attack a Dutch ship by stating, "We will go aboard the Ship, and plunder her, and we will have it under their Hands that we did not take her. . . . We may do it, we are Beggars already" (Kidd 9). Kidd reportedly responded, "May we take this Ship because we are Poor?" (Kidd 9). After responding thus, Kidd said at his trial, "Upon that a Mutiny arose, so I took up a Bucket, and just throwed it at him and said, *You are a Rogue to make such a Motion*" (Kidd 9).

were porous and ill-defined, giving the impression that sailors inhabited a world of moral ambiguity and that metropolitan management of the maritime world was fallible.

Within eighteenth-century British culture raged a battle regarding how Britons should perceive pirates, like Kidd, and mutinous sailors as either heroes or criminals. Pirate trials were widely publicized in texts like *The Arraignment, Tryal, and Condemnation of Captain William Kidd* (1701) and Thomas Salmon's *Tryals for High-treason, and Other Crimes* (a nine-volume work published between 1720-31).[52] These trial publications, like Johnson's *A General History* (which also contains trial records, like those from Bartholomew Roberts' trial), vacillate between sensationalizing pirates and mutineers and painting them as enemies of the state. Maritime and legal historian Douglas Burgess in "Piracy in the Public Sphere" argues that the publication of the piracy trials of Henry Avery and his fellow crew, who mutinied in 1694 and seized control of the *Charles,* show how print culture was a "nexus between the private realm of individuals and the public authority of the state" (889).[53] The public sphere was inundated with competing portrayals of Avery. For example, Johnson's play *The Successful Pyrate* (first performed in 1712) presented Avery as a suave desperado and contributed to a dominant narrative of "the pirate as popular hero" (Burgess 895), yet trial publications sought to label pirates like Avery "enemies of the human race" (qtd. in Burgess 894).[54] A slew of trial publications and corresponding newspaper accounts facilitated the public debate regarding Britain's colonial control and the role of sailors in the nation.

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[52] Other examples include *A Full Account of the Actions of the Late Famous Pyrate, Capt. Kidd* (1701) and *The History of the Most Remarkable Tryals in Great Britain and Ireland, in Capital Cases* (1725).

[53] Avery is alternatively spelled Every.

[54] The image of pirates as popular heroes was in part shaped by pirates themselves as they were led to the gallows, a moment that should have symbolized the nation's ultimate control. For example, Daniel Macarty who led a mutiny aboard the *Lancaster* in 1718 "ascended the

Furthermore, newspapers and trial publications publicized sailors' behavior and the state's control in a way that imbued events occurring across the Atlantic with the sense of immediacy. Newspapers even tracked Kidd's whereabouts, giving readers a chance to follow his geographic movements around the Atlantic (before and after he was captured), thereby linking the colonial periphery to the colonial center. For example, the *London Post*, in 1699, writes, "'Tis Confirmed, that Capt. Kidd, the noted Pirate, is seized by the Ld Bellamont, Governour of New-England, with all his rich Cargo, and that he has presented his Lordship with a Gift in Jewels valued at 10000 l" ("London, September, 8th"). Likewise, *The Post Boy* on Sept. 7, 1699, writes, "Capt. Kidd, the famous Pirate, of whom we have so often made mention" and recounts Kidd's great wealth ("Portsmouth, Septemb. 7"). By referring to him as "the noted Pirate" or "the famous Pirate," newspapers both reflect and reinforce the pervasive idea that sea robbers were notorious villains and pseudo-heroes at the forefront of the public's imagination.[55] On December 2, 1699, *The Flying Post or The Post Master* writes, "Next week Capt. Kidd is expected here from New England" ("London"), and on April 13th *The Post Man and the Historical Account* reports that "the Advice Frigot is arrived in the *Downs* having on board Captain *Kidd* and 34 other Pyrates" ("London, April 13"). The trial and execution of Kidd in May were correspondingly tracked in British newspapers and ensured the participation of people who lived far from Execution Dock in London, or "Hope

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Stage, with as much Agility and in a Dress of a Prize-Fighter" with "long blue ribbons at his Neck, Wrists, Knees, and Cap" (qtd. in Rediker *Between* 56), William Lewis who may have been Charles Johnson's creation "was brilliantly adorned with red ribbons" (Rediker *Between* 56), and James Bendall said he "wish'd he had begun the Life sooner, for he thought it a pleasant one, meaning that of a Pyrate" (Rediker *Between* 57). James Morris, who sailed with the pirate Henry Morgan, wished he "might have been a greater Plague to these Islands" (Rediker *Between* 57).

[55] References like these to Kidd's pirate booty contributed to the enduring belief that Kidd buried treasure and ensured that Kidd, who was a relatively unsuccessful pirate, earned a prominent place in pirate lore.

Point" as pirates termed it (Johnson *A General History* 179) and could not witness either the gruesome hanging or his body being coated in tar and hung in an iron gibbet until it rotted would experience the state's full power.[56] Furthermore, these texts represent the state as capable of addressing the pirate threat: by emphasizing Kidd's fame and making him seem like a titan among pirates, newspapers present the state's colonial apparatus as competent, expeditiously tackling the scourge of the Atlantic.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* is particularly helpful in understanding how Britons' interaction with the colonial periphery through print contributed to the rising sense of the nation. Anderson argues that printed texts ordered time and space for readers (33) and, because they were cheaply mass-produced, texts united citizens in the simultaneous act of consuming the news (35). Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" suggests that mutinies or piracy on the high seas, geographically distant events occurring far from London, the colonial center, were understood as having a direct and personal effect on individual Britons because of a rising national consciousness. Trial transcripts, Johnson's *A General History* and *The Successful Pyrate*, and newspaper accounts of disruptive sailors reveal how the nation and its values were being constructed in the minds of Britons through representations of sailors in print culture. In other words, portrayals of mariners were at the

[56] Because the rope broke when Kidd was initially hanged, he had to be hanged a second time. Kidd's protracted execution was just one of the reasons that pirates dreaded "Hope Point," the place where pirates had been hanged or drowned for centuries (Rediker 148). While hanging was common, only the most notorious pirates were left to rot in the gibbet. Instead, most pirates' bodies would be hung over the sea until the tide partially submerged the body three times. Many pirates, according to Rediker, would have rather blown themselves up than be taken alive to be hanged at the Execution Dock: "They have no Thoughts of ever being taken; but swear, with the most direful Imprecations, that if ever they should find themselves over-power'd, they would immediately blow their Ship up, rather than do Jolly Roger the disgrace to be struck, or suffer themselves to be hang'd like Dogs" (qtd. in Rediker *Villains* 149).

heart of a rising nationalistic ideology. This is especially true given how Britain was continuously at war during the eighteenth century and the nation heavily relied upon seamen's willingness to labor, fight, and die for the country.

The public's insatiable interest in pirates reflect a concern over sailors' motivations to turn rogue; print texts in the early eighteenth century, with their focus on discovering the causes of piracy, began to frame sailors as sympathetic victims repeatedly abused by the British government. Such print works ensured that seamen's lives and abuses were well-publicized and framed as national problems, inflecting representations of the common sailor as a patriotic victim. Early-eighteenth century texts reflect the well-known fact that many areas of the Admiralty were corrupt and mismanaged, resulting in systemic mistreat of common seamen.[57] After the Restoration, it became impossible, because of abuses of power, to pay Navy seamen punctually (Lloyd 92). For example, the H. M. S. *Harp* in 1665 was unable to pay its sailors for fifty-two months, at which point the officers petitioned the Navy Office for funds. That same year, riots broke out at ports around England because sailors' families were destitute from a lack of pay (Lloyd 92). Samuel Pepys's diary reflects his desperation to pay "poor seamen that lie starving in the streets for want of money" (Lavery 93) and his growing frustration over a lack of funds. On August 22, 1667, he writes, "they being as good men as were ever in the world, and would readily serve the King, were they but paid" (qtd. in Lloyd 94). This sentiment is also reflected in Ward's *The Wooden World*

[57] To understand how people viewed the Admiralty and discussed its deplorable treatment of sailors, see Robert Crosfeild's *Corrupt Ministers the Cause of Publick Calamities* (1701), *England's Corruptions and Mismanagements Discover'd* (1702), and John Dennis's *An Essay on the Navy* (1702). Authors even argued that the Admiralty was so corrupt it could not be reformed. For instance, in *Remarks upon the Two Great Questions* (1701), the author argues that winning the war against the Dutch can only happen if Parliament wrest control of the Navy from the Admiralty.

Dissected: Ward argues that the tar is "a rare Dog under an honest Commander, and will fight everlastingly, if he can but have Justice at the End of his Labours; but to receive all 'he Knocks, and none of the Moneys, is the Devil" (103). For Pepys and Ward, tars' loyalty cannot be assumed or taken for granted. But, it can be bought for fair pay. Pepys knew that "since conditions aboard ship were harsh and wages often two or three years in arrears, sailors mutinied, deserted, rioted, and altogether resisted naval service" (Linebaugh and Rediker 151). Even if the funds could be mustered, captains would often choose to withhold pay to ensure that sailors did not desert.[58] Within this context, sailors were constructed as national figures who earned state support.

A robust print culture also gave Britons a means of publicly commenting on the Admiralty's maritime policies and contribute to the construction of the Jack Tar figure. The free press provided a mechanism for spectatorship in which the public could monitor the government (Wilson 43) and contribute to the debate about how to ensure sailors' loyalty. This discussion of sailors' financial need was wrapped up in a vigorous discussion waged in the public press about how to combat piracy and subsequently protect the nation's merchant fleet. While some authors like the writer of *Piracy Destroy'd* (1701) argue that seamen's moral depravity leads to piracy, a competing theory about why sailors turned pirate was their long-standing lack of pay.[59] Many texts represent the average sailor as destitute because he

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[58] Rediker notes that sailors during the eighteenth century, because they had a 50% chance of dying, were particularly reticent about signing up for war, resulting in captains withholding pay to ensure that impressed men did not desert: "the state's demand for maritime labor and the seaman's refusal to be the supply produced something of a civil war over maritime muscle and skill" (*Between* 33). Lavery also states that, in 1667, English sailors deserted to sail with the Dutch for "want of pay and victuals" (93).

[59] According to the anonymous author of *Piracy Destroy'd*, "The real Cause (to name only one) is undoubtedly, the general depravation of Seamens manners, and their little or no sense of Religion" (3). The text then says that seamen's manners are "nor a little corrupted by the

is either not paid or not paid nearly enough. In *A General History*, Johnson argues that the British government is responsible for the piracy that threatened Atlantic trading routes. He writes in the "Preface" that "those few who are in Business are poorly paid, and but poorly fed; such Usage breeds Discontents amongst them, and makes them eager for any Change" (A3).[60] Johnson presents sailors like employees by referring to them as being "in Business," an approach that challenges beliefs that sailors should selflessly serve their country.[61] Likewise, *The Sailors Groans* (1702) states, "Seamen which will be necessary for our Defence, [must] be WELL TREATED, WELL PAID, and WELL COMMANDED" and "Sailors have met with *nothing but Rubs*; Three and twenty Shillings *per* Month, is the most that ever they could yet arrive at, and be used like Dogs in the Bargain" (2-3). The author's use of first person makes personal the effects misusing sailors will have on the nation and reader. And, the text argues that, even if sailors were paid on time (which is unlikely), they were not "WELL PAID."[62] Being constantly pressed from ship to ship, consequently losing pay, is what "makes our Sailors leave the Kingdom so fast, chusing rather to serve any body

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bad Example their Officers shew them; and the great neglect in causing due Punishments to by [sic] inflicted on such as are guilty of Swearing, Drunkenness and other Vices" (5-6). Maritime life did, in some respects, run counter to religious practice: "work at sea obliterated the plebeian calendar of holy days" and paying was represented as ominously viewed by sailors since it was a tacit admission that all hope in human agency had failed (Rediker *Between* 174-175).

[60] Johnson also suggests that the Royal Navy was a training ground for fledgling pirates during war. Once demobilized, sailors had few options for finding work after war and subsequently turned to piracy.

[61] Bartholomew Roberts echoes this perspective by saying, "in honest service, there is thin Commons, low Wages, and hard Labour; in this, Plenty and Satiety, Pleasure and Ease, Liberty and Power" (Johnson 272).

[62] This approach (arguing for increased wages) was fairly uncommon at this time since most sailors during war were not paid at all, but this argument emerges again in the later eighteenth century with the Spithead mutiny.

other than our own Nation; and to turn Pirates, rather than be thus *Pirated upon*" (14-15).[63] The author speaks to how mariners on merchant ships could be pressed into service with the Royal Navy, causing them to lose wages. And Navy seamen when ashore could easily be pressed into service for a different vessel, thereby being marked as a deserter on the first ship, losing all wages, and running the risk of eventually being caught and hanged. By interrogating the British government's policy of impressment and withholding pay (two common and widely criticized manning practices), Johnson argues that the Admiralty are the true pirates, a linguistic move that absolves actual pirates of some small measure of culpability. Here, sailors' treatment and pay are not individual issues, affecting only a few separate sailors, but national concerns: seamen have little choice but to serve other nations, a shocking argument that presents treason as an inevitable result of systematic abuses by the nation. Sailors, even those who turn pirate, are presented as victims of the state, men whose country has left them no choice but to escape, rebel, or turn pirate.[64] Therefore, in the early eighteenth century, the common sailor was presented, even when mutinying, as a bastion of Britishness essential to the nation.

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[63] The author of *Piracy Destroy'd* argues that this financial reason is a "pretended" cause, although the author does state that they hope the Admiralty will pay sailors on time (11-12).
[64] Other examples of these arguments in the press include William Hodges's 1694 letter to King William III. In it, he says that the seamen of England and Scotland "have been hearty and truely sincere in the Interest of Your Majesty and these Nations." Additionally, Barnaby Slush, a sea cook, writes in the lengthy essay "The Navy Royal: or a Sea-Cook Turn'd Projector" (1709), "what can the poor, but Jolly *Tar*, hope to meet with, who has neither Money, nor Friends perhaps, but a pair of good Hands and a Stout Heart to recommend him?" (16).

Conclusion

The spread of print culture in the early eighteenth century facilitated public debates about sailors' role in the nation, discussions that directly affected how Jack Tar was characterized for over a century. While the sailor had long been associated with drinking, and Britons (including the Admiralty) feared seamen's drunken antics, the figure of Jack Tar constrained sailors' disruptive potential. Drinking was either made humorous (like in Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest; Or, The Enchanted Island*) or combined with representations of the Tar's patriotic machismo. In other words, the common sailors' potentially dangerous behavior was regulated and made adorable because national ideology, more so than laws, framed the working-class sailor as a lovable (and often delightfully inebriated) caricature. Repetition of images of the drunken tar in various mediums (newspapers, novels, songs, and plays) helped produce this patriotic figure and reinforced an emergent nationalistic identity.

Representations of Jack Tar in this time period also reveal concerns Britons had over sailors' impact on the nation's colonial endeavors. Well-publicized pirate-related activities, like those of Blackbeard, Black Bart, and Captain Kidd, and pirate trials brought the colonial periphery into Britons' home, shrinking the conceptual distance between the colonial center and periphery. Print as a mass commodity meant that people from around Britain and the colonies began to see themselves as part of a community, a community that was vicariously experiencing the effects of wayward sailors in the Atlantic. Much attention then shifted to determining how to prevent and stop piracy, with authors presenting mariners' financial need driving men to violate their innate nationalistic sentiments. In an analogous way to how sailors' drinking was constrained by nationalism, so too do the discussions of seamen's financial concerns draw on ideology to present Jack Tar as a sympathetic patriotic figure,

someone who deserves compensation from the state because he has suffered for the nation. Repetition of the image of Jack Tar as a national hero fighting not against the nation but against tyranny helped solidify the figure of Jack Tar into a British icon.

Chapter 2: An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins

By the mid-eighteenth century, Jack Tar was a ubiquitous figure in British culture: he was instantly recognizable as he swaggered into view in novels, songs, plays, and images. *Caricature of a Sailor* (Figure 1) shows a typical image of the common British sailor in the long eighteenth century:

Figure 3: John Sell Cotman's *Caricature of a Sailor* (1799).

The sailor's clothing is consistent with other images of eighteenth century seamen: shoes with large belt buckles, a waistcoat with prominent buttons, and striped pants. This young man exudes vitality and sexuality: he is dashing and gallant with the tipped hat, open-collared shirt, neckerchief blowing in the wind, an arm raised and legs bent as if he is dancing. The cudgel in his hand indicates a latent violence in sea life as well as the sailor's lower-class status. Yet, the sailor's posture is proud, not violent, and virile. This shipboard image romanticizes the man and the profession. However, this was only one version of the Tar, a figure that I argue mutates over the long eighteenth century. Eighteenth-century texts present Jack Tar as a complex figure that is a locus for British patriotism and a site where Britons project their anxieties as the nation's reach extended further and further around the world. On the one hand, some images of the Tar show sailors as a civilizing force, one that is essential for controlling the seas and ensuring Britain's economic power. Others highlight how bringing civility or, more specifically British control, to the seas and the colonial periphery required unimaginable violence that could deeply change these men, violence that threatened to destabilize life at home when sailors returned.

Recent scholarship has argued that the figure of the British Tar crystalized in the nineteenth century (Bratton et. al 34). Focusing on the nineteenth century, though, overlooks how eighteenth-century authors and illustrators created the mold that later tars replicate. Addressing this gap, Terrence Freeman's *Dramatic Representations of British Soldiers and Sailors on the London Stage* investigates how depictions of the British sailor took shape on the stage. Freeman's work, although providing a comprehensive look at the sailor on the stage, extending even to include the sailors in the audience, does not examine how the stage Tar compares with portrayals of sailors in other genres and media. But, representations of the

Tar in other media, like novels, images, and songs, reveal how Britons were grappling with their nation's expanded reach and influence in the mid-eighteenth century. Furthermore, a multimedia approach can show how theatrical and print depictions of tars encapsulate the tension people felt over changing notions of British identity. In other words, these varied portrayals can teach us about eighteenth-century attitudes toward sailors and even speak to latent sailor stereotypes that are still present today.

In this chapter, I seek to answer the following questions: What do characterizations of Jack Tar in the mid- and late-eighteenth century reveal about class and masculinity in British culture? In particular, what, if any, aspects of Scottish or even Welsh and Irish identities become part of the Jolly Jack Tar figure/stereotype? The Tar figure brings to the forefront the contradiction between valuing men who stay home and take care of their family and their community, what we call "domestic masculinity," and the man who roams the sea defending Britain and her people. Representations of the common sailor also highlight how the sailor, by having an opportunity for social mobility, could support the home by disrupting it. In these depictions, sailors reveal an alternative perspective on class relations and gender norms in the mid-eighteenth century. I analyze novels, Acts of Parliament, plays, songs, and images to explore how masculinity and social status are defined or redefined in terms of the Jolly Jack Tar, and I examine how characterizations of the Tar develop over the course of the mid- to late-eighteenth century.

To investigate how Jack Tar develops in the mid-eighteenth century as well as what cultural arguments about class, gender, and nationalism are being made with the sailor figure, I focus on Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) for two reasons: 1) Smollett provides a diverse range of tars, and 2) his character Tom Bowling became the

quintessential tar of the century, though mostly unrecognized by Smollett scholars. Smollett's *Roderick Random* is a picaresque novel that traces Random's trials and tribulations across numerous sea voyages and characterizes many types of British sailors. In particular, the character of Tom Bowling became emblematic of Jack Tar throughout the rest of the eighteenth century. Bowling, as characterized in *Roderick Random*, speaks in nautical terms, has a craggy appearance that contrasts with his officer apparel, and disrupts the established social order on land. I compare Smollett's depictions of the tar, particularly Bowling, in *Roderick Random* to other portrayals of Bowling-type tars that were performed during and after the Seven Years' War. I am interested in how the Bowling figure surprisingly reemerged on the stage and how Bowling's move from page to stage, so to speak, contributed to him becoming a beloved cultural figure in the later-eighteenth century.

My argument traces Bowling from *Roderick Random* through the rest of the eighteenth century. In the first part of the chapter that follows, I argue that Smollett's tar in *Roderick Random*, unlike the sailors in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, challenges established class divisions, furthers a primarily English, Scottish, and Welsh nationalistic agenda, and represents a new form of domestic masculinity. In other words, Smollett's tar acknowledges cultural differences between seamen and landsmen but articulates a collectivity and national identity springing from a shared set of values about the home. I use *home* here to refer to both the literal home and the nation as a whole, in the sense of homeland. Smollett's tar has the capacity for enacting violence to preserve those domestic and national values. My argument then traces Smollett's Tom Bowling as he exploded in popularity at the end of the eighteenth century. I contend that Bowling became a hugely popular figure because of the character's move to the stage and that part of the character's enduring popularity was due to

actors who played him. Bowling's resurgence, furthermore, reflects Britons' concerns over 1) manning the Navy in the period that encompassed the Seven Years' War, the War of American Independence, and the Napoleonic Wars, and 2) facing these changed men when they returned home. This Tar figure highlights the diverse nature of shipboard life, showing how the ideal British sailor is truly that—British—not solely English, and how he embodies exalted moral, masculine, and nationalistic qualities that alleviate any anxiety that arose from sailors returning home.

Social Mobility and the Wooden World

Although life at sea was treacherous, not least because of harsh discipline and the tempestuous sea, sailors were drawn to that profession in part because a stint in the navy meant daily rations and the chance to move up the social ladder. Authors like Smollett depicted the sea as a place for social mobility and economic opportunity. Men born to the lower classes could access the higher social ranks by being promoted to the officer class, and they could gain substantial wealth through capturing enemy ships. Upon returning to Britain, these promoted men challenged the social framework in Britain as they were neither of the traditional upper class nor any longer part of the lower classes.

This section explores how Smollett's *Roderick Random* grapples with the effects these promoted officers, known as tarpaulins, had on land and in the wooden world. Smollett's figure of Tom Bowling, arguably the eighteenth-century's most famous sea character—or as Claude Jones says, one of "the most fully portrayed, and best-loved, sailors in English literature" (60)—is an argument for a new type of gentleman on land and at sea, challenging established social norms, and promoting a form of masculinity that supports the

home and the nation by disrupting it. Bowling's liminal status, as revealed through his choice of weapons, his body, and his language, results in conflict and violence (e.g. the killing of foxhunting dogs and dueling) between Bowling and representatives of the established ruling class. Smollett's novel articulates the tenuous nature of this emergent social position: the tarpaulin, because he functions outside the Admiralty's patronage system, lacks institutional support back at home. By showing that the tars' honor is little match against institutionalized corruption, the novel criticizes the assumption that social status indicates morality, a belief that was gathering steam at this time with the rising middle class. Furthermore, Smollett's tars argue for a unified nation that respects Scottish, Welsh, and Irish heritages, an important argument for nationalism given the mid-century upheaval surrounding the Jacobite rebellion of 1745.

Tom Bowling, Roderick Random's uncle, represents a unique class of officer in the eighteenth century—the tarpaulin.[65] The term *tarpaulin* originally denoted the common seaman in the mid-seventeenth century. Before the Restoration, during the "more democratic days of the Commonwealth" (Lloyd 88), lower-class seamen promoted to the officer class were much more common but were not named tarpaulins. The emergence of the "Gentlemen Captains" of the Restoration and the fact that the navy became a viable career avenue for men and their sons resulted in the word "tarpaulin" developing to distinguish the lower class (ranked) men from the new gentlemen officers (Lloyd 88).[66] These men were sea-bred, and the tarpaulin appellation distinguished these officers from men who were from wealthy families and were often appointed as officers due to familial influence; the term tarpaulin is

[65] Tarpaulin is also commonly spelled tarpawlin, and the meaning is the same.
[66] The first known use of tarpaulin to mean sea-bred officer occurred circa 1690: "Upon the Different Conduct between Seamen and Gentlemen Commanders in ye Navy (not bredd Tarr Pawlins) since 1652" ("Tarpaulin").

often used in the context of conflict and tension between the sea-bred officers and the appointed officers.[67]

However, tarpaulins were increasingly rare as the eighteenth-century progressed, in part because Samuel Pepys in 1677 instituted regulations, like literacy, designed to ensure a quality officer class to protect the nation's fleet.[68] Regulations in the eighteenth century further refined the necessary qualifications needed to become an officer. In addition to taking an exam to demonstrate competency, as of 1720, aspiring officers needed to spend at least six years at sea and be at least 20 years old (McLeod 13). Although the creation of the Royal Navy Academy at Portsmouth (1730) was designed to teach young gentlemen navigation, fencing, and other skills, it was not regarded as essential for a successful Naval career (McLeod 12-13). Instead, young gentlemen were taken to sea under the wing of influential captains, thereby creating a patronage system that would help youths gain experience as well as create opportunities for them to excel. Their success reinforced the success of their captains, leading to a series of promotions (McLeod 22-23). What this patronage system meant in practical terms was that promotion from the lower deck was becoming increasingly more difficult. As maritime historian Christopher Lloyd notes, "the development of the naval

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[67] The feeling that tarpaulins were a nuisance to the real officers is reflected in the following 1855 quote: "There was an end of privilege if an Earl was to be doomed to death by tarpaulins seated round a table in the cabin of a ship" ("Tarpaulin").

[68] Lloyd states, "To get rid of these amateurs, to make the tarpaulin something of a gentleman, in fact to produce that amalgam of officer and gentleman which became the qualified naval officer, Pepys in 1677 introduced the most important reform of all in the creation of a professional corps of officers: no one could become a lieutenant unless he passed an examination in seamanship and navigation" (89). A. B. McLeod, scholar of maritime history, contradicts this point by stating that Pepys' motivation was less to turn tarpaulins into gentlemen as it was to ensure that the gentry would see the Navy as a viable career opportunity for their sons: "Pepys was determined to create a professional officer corps in the Restoration Navy. He wanted to make the sea service attractive not only to younger sons but also to the first-born sons of gentry. . ." (12).

officer did not improve the chances of promotion from the lower deck. . . His social origins prevented him from becoming an officer and a gentleman. . . . As the ladder of rank became more defined, the line hardened between the quarter-deck and the lower deck" (89). In other words, while tarpaulins were not unheard of even into the late eighteenth century (the most notable being Horatio Nelson), they were increasingly rare since that path to social mobility was difficult and dangerous.

Bowling's characterization as a tarpaulin brings to the forefront a growing social concern over tarpaulins, specifically, and changeable social status, more generally. Smollett describes Bowling as a man displaying the symbols of both the average sailor and the officer class:

> He was a strong built man, somewhat bandy-legged, with a neck like that of a bull, and a face which (you might easily perceive) had withstood the most obstinate assaults of the weather. His dress consisted of a soldier's coat altered for him by the ship's taylor, a stripped flannel jacket, a pair of red breeches japanned with pitch, clean grey worsted stockings, large silver buckles that covered three-fourths of his shoes, a silver-laced hat whose crown over-looked the brims about an inch and a half, a black bob wig in the buckle, a check shirt, a silk handkerchief, an hanger with a brass handle girded to his thigh by a tarnished laced belt, and a good oak plant under his arm (8).

Bowling displays all the indicators of his rank as an officer: namely the wig, the lace, the silk handkerchief, and the sword. Yet, these symbols of the officer class or gentlemanly status are juxtaposed with indicators of being a common sailor: tar-covered clothing, a retrofitted soldier's coat, a striped jacket, enormous shoe buckles, and the oak cudgel. Bowling's body

suggests that he has lived a life of labor onboard a ship working long hours building muscles needed for successful sea travel. In other words, Smollett's tar is physically marked by his labor. His tar-covered clothing and weathered face suggest that his apparel is not merely a performance of status, but also a symbol of pride in his hard-won success at sea. In the eighteenth century, only gentlemen carried swords, yet the cudgel, in part because it could be wielded without any skill, was a commoner's weapon. Thus, the combination of sword and cudgel encapsulates Bowling's ambiguous or liminal status as tarpaulin.

Bowling's status and life at sea uniquely situates him to recognize the oppression of the poor and weak by the traditional landed class and then advocate for those victims. He can enforce social change because he does not fully inhabit either the identity of a common seaman or a gentleman and therefore has a hybrid identity. Bowling's capacity for social disruption occurs in the first moment the reader meets him. As Bowling and Roderick walk up to Roderick's grandfather's house, Bowling kills Roderick's cousin's foxhunting dogs (Smollett *Roderick Random* 9). Since foxhunting was common in literary portrayals of the booby squire, the foxhunting dogs symbolize the cousin's degeneracy and obsession with his own pleasure, a perspective reinforced throughout the novel as the cousin eventually gambles away his fortune.[69] Bowling's use of both a cudgel and a sword to kill the dogs emphasizes

[69] Allyson May, in *The Fox-hunting Controversy 1781-2004: Class and Cruelty* (2013), writes, "The stereotype of the hunting-mad (Tory) 'booby squire' had been established as early as 1711 in the person of Addison and Steele's Sir Roger De Coverley. This stereotype was reproduced in Henry Fielding's Squire Western (*Tom Jones*, 1749). . . . English fox hunting, Lord Chesterfield wrote in disgust in 1751, was fit 'only for bumpkins and boobies'" (21). It wasn't until the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century that the arguments against the sport's bloody and cruel nature, particularly in regard to the dogs and even the cats that were used as game to train the dogs, came to the forefront (May 9). Although foxhunting rose in popularity during the eighteenth century, in part because of the scarcity of deer (Griffin 124), and became quite fashionable, foxhunters caused much

his status as neither a social elite nor a commoner. His seafaring qualities, which enabled his social rise, are further highlighted in this scene. Smollett writes that when the cousin orders his attendants to attack Bowling, Bowling "stepped forwards with an undaunted air, at the sight of whose bloody weapon, his antagonists fell back with precipitation" (9). Bowling is heroic and brave, a man who can be outnumbered and still win the day. He is a larger than life folk hero embodying the best traits of the common sailor. The cousin, though, sees Bowling not as a man protecting himself but instead as a "scoundrel of a seaman . . . who has deserted and turned thief" (9). Upon being faced with a new kind of gentleman, the cousin calls into question Bowling's, and by extension all sailors', honor. This comment reveals the cousin's assumption that low-born sailors could not rise through the ranks to become officers—Bowling must have stolen the sword. Yet, Bowling inhabits a new social role, one that challenges the sailor-as-ruffian image. Bowling comes into the novel as a type of hero who can fight the ills propagated against the lower classes by the wealthy. It is through this position that Bowling can address the conflict between the rich and the poor he notices on land and even at sea, which I discuss later.

In addition to his actions, Bowling's language indicates his identity as a sailor. When he is faced with the cousin, Bowling states, "'Lookée, brother, your dogs having boarded me without provocation, what I did was in my own defense.--So you had best be civil, and let us shoot ahead, clear of you'" (9). While this language is comedic, it also reveals that Smollett's tar is concerned with fairness, or what is morally right—responding with violence to being attacked by dogs is, at least to Bowling, the only option. This nautical parlance

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damage to their neighbors' fields and crops (Griffin 139), contributing to the ill-will people felt toward the sport.

> represents not only [the tar's] personal separation but the different foundation of his values; he is a stranger amongst the familiars but also a public man from the wide world returned to private life, a brave man amongst cowards and an emissary of virtue against villainy; he is in particular a champion of natural law and instinctive rightness, and the love of liberty, against legalism, privilege and the resultant tyranny. (Bratton et al. 38)

Certainly, the nautical language indicates the tar's distance from landed society, but it also, as this quote captures, demonstrates the tar's concern with what is right—what is right, as Smollett illustrates in the novel, does not coincide with conforming to or accepting established social expectations. Marcus Rediker and Margaret Cohen call this speech pattern "plain speaking." According to Rediker, authors in the late seventeenth century "began to depict the seaman as an uncommonly honest, straightforward, and unconventional speaker, someone not much given to politeness but usually committed to telling the unvarnished truth" (168).[70] Smollett's Bowling continues this literary tradition with Bowling and other tars in the novel. His nautical jargon ties Bowling to real sailors whose nonfictional maritime narratives, Cohen notes, were littered with technical terms related to laboring at sea (44). Moreover, in addition to revealing his values, the tar's language hints at his underlying potential for violence ("so you had best be civil"), which stays a part of the tar figure through the nineteenth century (Bratton et. al. 39). Thus, the tar's capacity for violence is represented

[70] Cohen writes that "plain style" evokes the craft of seafaring, imbuing characters with authenticity (43). Janet Sorensen compelling argues that sailors technical language "became a sign of British sailors' freedom" (233) and "maritime language, supposedly denotative—a bowsprit is a bowsprit—is an apposite language for such a plain dealer, a language that, like its speaker, supposedly does not wander in meaning" (239). This "plain speaking" reinforces the idea of sailors as honest, trustworthy fellows: their terms, that always call to mind their physical labor and different lived experiences from landlocked people, simultaneously making the sailor appear both straightforward and delightfully opaque (Sorensen 240-50).

as being tied to his time laboring at sea as well as his moral values developed in the wooden world that challenge the status quo.

Drawings of this confrontation with Roderick's cousin, which were printed in different editions of the novel, and the ambiguous representation of Bowling suggest anxiety related to Bowling's liminal status. Daniel Dodd's 1780 illustration of this scene (Figure 4) presents Bowling the moment before killing one of the foxhunting dogs, the sword raised threateningly in his right hand and his cudgel held in his left hand:

Figure 4: Daniel Dodd's illustration of Bowling killing the foxhunting dogs (1780).

One dead dog is depicted in the lower left corner of the image. The cousin's servants rush through the gate holding pitchforks and a scythe. Roderick, standing behind his uncle, appears alarmed, while Bowling shields his nephew from the vicious canines. This image

highlights the violence of the encounter and Bowling's role as a social disruptor. Certainly, the two weapons and Bowling's sailor garb accentuate his liminal status and seafaring life, but the class conflict that follows the killing is not part of the image. In fact, showing Bowling in the act of killing focuses the readers' attention on the danger that Bowling represents to this landed class, not his potential for asserting the rights of the poor. Yet, the focus on the sword, particularly since it is juxtaposed with the laborers' farm equipment, highlights Bowling's gentlemanly status. Luke Clennell's drawing of this scene for the 1810 reprint of the novel brings the Bowling's potential for social disruption to the forefront by contrasting Bowling with the domestic sphere (Figure 5).

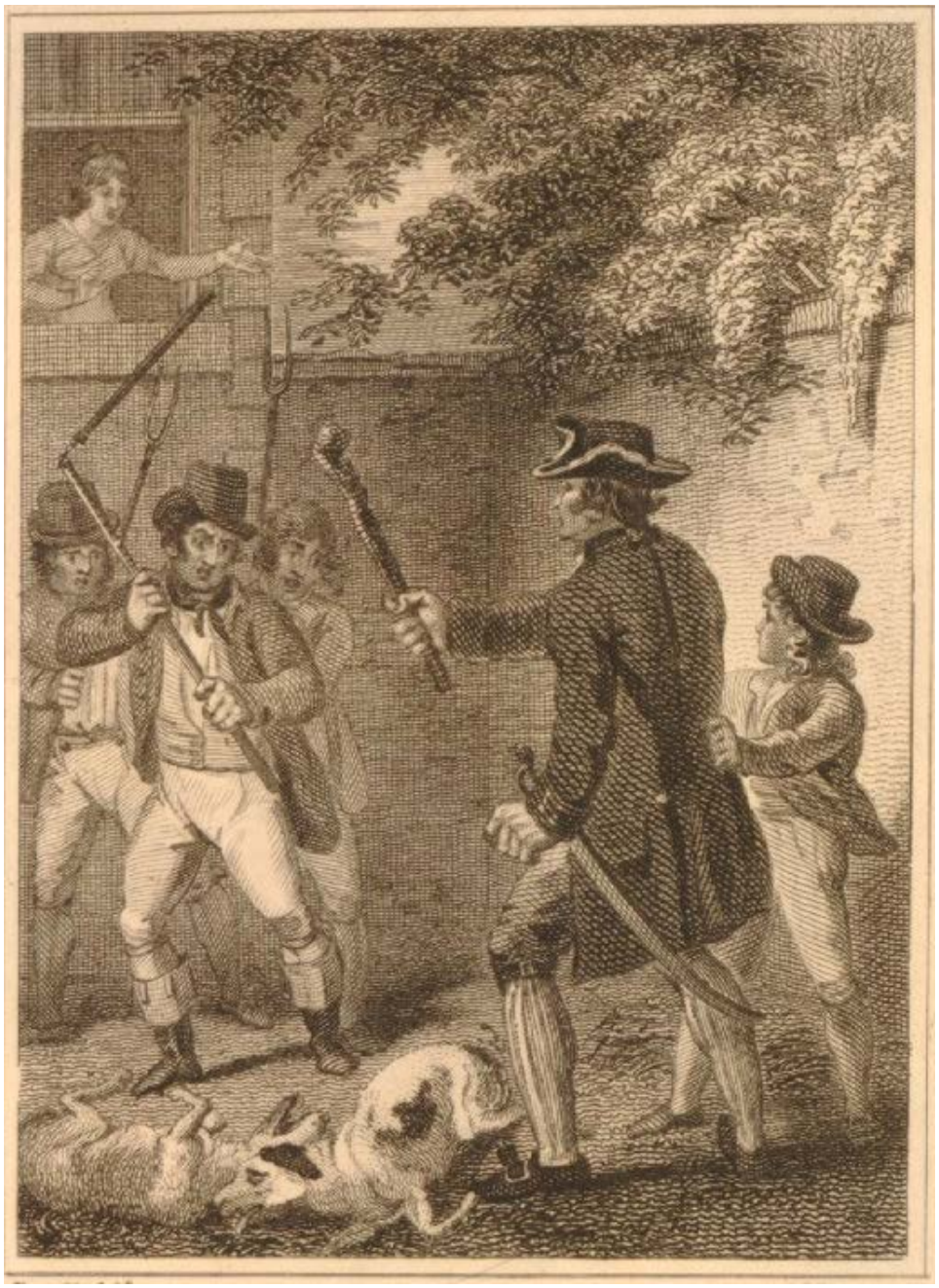

Figure 5: Luke Clennell's drawing of Bowling killing the foxhunting dogs and confronting Roderick's cousin (1810).

Bowling, notably, is wielding his cudgel threateningly, the sword hanging at his side. The focus on the cudgel emphasizes Bowling's lower-class origins but also shows how he is not using a gentleman's weapon against his laboring foe. This image (Figure 5) also differs from the 1780 version (Figure 4) as a young woman looks over the scene in shock from her

position in the house and Bowling's counterparts are positioned as protectors of the home as they block the weathered seaman from proceeding. The inclusion of the woman and the home brings the domestic sphere, and the tar's potential to disrupt it, into focus. As the dead dogs, symbol of the degenerate gentry, are at his feet and Roderick clutches his jacket, Bowling is depicted as a figure that can right social wrongs, even if it is through violence.

Bowling's first scenes with the gentry continually reinforce how the tar was viewed as a social outcast. For instance, immediately after the confrontation with Roderick's cousin, Bowling approaches Roderick's grandfather in the hopes of securing better treatment for the young man. The grandfather "calmly rebuked [Bowling] for his unmannerly behavior, which he said he would excuse on account of his education" (11). The family is so appalled by Bowling lecturing the grandfather on manners that they call him a "scurvy companion—sawcy tarpawlin" (10). The language in these moments shows the distrust and disgust many eighteenth-century Britons felt toward sailors. For example, the term "sawcy tarpawlin" tellingly reveals a belief that one could never escape the taint of low birth; in other words, Bowling does not have the right to speak to the grandfather as if they were both gentlemen. Ironically, though, while the family's language demonstrates a common discriminatory belief that sea life makes someone unfit for society on land, it is Bowling's sea education and experience that provide him with the status and wealth necessary to give Roderick a better life.

Bowling's gentlemanly status provides him with the ability to fight against the status quo at sea, as well. In one important moment, Bowling challenges his commander Captain Oakhum, whom we learn is a deplorable officer, to a duel. The conflict between Lieutenant Bowling and Captain Oakhum is the result of Bowling questioning Oakhum's disinterest in

pursuing what could have been an enemy ship.[71] Oakhum responds to Bowling by insulting Bowling's Scotch heritage ("lousy Scotch son of a whore") as well as his aptitude as a sailor ("swab") (141). Bowling and the captain "jawed together fore and aft a good spell, till at last the captain turned out, and laying hold of a rattan, came athwart Mr. Bowling's quarter" (141).[72] Bowling responds to the physical attack by challenging the captain to a duel, thereby asserting his right as a gentleman to defend his honor and retain his reputation. Although dueling was much more common among officers in the army during the eighteenth century, in part because there were a greater number of army officers and naval combatants had to wait till on shore to duel, dueling in the Royal Navy was not unheard of (Barton 282).[73] Dueling, although it was illegal, was a part of gendered and class expectations: "there were many cases of officers who had failed to respond to an insult appropriately being ostracized by fellow officers or even dismissed from their ships or regiments" (Banks 533).[74] In other words, dueling was part of honor culture, as Stephen Banks notes, and "honor culture

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[71] As discussed in Chapter 1 "Defoe and the Emergent, Nationalistic Jack Tar," failure to pursue an enemy signaled cowardice and was harshly punished. One of the most noteworthy examples of this was the execution of Admiral John Byng in 1757 for not pursuing a French force, a decision that was viewed in the contemporary press as directly resulting in the French capturing Minorca. As historian Tim Clayton writes, Byng was condemned because he "had not behaved with the reckless disregard for odds that was expected of the Royal Navy in desperate cases. He had not even shown much energetic determination to take a risk. He had been too conscious of the sickness in his fleet and the poor quality of his ships and seamen" (60).

[72] Rattan is a type of cane or stick.

[73] It is nearly impossible to know how many duels with at least one naval officer occurred in the eighteenth century because newspaper accounts obscured names, and duels and their subsequent injuries were masked in the records--their injuries were represented as sprained ankle, etc. (Banks 533).

[74] Dueling was made illegal in the early seventeenth century, but it did not fall out of favor until the mid-nineteenth century (Banks 549). For more on the various social factors that contributed to the decline of dueling, see Stephen Banks' "Killing with Courtesy: The English Duelist, 1785-1845." I also discuss dueling in relation to pirate culture in Chapter 1 "Defoe and the Emergent, Nationalistic Jack Tar."

connected the gentleman to a value system based upon 'honest violence' that contributed to the appreciation of a formation of the general national character" (Banks 542). Thus, fighting for one's individual honor and reputation was wrapped up in the belief that gentlemen should resolve their disputes themselves, not rely on any authority (Banks 542). Oakhum behaves as if Bowling is not a gentleman, yet his acceptance of the challenge acknowledges Bowling's status. Moreover, Oakhum cannot refuse the challenge without damaging his own honor and career. For both men, the duel is an opportunity to bolster their reputations as brave and honorable men. In addition, this conflict, like the interactions with Roderick's grandfather and cousin, reveals how Bowling's liminal status causes conflict while also providing him with the ability to challenge the traditional landed gentry's abuse of power.

The outcome of the duel, though, reveals how Bowling's status as gentleman is inextricably tied to his life in the Navy. Once Oakhum and Bowling reach land, the duel commences. Bowling, upon shooting Oakhum, believes that he has killed his captain and runs away (141).[75] While dueling was not expressly forbidden in the Articles of War, it was still illegal. Bowling becomes a deserter because he is well aware that he could be tried for murder. Mark Barton writes that it was highly unlikely for an officer to be tried for dueling (295). If a gentleman were arrested and charged, connections with highly respected naval officers could help the accused escape conviction (Barton 293).[76] Unlike commissioned

[75] Barton writes that "the majority of naval duels were fought with pistols and, in this, the Royal Navy reflected the British fashion of the time" (289). Pistols were preferred as they "were felt to better suit the formality and fairness of a duel because skill with a sword took a long time to hone" (290).

[76] One famous duel that demonstrates the importance of highly-respected character witnesses occurred between Captain James Macnamara and Lieutenant Colonel Montgomery (Army) that started with their dogs barking at each other. The duel happened in 1803. Montgomery died and Macnamara was tried for murder. He was acquitted, in part because Nelson, among other officers, gave evidence of his general respectful and gallant demeanor (293).

officers who rise through the patronage system, tarpaulins could lack extensive ties to influential men in the Admiralty, and their lack of familial wealth and standing meant their social rank was reliant upon their role in the Navy. Although Bowling can defend his honor by claiming his right to a duel, his liminal status results in him losing his naval rank, being labeled a deserter, and forfeiting all the wages owed to him (Smollett 142). In effect, the duel costs Bowling his gentlemanly status and ensures Oakhum's continual tyranny, a turn of events that highlights how the heroic British Tar can be quite powerless in the face of the Navy's mismanagement.

Bowling is not the only sailor in the novel, though, who is an argument for a new system based on meritocracy in which skill and morality are valued above social rank. Morgan, the surgeon's first mate, who is a Welshman, and Jack Rattlin an English sailor, reiterate this value for naval meritocracy. Beyond the fact that their names indicate their profession and their link to the ship (Morgan's name may refer to "mooring" a ship, Rattlin's name denotes the ratlings leading up the sails, and Bowling's name refers to the bowling knot, one of the foundational sailing knots), these characters all serve as illustrations for a social system based on a pseudo-meritocracy, not birthright. For instance, Morgan, basically a Welsh Bowling, walks into Captain Whiffle's cabin seeking to argue for his skill as a surgeon, only to be insulted for his body odor and roughly removed from Whiffle's presence (195-196). Whiffle, rather than valuing skill, prioritizes sycophants whose sole purpose is to please him, not help the ship or her crew. This scene highlights how appointed captains, rather than tarpaulins, are detrimental to the Navy and, by extension, the nation. Artistic renderings of this scene further suggest that Morgan's confrontation with Whiffle mirrors Bowling's interaction with Roderick's grandfather. Samuel Collings' drawing for an 1800

reprint of the novel (Figure 6) juxtaposes Morgan on the left in classic sailor garb with Whiffle, on the right of the image, lounging on a chaise and surrounded by toadies.

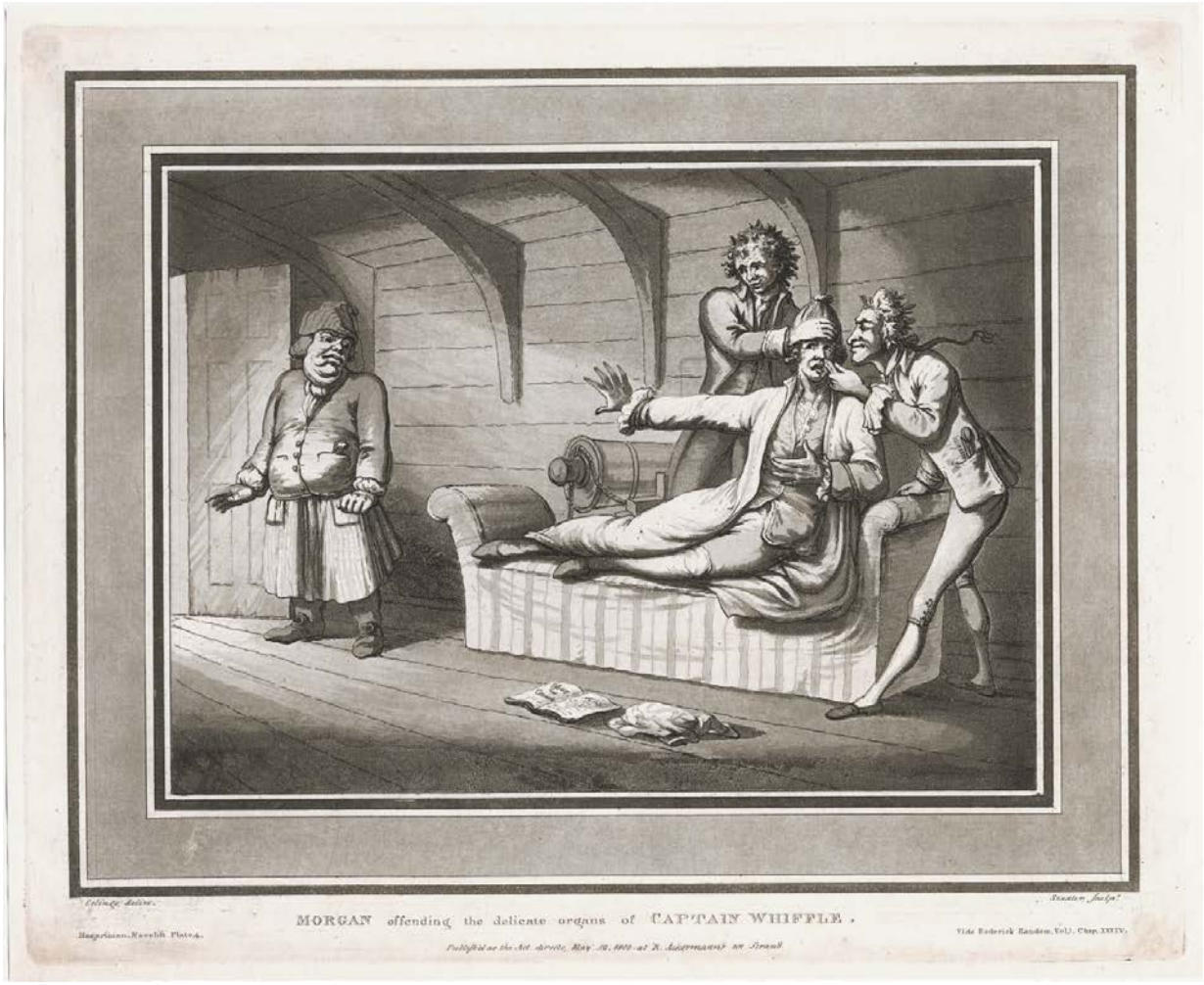

Figure 6: Samuel Collings' "Morgan Offending the Delicate Organs of Captain Whiffle" (1800).

This image almost mirrors G. M. Woodward's drawing (Figure 7) of Bowling confronting Roderick's grandfather during one of the first scenes in which Bowling appears, which I discussed previously. In each of these scenes, the tars are positioned in opposition to a degenerate ruling class.

Figure 7: G. M. Woodward's "Lieut. Bowling Pleading the Cause of Young Rory" (1800).

On the left stands Bowling with Roderick. Like Captain Whiffle, the grandfather is surrounded by sycophants. Whiffle's posture and clothing indicate that he embodies a type of gentlemanly masculinity that does not productively contribute to life at sea.[77] Similarly, the grandfather's gout is symptomatic of a degenerate landed class. Both images show a distinct separation between the tar and non-sailors, particularly those who are from the upper classes. The similarity highlighted in these images suggests that a different type of man is needed to

[77] Whiffle's masculinity or, to be more precise, his effeminacy is also called into question in this scene. Historian Robert Jones writes that "complaints about delinquent or 'effeminate' men—men who were too soft, too interested in their dress or in the pleasure of fashionable life (including the pursuit of women)—had risen markedly by mid-century" (214).

address the abuses springing from a degenerate landed gentry that were prevalent on land and at sea. Like other works of maritime fiction, Smollett's novel presents the ship as "a mini-state where such questions about the moral condition of society can be studies in a microcosm" (Peck 6). These images reinforce how the ship is an extension of landed society, and they imply that the Tar, with his distinct moral values, experience at sea, and masculinity, can address problems surfacing in society on land and at sea.

Smollett's tars package their disruption of the social order and their argument for a new class in a nationalistic agenda. Juliet Shields, in "Smollett's Scots and Sodomites: British Masculinity in Roderick Random," argues the novel demonstrates the "bigotry that Smollett himself endured" (175) as a Scotsman in England. The honest tars in the novel, particularly Bowling, argue for a new masculinity that incorporates ethnic difference. For example, Bowling is an alternative to depictions of Scots as morally-suspect and damaging to the nation, a perspective commonly propagated by John Wilkes. Historian Linda Colley notes that "By dwelling on how irreversibly alien the Scots were, [Wilkes] offered a reassurance to his more intolerant and worried countrymen that they would not be absorbed into an all-embracing and non-Anglocentric Great Britain. Scottish difference, he implied, was a guarantee that traditional Englishness and English primacy within the Union would remain intact" (117). The prevailing stereotype that Wilkes exploited was that Scots were poor, uneducated, and unable to contribute to the advancement of Britain; instead, Scots were a parasite living off the hard work and generosity of Englishmen. This perspective conveniently overlooks the fact that many Scots swelled the ranks of the Army and Navy, and Anti-Scottish sentiment was particularly high after the Jacobite Rebellion of '45 and

during the time *Roderick Random* was first published.[78] *The Scotch Triumvirate* (1752) shows prevalent anti-Scottish sentiment and common Scottish stereotypes (Figure 8):

Figure 8: *The Scotch Triumvirate* (1752).

The three men on the scaffold are Scotsmen: William Henry Cranstoun, James Lowry and Major James MacDonald.[79] While each of these men was related to crimes like assisting in

[78] The threat of Stuart invasion was present throughout the eighteenth century, to varying degrees. Colley writes, "In 1708, 1715, and again in 1745, expeditionary forces in support of the Stuart claimants to the throne landed in Scotland with the intention of marching south to capture London and thereby the entire island. There were other Jacobite invasion scares in 1717, 1719, 1720-21, 1743-2 and even 1759 which never came to anything but were still unsettling" (24).

[79] Cranstoun on the left speaks to Mary Blandy, who like her father, is in a shroud. Cranstoun was accused of tricking Mary into poisoning her father after he refused consent for

the Jacobite Rebellion or murder, I am most concerned with the central figure, Lowry, a captain of a merchantman, who was accused of whipping sailor Kenrich Hossack to death. He holds a cudgel with the words "The Royal Oak Foremast" written on it—a name that Lowry reportedly gave the weapon (*The Scotch Triumvirate*). As the cudgel was a common symbol of the average sailor, as previously noted, the image conflates Scottish sailors, even gentlemen, with the lower classes and criminality. Of the three Scotsmen, only Lowry was hanged, but the nooses around the others' necks reaffirm their guilt. At the bottom of the image, there is an ad for "Scotch Powder to cure the Itch" and a mock coat-of-arms with the motto "Impudent, Rebellious/Lazy, and Proud." Audiences would certainly have heard of these high-profile criminals and been well-aware of the "dirty Scot" image conveyed by the itching powder. Lastly, the drawing's caption reads "Proud Scot, Beggerly Scot, witness keen, Old England has made you all gentlemen," indicating that gentleman status can only be bestowed by England, not earned, and is nationalistic in origin. Smollett's text responds to these stereotypes and conceptions of gentlemanly status. Thus, Bowling's ability to succeed and enact social change, as opposed to merely reaffirming or bolstering the established social order, chips away at anti-Scottish sentiment.[80] Bowling's success, which seems to acknowledge the additional stereotype that Scots were greedy and ambitious, is repackaged into national advancement: Smollett suggests that the nation benefits from the industriousness of Scots (Shields 176). In addition, Smollett's novel creates a conceptual space for thinking about ethnic as well as class hybridity in the British nation.

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their marriage. Macdonald, who took part in the Jacobite Rebellion, says, "I have Escap'd Hanging I own I'm a Highland Villian [sic]" (*The Scotch Triumvirate*).

[80] Given Smollett's articulation of the ship multi-ethic space and sailors of various ethnicities as men necessary for national advancement, I disagree with Robin Fabel's assertion in "The Patriotic Briton: Tobias Smollett and English Politics, 1756-1771" (1974) that Smollett's writings before the mid-1750s were apolitical (103).

Like Scots, Welsh sailors were often represented as outsiders but depictions of them were not nearly as offensive, in part because the Act of Union between England and Wales (1536) was well-established compared to the Act of Union with Scotland (1707). One example of how Welsh sailors were presented in a slightly gentler fashion is Thomas Rowlandson and Woodward's 1808 drawing (Figure 9) called *The Welch Sailor's Mistake or Tars in Conversation*, which shows a group of sailors laughing at a Welsh sailor's misunderstanding.

Figure 9: Thomas Rowlandson and George Moutard Woodward's *The Welch Sailor's Mistake or Tars in Conversation* (1808).

One sailor says, "And so then do you see David we sprung a leak." To which, the Welsh sailor replies, "Cot pless us— and save us—did you! and a ferry coot fetchitable it is. I

should have liked to have had a pit with you." The humor in this image is that the Welsh sailor misunderstands "leak" as "leek." The Welsh sailor responds with saying that leeks are a very good vegetable ("a ferry coot fetchitable"). Another reason this image is humorous is because the accent in Welsh sailor's remarks make the comment nearly incomprehensible. Lastly, what comes through strongly in this drawing is the image of the ship as a community of British sailors: these men are *British* "Tars in Conversation."

Similarly, Smollett's text does not seek to eradicate these nationalistic differences. Instead, Smollett's tars, from Bowling to Bowling-type sailors, highlight the diverse nature of shipboard life, showing how the ideal British sailor is truly that—British—not solely English. In one scene, Roderick fights his nemesis Crampley, nearly killing him, and earns the respect of all the other sailors on board. Morgan, the Welsh sailor, "after observing, that in all likelihood, the ancient Scots and Britons were the same people, bid me 'Praise Cot for putting mettle in my pelly, and strength in my limbs to support it'" (156). Morgan, here, refers to himself as a Briton. Morgan's statement suggests that the masculinity associated with the tar (or in his words, "mettle in my pelly and strength in my limbs") is what unites the men of different ethnicities (English, Welsh, and Scot) on the ship. As Smollett's ship is an extension of the nation itself, his text argues for a type of masculinity that can support a unified British nation.

Smollett's tars also present a version of masculinity this is defined by extreme performances of bravery that separate mariners from other men, ensuring a social order that is based on meritocracy, masculinity, and morality. Similar to how Bowling did not flinch when attacked by the foxhunting dogs or when threatened by the cousin's servants, Morgan and Rattlin are described as making a conscious decision to act courageously even in the face

of pain and near-certain death at sea. For example, during one ill-advised attack against a Spanish fort, Roderick and Morgan endeavor not to show their fear to each other or to other sailors: as Roderick notes, while witnessing the surgeon, chaplain, and purser fall flat on the floor in fear, the "Welshman and I sat upon a chest looking at one another with great discomposure, scarce able to refrain from the like prostration" (181). Here, Smollett demonstrates that it is not the absence of fear that makes a tar. Instead, what signifies a tar is the performance of bravery. Roderick is later ordered to go on deck during the fight to tend to the captain: "as I thought my reputation depended upon my [going to the deck during the battle], I was resolved to convince my rival (Crampley) that I was no more afraid than he, to expose myself to danger" (183). Morgan is later ordered up to the deck, and Roderick states, "Morgan, who (I believe) was jealous of my reputation for courage, undertook the affair, and ascended with great intrepidity" (184). Certainly, both Morgan and Roderick are concerned about their reputation as sailors and as men, but they are also able to fulfill their responsibilities as the surgeon's mates: their enactment of a manly ideal enables them to continue to labor on behalf of the state. Furthermore, Smollett's tars recognize the need for performances of bravery during violent and dangerous situations. For instance, Rattlin, during this battle, "endured the amputation of his left hand without shrinking" and even tries to restore social order below decks immediately after the surgery (182). Rattlin's performance of this specific manly trait exemplifies how tars like Bowling are both different from all other men and necessary for the well-being of society on land and at sea.

Bowling's Move from Page to Stage

Throughout the late eighteenth century, Smollett's Bowling, in many respects, became synonymous with the figure known as Jack Tar. In this section, I explore how Bowling was portrayed on the stage and how these characters transformed Bowling from a character in a novel to a cultural icon. Although Bowling was a popular character in 1748, perhaps because he championed the cause of the weak, and advocated against the established social order, Bowling practically disappeared in the 1750s and 1760s. However, Bowling's appearance on the stage and in song in the late eighteenth century suggests the character's resurgence as a cultural figure. Figure 10 shows the occurrence of Tom Bowling in a variety of genres: novels, plays, afterpieces, and songs.[81]

[81] This timeline was compiled through searching *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* and piecing together references to Bowling found in Claude Jones' *Smollett Studies* (1970) and Gillian Russell's *Theaters of War* (1995), to name a few. This list focuses on texts published or performed in Britain, but Bowling did appear around the world. For example, Bowling was an American sailor in John Hodgkinson's 1797 *The Launch; or, Huzza for the Constitution*, performed in Boston at the Haymarket. In *To Swear like a Sailor* (2016), Paul Gilje briefly discusses Bowling gets picked up as a quintessential American sailor in the late eighteenth century. Also, the existence of Tom Bowling Bay in New Zealand (in North Auckland near North Cape) suggests that the character resonated with British sailors. In *Place Names of New Zealand* (1975), A. W. Reed writes that "There are several accounts or legends relating to Tom Bowling. One is to the effect that he was a Maori, Tame Porena, known to whalers who frequented the area as Tom Bowling, and whose descendants live at Te Hapua" (427).

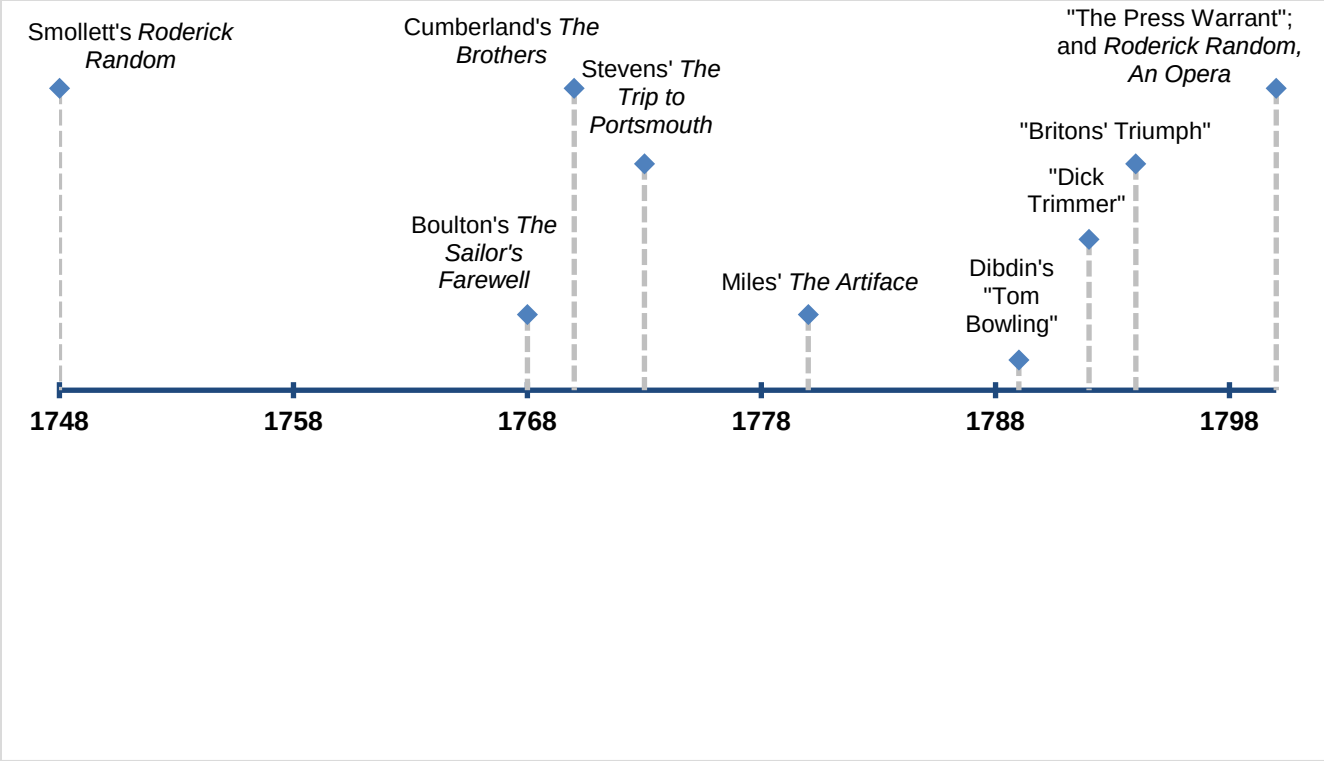

Figure 10: A timeline of Tom Bowling's appearances on the page and stage in the mid- to late eighteenth century.

As shown in Figure 10, Bowling appears in a variety of genres throughout the late eighteenth century, particularly during the period after the Seven Years' War (1756-63), the American Revolutionary War (1775-83), and during the French Revolution (1789) and French Revolutionary War (1793-1803).

The above timeline raises the following questions: Why did Bowling frequently reappear in the late 1760s and 1780s? How did the stage resurrect and change the representation of Bowling? How did the "Bowling" figures on the stage draw on or reflect other representations in popular culture? And, how does the representation of Bowling and, by extension Jack Tar, change from Smollett's initial characterization? To answer these questions, I examine stage performances, songs, and images of Bowling in the mid- and late-eighteenth century when he became a treasured national figure, in part because the character was reinscribed and reinforced in different mediums. Portrayals of Bowling reinforce sailors'

connection to the home, domesticating these men and emphasizing their inherent moral qualities. Bowling is the nostalgic and hopeful image of the seafarer, thereby helping alleviate anxiety over violent sailors returning home and, because of their time at sea, becoming outsiders with little connection to the men and women on land.

One of the most significant factors leading to increased cultural interest in sailors in the mid-eighteenth century was the Seven Years' War (1756-63). Primarily a colonial conflict between Britain, France, and eventually Spain, the Seven Years' War required the voluntary and forced enlistment of thousands of British sailors. It is impossible to determine just how many men went to sea during the Seven Years' War.[82] Historians cannot look at a ship's complement, or how many men should be on a vessel, since very few ships left port with a full complement of sailors: "It was a fortunate captain who left port with his ship's complement complete, and by the end of a commission to the West Indies, for example, the actual complement had sometimes been halved" (McLeod 90). Because of the high mortality rates (disease being the primary culprit), captains and the Admiralty were desperate for men. To encourage enlistment, the 1758 Act of Parliament stated that two-month wages would be paid in advance and that wages could be sent to wives (McLeod 92). Aside from this financial inducement, the Navy relied on impressment, a term that refers to taking men (preferably those with sailing experience) and forcing them into military service. Impressment and a long-standing war increased tensions between the fishing fleets and merchant marine where men with even a modicum of sailor experience could be found.

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[82] Because of inconsistent record-keeping during the mid-eighteenth century, McLeod writes, "numbers of how many men were killed in action, deserted, died of disease, or were employed are contested" (90). According to Christopher Lloyd, the Admiralty was "more concerned with recording details about the ships, their stores and their officers, than they were about the men they employed" (113).

Technically, these men were protected from the press because they were needed for the nation's food supply and economy.[83] In practice, though, naval vessels would board fishing and merchant ships looking for "volunteers" (McLeod 97).[84] Impressment, the evil necessity as Denver Brunsman calls it, challenged the public's relationship with the state, starkly revealing contradictions in the ideals of British nationality and freedom.

The stage laid bare the swirling currents of nationality and masculinity within the discourse of impressment. At the heart of this discourse was the common British sailor characterized as Jack Tar. For instance, James Thomson's immensely popular song "Hearts of Oak" highlights how the eighteenth-century theater was a political space in which conceptions of the sailor were being formed and challenged. "Hearts of Oak," originally sung by David Garrick in *Harlequin's Invasion* (1759) at Drury Lane during the midst of the Seven Years' War, links "sailor to ship, ship to freedom, and freedom to king and country" (Freeman 119):

> To honor we call you, not press you like slaves;
>
> For who are so free as the sons of the waves.
>
> Hearts of oak are our ships; hearts of oakare our men;
>
> We always are ready;
>
> Steddy boys, steddy:
>
> We'll fight, and we'll conquer again, and again. (*The Blackbird* 37) [85]

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[83] Other protected men were "wherry men and watermen on the Thames and other rivers, [because they] made possible the loading and unloading of freight and the movement of people across rivers and about harbours" (McLeod 96).

[84] If the Navy was in desperate need of men, a "hot press" was used to press men who would normally be protected (McLeod 96).

[85] Other versions of this song change the second "hearts of oak" to "jack tars."

By saying that sailors are not pressed "like slaves," this ode directly alludes to the line in "Rule, Britannia" (1740) that "Britons never will be slaves" (Thomson, James 42).[86] Both "Hearts of Oak" and "Rule, Britannia" suggest that national identity protects Britons from enslavement, even while those sailors "conquer again, and again." While the seafaring singer in "Hearts of Oak" addresses impressment specifically and alludes to the fact that that pressing into service takes away men's liberty, he argues that complete freedom and glory can only be found at sea. The lyrics, then, capture the essential paradox at the heart of impressment: freedom comes from the ability to enslave others. By suggesting that national identity is predicated on empire, these lyrics negate arguments that impressed British sailors were slaves, a rhetorical strategy commonly employed by sailors and their families.[87] Furthermore, "Hearts of Oak" promotes the image of sailors as stalwart defenders of the nation, men who are brave, "steddy," and continually win their battles. In this song, national identity intertwines with depictions of British masculinity. Lastly, this song cements a correlation between seamen and their ships, which were physical manifestations of Britain's colonial power: the phrase "hearts of oak" refers to the heart of the oak tree, from which the strongest planks were created and used to build Britain's Navy. Imported from North America, oak became a symbol of British Naval strength, a symbol that inflected the cultural references to Jack Tar. The imagery surrounding freedom and "oak" reinforces the Jack Tar mythos, one in which the sailor is essential to the nation's continued colonial success and safety.

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[86] "Rule, Britannia" first appeared in *Alfred: A Masque* performed at Cliveden. Written by James Thomson and David Mallet, "Rule Britannia" quickly became a popular nationalistic tune and was particularly associated with the Royal Navy.

[87] For more on sailors' use of the rhetoric of slavery, see historian Jeffrey W. Bolster's *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (1997) and Brunsman's *The Evil Necessity: British Naval Impressment in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (2013).

In this way, theatrical performances participated in a nationalist agenda of bolstering the Navy and contributed to Bowling's growing popularity. Bowling's popularity expanded because of theater's influential portrayals of sailors before larger and larger audiences. Massive audiences attended the theaters throughout Britain. Each of the Theatres Royal (Drury Lane and Covent Garden), by the end of the century, could accommodate nearly 3,000 patrons. It would be a mistake to assume the theater's influence stopped there, though: audiences also visited the illegitimate theaters in London like the Haymarket, East End, and Sadler's Wells, and provincial theaters attracted large crowds throughout Britain.[88] The prevalence of theaters around London and the British Isles indicates how a popular character on stage could become a well-known cultural figure virtually overnight. Unlike readers of novels, audiences for the theater did not need to be literate. This meant that great numbers of people who had not been previously exposed to the character could encounter Bowling-type figures. In addition to the sheer numbers of theater-goers, people brought the stage into their homes in the form of private theatricals. On the street passing print shops, audiences could view drawings of actors in popular scenes, influencing their perception of the plays, the actors, and the characters (Davis 60-63). The confluence of these many cultural representations of Jack Tar and Bowling, therefore, shaped people's perception of seamen.

Bowling's resurgence in the late eighteenth century speaks to how the theater was a site in which audiences could witness seamen, rather than behaving as degenerates, enacting positive social change at home. After the Seven Years War, Britain experienced the "social

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[88] Illegitimate theatres did not have a royal patent, which was required after the 1737 Licensing Act. The Haymarket received a provisional patent (for summer performances) in the mid-eighteenth century. Provisional theatres like Edinburgh received patents in the 1760s and 1770s. For more on illegitimate theatre, see Jane Moody's insightful *Illegitimate Theatre in London, 1770-1840* (2000).

strain of absorbing more than 200,000 demobilized men, most of them poor, some of them mutilated, all of them trained to violence" (Colley 101). It is against this backdrop of sailors return and potential social instability that Bowling's reemergence in the theater and culture becomes significant: Bowling came to symbolize the everyman—a simple, non-threatening sailor who, because he transcends traditional class lines, can make the country better. The first play in which a Bowling figure appears on the stage is Richard Cumberland's *The Brothers*, which was performed for the first time on December 2, 1769 at Covent Garden.[89] *The Brothers* was widely successful, having been performed 26 times during the '69-'70 season (Stone 1439-1516) and a further 22 times during the remainder of the late eighteenth-century.[90] The play follows a young sailor's shipwreck on the Cornwall coast and his attempt to claim his birthright and rightful place in society with the help of his uncle, a gnarled old seaman called Captain Ironsides. Ironsides, like Bowling in Smollett's *Roderick Random*, took his nephew (Belfield Jr.) to sea, helps Belfield Jr. win the hand of a lovely young British woman (Sophia), and instates his nephew into his rightful positions as gentleman and landowner. Ironsides' actions mirror those of Bowling in *Roderick Random*, harkening back to Bowling, and bringing this version of Jack Tar into the late-eighteenth-century cultural

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[89] Although Thomas Boulton's *The Sailor's Farewell* (1768) is the first play that has a character named Bowling, it was never performed. In the play, a captain tries to recruit men to transport slaves to Jamaica. The captain sends his men into taverns to bribe sailors' "wives" into encouraging their men to go to sea. Bowling, in this play, is hesitant to leave his prostitute to go back to sea, a dramatic change from Smollett's representation of the character. In fact, Boulton's use of the name "Bowling" suggests that the character of Bowling was already standing in for the average sailor.

[90] During the '71-72 season, the play was performed ten times (Stone 1522-1596). It appeared only once during 1772 (1636) and once during 1774 (1795). However, it was performed three times in 1775 (1871-1912), once in 1778 (Hogan *The London Stage* Part 5 volume 1 140), once in 1779 at the Haymarket (294), four times at Covent Garden during the '87-'88 season (Hogan *The London Stage* Part 5 volume 2 969-1070), once in 1791 (1345), and for the last time in the eighteenth century on May 2, 1791 (1345).

consciousness. Ironsides is described as a "true English oak to the heart of him, and a fine old seaman-like figure he is!" (9) and an "old tar-barrel" (16). These descriptions highlight Ironsides' position as a patriot ("true English oak") and working-class sailor: the reference to tar, for example, is a clear signal that Ironsides rose from the lower decks and is not a commissioned officer. Furthermore, like Bowling, Ironsides is a tarpaulin: his appearance, with his officer's uniform, evokes his status as a gentleman, but his speech signifies his identity as a lower-class sailor as well as his social mobility. For example, Ironsides' speech is peppered with nautical phrases, signaling his laboring origins, his outsider status, and his disinterest (perhaps even disregard) for society on land. Unlike other representations of Jack Tar as a young party boy who frequents brothels whenever in port, Bowling and Ironsides abhor all women except the ones whom their nephews love: for Ironsides, that woman is Sophia (the woman that Belfield Jr. loves) (11) and for Bowling that is Narcissa (the woman that Roderick loves). In fact, Ironsides and Bowling are instrumental in ensuring their nephews marry, therefore bolstering a social institution that they reject for themselves. Lastly, Ironsides' desire to leave Cornwall reinforces the image of the sailor who belongs at sea, whose disruptive potential is contained and limited.[91] Thus, Ironsides evokes the image of a seaman whose morality resolves his otherness: he does not fit into the established social order but is nonetheless supportive of this order.

Ironsides is also like Bowling in that his success at sea results in his capacity, or at least the requisite status, to right social wrongs. Andrew Belfield, the brother of Belfield Jr., loves Sophia. To defeat his rival, Andrew Belfield spreads a rumor that turns Sophia against Belfield Jr (Cumberland 16). When Belfield Jr. turns privateer in his grief and leaves

[91] Bowling in *Roderick Random* also expresses a desire to return to sea, staying only to give Narcissa away in marriage to Roderick by functioning as a surrogate father.

England, Andrew Belfield tells everyone that his brother is dead, paving the way to winning Sophia for himself (16). At the end of the play, when the truth comes out, Ironsides vouches for Belfield Jr.: “My nephew here is as honest a lad as lives, and loves you at the soul of him: give him your hand, and I’ll broach the last chest of dollars, to make him a fortune deserving of you” (71-72). Like Smollett’s Bowling, Cumberland’s Ironsides lives a life as a sailor that has provided him with the financial means, and morality, to solve class conflict and support the domestic front. A review of the play in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* (1769) offers a glowing account of the character and the actor:

> Belfield’s uncle, capt. [*sic*] Ironsides, is a rough honest, generous old tar, who loves the smoke of tobacco and gunpowder, who distinguishes what is right by feelings that approve it, and acquires dignity and importance in drunkenness and dirt, by the nobleness of sentiment which he does not know to be noble, and acts of benevolence and liberality which he performs by the happy necessity of his nature, just as he eats when he is hungry, or drinks when he is dry. (Urban 596)

This review, like Smollett’s novel and Cumberland’s play, highlights the tar’s inherent morality and generosity. What defines these characters, then, is less their newfound social status, or even brave actions, than their essential goodness. Ironsides helped theater audiences conceptualize tars as lovable men who want only to support their families and the nation. Ironsides supports Terrence Freeman’s claim that eighteenth-century audiences laughed at sailors on the stage but did so “amiably rather than contemptuously for the most part . . . [supporting] a repertory that, more often than not, gives the lie to those inclined to characterize the popular image of Redcoat and Tar in terms of buffoons, boors, or brutes” (3).

The comedic stylings of Jack Tar, and the audience's enjoyment of socially-inept sailors, more likely indicates affection for seamen rather than disdain.

In addition to the repackaging of these admirable qualities in the character of Ironsides, Bowling's popularity in the late eighteenth century is due, in part, to the actors who portrayed the Bowling-type characters. We can understand Bowling's many appearances on the eighteenth-century stage by using Marvin Carlson's theory of ghosting. Carlson writes:

> [Theatre] is the repository of cultural memory, but, like the memory of each individual, it is also subject to continual adjustment and modification as the memory is recalled in new circumstances and contexts. The present experience is always ghosted by previous experiences and associations while these ghosts are simultaneously shifted and modified by the processes of recycling and recollection. (*Haunted Stage* 2)

Ghosting gives the audience a chance to see the character as part of a continuum of performances and draws attention to the interplay between the actor and the audiences' cultural memory, memory that is influenced and altered by each portrayal of Bowling and the audiences' knowledge of the actors themselves. Ironsides was played by Henry Woodward, a highly popular comedic actor, particularly in comic roles that appealed to an audience that included the lower classes (for a portrait of Woodward, see Appendix B: Actors' Portraits). David Garrick, in his memoirs, asserts that Ironsides "is our old friend Tom Bowling dramatically dressed" and that he "was glad to see him make so good a figure upon the theatrical boards" (qtd. in Davies 271). Garrick is referring to Woodward's portrayal ("dramatically dressed") as much as the character itself. Woodward was beloved in his

portrayal of Ironsides, a role that was associated with him for decades. *The Gentleman's Magazine* review states, "This character is most admirably sustained by Mr Woodward, of which the applause he received, is a better proof than the opinion of the writer of these remarks" (596) and an advertisement for the play in *World and Fashionable Advertiser* in 1787, ten years after Woodward's death, states that Woodward was "most incomparable" in the role of Ironsides and "this play has . . . been laid aside ever since Mr. Woodward's death; for this plain reason—because there was nobody to play the Captain" ("Sporting Intelligence"). Ironsides was inseparable from Woodward the actor and his celebrity status. As Carlson writes, "the same actors would portray [the same] characters in scenario after scenario, so that audiences could expect certain actions, even certain gestures, from certain actors" (*Theatre Semiotics* 16). As audiences began to expect Woodward to play Ironsides in particular ways, the character becomes inextricably linked to Woodward himself. The connection between this actor and the character cannot be overstated: of the forty performances of *The Brothers* between 1769 and 1775, Woodward played Ironsides thirty-six times. Because of Woodward's popularity and frequent portrayal of the character, the theater continually reinforced the cultural memory of Bowling.

Since Woodward's previous performances ghost his subsequent characters, theatrical representations of Bowling reinforced the humorous aspect of the Bowling figure, thereby obscuring sailors' more troubling role in war. Woodward, as previously noted, was a famous comedic actor and his style of acting must have invariably influenced how people understood Ironsides/Bowling. For example, a popular drawing of *The Brothers* Act I scene IX (Figure 11) shows Woodward as Ironsides insulting Lady Dove in front of her husband, revealing the foolishness of the perpetually berated and nightgown-clad Sir Benjamin Dove.

Figure 11: Illustration of Woodward as Ironsides in *The Brothers* ("Richard Yates").

Like drawings of Tom Bowling from *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (see Figures 3 and 5), this illustration places the seaman in opposition to the rich, giving the sailor the voice of

truth, even if his observances are biting and caustic. The public's perception of Woodward's Ironsides was influenced, to some extent, by the actor's famous work in pantomimes, which brought together slapstick physical comedy with song and dance (O'Brien 103).[92] In essence, pantomimes prioritized spectacle and sensation over ideas (O'Brien 104). Even though this genre was widely criticized by critics, actors, and authors, the pantomime was wildly popular.[93] Although we cannot know how Woodward performed Ironsides, Carlson's concept of ghosting suggests that audiences would have viewed Woodward's performances through the lens of his portrayal of Harlequin in pantomimes. Theatrical repetition always calls upon the past performances of the same character and the other characters that actors portrayed. Thus, the ghost of Harlequin connects Bowling to a popular entertainment genre that would have called attention away from the sailors' more troubling function in war and appealed to a broad audience.

Music, additionally, reframed sailors' role in society, obscuring the inherent violence of life at sea. Images of sailors in the late eighteenth century, including those of Bowling, were influenced by the long-standing connection between Jack Tar and musicality that appeared in a variety of genres. For instance, Thomas Stothard's *Sailors in Port* (1798) presents a typical image of a sailor dancing to the tune played by his fiddling seafaring companion (Figure 12):

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[92] Peter Thomson similarly writes "Henry Woodward (1717-1777) should be better remembered, not only because he was a versatile comedian . . . but also as the finest Harlequin of his time, often in his own pantomimes. His *Queen Mab* and *The Genii* were, by a considerable margin, the most frequently performed dramatic pieces during Garrick's management of Drury Lane" (13).

[93] Critics of the pantomime included Alexander Pope, William Hogarth, and Henry Fielding: their main concern was that pantomime indicated the theater's decline into frivolity (O'Brien 105).

Figure 12: Thomas Stothard's *Sailors in Port,* engraved by William Ward (1798).

In this image, sailors enjoy the company of prostitutes, who would be rowed into the harbor in bumboats to meet with sailors that were denied leave. Depictions such as Stothard's certainly contributed to the idea that sailors had wives in every port, but these portrayals also furthered the idealized and romantic notion that seamen were non-threatening, full of life,

and carefree (for more examples of drawings of dancing and musical sailors, see Appendix B: Dancing Jack Tar). This portrayal of a musical or dancing Jack Tar was further reinforced by the publication of sea chanties and other sailor-themed tunes in song collections like *The Jolly Tar's Garland* (1780), *The Seamans Garland* (1790), *The Jovial Songster, or Sailor's Delight; A choice Collect of cheerful and humourous Songs, that are Sung by the Brave Tars of Old England* (1792).[94] Although these collections are just a few of the many either solely devoted to songs about or purportedly sung by sailors, these texts suggest that a robust print culture and the many visual representations of dancing sailors were instrumental in popularizing the image of the seafarer as romantic songster.

The theater also propagated the image of the sailor as lighthearted and musically-inclined. Although I do not necessarily agree with Gillian Russell's argument that "The 'Jolly Jack Tar' was largely a creation of the theatre" (99), since this character was shaped by novels and other print media, I do agree that music, much of which was performed in the theater, was central to this figure. One way in which the theater reinforced Jack Tar was by including the popular hornpipe dance as an interlude. The hornpipe was a dance that became associated with sailors (Freeman 127) in part because actors dressed as seamen would take part in the dance, and the hornpipe was occasionally paired with the singing of "Hearts of Oak" (Stone 925). The representation of musical tar was also reinforced by John Bannister (1760-1836), an actor famous for his portrayal of Ben the sailor in William Congreve's *Love for Love*.[95] Bannister also appeared as Tom Bowling in George Alexander Stevens' *The Trip to Portsmouth* and William Augustus Miles' *The Artifice*. First performed on August 11,

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[94] Within these collections are songs titled "The Merry Sailor," "How Pleasant a Sailor's Life Passes," and "The Bonny Sailor," to name a few, that present seamen as musical heroes.
[95] For a discussion of this play's performance history, see Chapter 1 "Defoe and the Emergent, Nationalistic Jack Tar."

1773 at the Haymarket Theatre, *The Trip to Portsmouth* featured Bannister in the roles of Bowling/First Sailor (for a portrait of Bannister, see Appendix B: Actors' Portraits).[96] Bannister also played Bowling five times in the afterpiece *The Artifice* (1780).[97] In both plays, Bowling still speaks in the "plain speech" indicative of the laboring seaman in Smollett's novel and other representations of Jack Tar (as well as Woodward's Ironsides). Yet, both of Bannister's theatrical portrayals merge Smollett's Bowling with a dominant cultural image of the dancing, musical sailor. In *The Artifice*, Bowling sings:

> We who brave the stormy main,
>
> Lead lives of pleasure free from pain;
>
> Let the welcome then go round,
>
> May our Ship ne'er run ground,
>
> May our grog pot ne'er ebb dry,
>
> Nor British tars from Frenchmen fly. (9)

This song emphasizes the qualities that have, by this point in the eighteenth century, become characteristics of Jack Tar: bravery, patriotism, and a penchant for grog. But more than that, the lyric "lead lives of pleasure free from pain" reinforces the idea that sailing with the Navy was an enviable life decision. This idea of the happy and musical sailor functioned in multiple ways. First, it flatters sailors in the gallery.[98] Playwrights and theater directors

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[96] *The Trip to Portsmouth* was performed fourteen times in the eighteenth century (Stone *The London Stage* 1736-1905). While certainly not as big of a hit as *The Brothers*, the play was still a success as it appeared over the course of two seasons.

[97] *The Artifice* was not terribly successful. While it was performed five times in 1780 at Drury Lane, the play was not performed during any other season (Hogan *The London Stage* Part 5, Vol. 1 332-339).

[98] The epilogue to *A Trip to Portsmouth* similarly flatters sailors while promoting a nationalistic agenda: "After a triple hornpipe, a chorus of sailors performs this song: 'My Mess-mates aloft, and my Masters below, / Since pleas'd you accept of our Pantomime show,

shrewdly cultivated seamen's interest: as Jane Moody writes, "Military personnel represented influential patrons, for many provincial theatres were located in garrison towns and at major ports. Officers bespoke large numbers of plays . . . and they also supplied the theatre with military supernumeraries: English crew members for a performance of Smollett's *The Reprisal; or, The Tars of Old England* (DL, 1757)" ("Dictating" 35).[99] Second, depictions of the musical tar allow large and diverse audiences to visualize sailors as romantic adventurers, and, by extension, reimagine imperial expansion and war. Or, as David Worrall notes, the importance of naval portrayals lies in their repetition to a large audience: "national ideological aims were habitually reiterated in song and chorus" (124). Bowling's rough exterior, his penchant for violence, and his inability to fit into society on land are, to some extent, repackaged as emblems of one type of British masculinity. Music, then, celebrates the sailor identity while also containing it with the discourse of nationalism.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Jack Tar and Tom Bowling have morphed into one figure. While it is certainly true that many of the characteristics of Jack Tar were also found in the portrayals of Tom Bowling (namely his pervasive nautical phrases and pugnaciousness), the figures were fairly distinct (for example, Jack Tar, unlike Bowling, was often presented in images as frequenting brothels) throughout most of the eighteenth century. One way in which Bowling and Jack Tar began to merge in terms of cultural memory and

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/ Our hopes are safe harbour'd, unshipped are our fears, / And joyous we gratefully give you three cheers. / Your musical folks may perhaps shew their parts / By this song or that song, but we shew our hearts: / The song of all songs, fit for Englishmen's ears, / Is, *Britons strike home*, boys, with three jolly cheers, / This Stage is our Vessel, we Actors the Crew, / Who luff, or go large, or make Trips to please you; / If, Sirs, no offence in our last Trip appears, / As we take our Departure, accept of--three Cheers'" (Freeman 94).

[99] Smollett's *The Reprisal* was performed 25 times during the eighteenth century. For more on the performance history of this afterpiece, see *The London Stage* Part 4. Vol. 2; Part 4. Vol. 3; Part 5. Vol. 1; and Part 5. Vol. 2.

representation was Bannister's depiction of a young, singing Bowling invariably being ghosted by and thereby reinforcing the memory of Ben a stereotypical Jack Tar from *Love for Love*. We can also understand the conflation of Tom Bowling and Jack Tar by utilizing Joseph Roach's theory of surrogation. According to Roach, surrogation is the process or mechanism by which "culture reproduces and re-creates itself" (2). In other words, a surrogate takes the place of something or someone who is missing, filling a void by reproducing the valued social element. In the case of Bowling at the end of the eighteenth century, he is symbolically killed by Charles Dibdin and a new type of tar takes his place, reproducing and altering Bowling for a new generation. In Dibdin's famous song "Tom Bowling," sung for the first time at Covent Garden on Nov. 23, 1790 by Bannister (Hogan *The London Stage* Part 5 Vol. 2 1304), the singer recounts the life and death of Tom Bowling while emphasizing domestic masculinity.[100] Dibdin writes,

> Tom never from his word departed,
>
> His virtues were so rare,
>
> His friends were many, and true-hearted,
>
> His Poll was kind and fair:
>
> And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly -
>
> Ah! Many's the Time and oft -
>
> But mirth is turn'd to melancholy,
>
> For Tom is gone aloft. (*British Songster* 32)

Here, Dibdin highlights Bowling's laudable qualities, (e.g. bravery, loyalty, joyfulness) not related to rank or his ability to disrupt the social order (a quality that was emphasized in

[100] Depending on the collection, this song was variously titled "Tom Bowling," "Poor Tom Bowling," or "Poor Tom."

Smollett's novel). Like other representations of seamen in the theater, this song emphasizes sailors' strong moral character, perhaps reflecting the rising influence of the middle classes: inherent morality became more important than station of birth. Additionally, Bowling's connection to Poll, a name commonly indicating a good English lass, tightly binds Bowling to the home front and the family. Yet, the titular character in "Tom Bowling" is vacant, his death leaving a void waiting to be filled. An accompanying image to Dibdin's song exemplifies how surrogation functions in regard to Bowling (Figure 13):

Figure 13: *Poor Tom Bowling* by unknown artist and published by Robert Sayer (1791).

Bowling's body, presumably, is within the casket over which Poll mourns. Startling, though, is the young sailor in the forefront gesturing to the casket. Bowling, or at least the memory of Bowling, is displaced on to the anonymous seaman, reaffirming the connection between Jack

Tar and Bowling. But, like all acts of surrogation, the process results in change (Roach 2). The young sailor, the surrogate, is not a perfect substitute for Bowling, and surrogation invariably calls upon and changes the memory of that which is lost. In Robert Sayer's drawing (Figure 13), this process helps connect the battles of the past with the future of the Royal Navy and the nation itself. Indeed, the role of empire is accentuated by the map of the world on the wall and the ship anchoring outside the window: the symbols of empire literally surround and are part of the home. In this way, Dibdin and the artist who created the drawing reject the contested image of the common sailor as dangerous, profligate, drunken, and promiscuous; instead, the picture displaces the loyalty and nationalism associated with Bowling onto a youthful seamen who embodies a new form of the Jack Tar identity.[101] Ultimately, this song and drawing repackage sailors for a new generation, one that is framed by the home rather than one that rejects domesticity.

Conclusion

Smollett's Tom Bowling's emergence and reemergence in the eighteenth century speaks to how sailors' role within society was contested and changed over the course of the mid- to late eighteenth century. Trained to violence in a world far removed from life in Britain, seamen had the capacity to disrupt the home front, either by violence or through their social mobility. The rapid demobilization after the wars in the mid-century thrust these previously distant men back into British society on land. Smollett's Tom Bowling

[101] One has only to look at "Dick Trimmer," a song that parodies "Tom Bowling," to see that the representation of sailors as drunkards was still common. In the song, Bowling (aka Dick Trimmer) is not dead; instead, he is passed out drunk under a pub table. Linda Hutcheon argues that parody "stresses sameness and stasis" and a subversive side that "stresses only difference" (qtd. in Carlson 39). In other words, "parody both reinscribes and subverts" (Carlson 39).

encapsulates the tensions inherent in many representations of these social outcasts on whom the nation relied for security and prosperity. Bowling's popularity in the late eighteenth century not only speaks to the Navy's importance and influence on Britons' daily lives, but it highlights the vital roles the close relationship between theater and print culture had on shaping the public's understanding of the Navy. The nature of the theater, with the inherent adaptation of the character that invariably occurs with any performance, brought Smollett's Bowling and the Jack Tar closer together in the cultural imagination, making the two nearly synonymous, particularly at the end of the eighteenth century. These characters, in the face of the uncertainty of war and peace, reinforce idealized nationalistic sentiments while repackaging sailors as exemplifying a more domestic masculinity.

Chapter 3: "This Hollow Place the Ship": Constructing British Identities through Sea Travel in Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*

By the end of the eighteenth century, sailing was not just what someone did, but was increasingly presented in a variety of texts as defining who someone was. Sailors were not individuals so much as they were part of an identifiable and knowable group distinguished by their unique spirit and bravery. Jack Tar was often represented as "jolly," constantly joking with his peers and living life to the fullest.[102] His ability to laugh at danger and death fed into the characterization of the naval veteran as brave. In fact, these men were often presented as the bravest of all British men, including soldiers and most certainly more courageous than all other men who do not take up arms for the defense of the nation, as I previously discussed. Thus, bravery was tied to having a powerful sense of patriotic duty. While it was presented as a strong motivator for going to sea and acting courageously during a sea battle, jingoism was not presented as the sole influence for choosing a sailor's life. Nationalism was combined with economic interest, both for the country and, more predominantly, for the sailor's own life. Often, the Tar in the late eighteenth century is represented as seeking riches to support his family or his lady back at home: in many texts, he is a lover pining after his lovely British lass sadly left on the shore. These three common traits (humor, courage, and entrepreneurial spirit) often overlap in late eighteenth-century depictions of seamen to create a complex figure embodying a type of British masculinity.

The figure of Jack Tar, in presenting a version of British manliness, imposed a homogeneity on the wooden world, promoting the idea that deep sea ships were less diverse

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[102] "The Midshipman," a song from 1790, offers a great image of the jolly tar: "I'm here or there a jolly dog, / At land or sea I'm all agog, / To fight, or kiss, or touch the grog, / For I'm a jovial midshipman" (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 109).

spaces than they actually were and erasing non-white and non-European sailors' labor and place within homosocial communities at sea. To explore how non-European mariners are represented in relation to Jack Tar and how the Tar identity was used by sailors in the late eighteenth century, I primarily focus on Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* (1789). Equiano's text is most well-known, both in the eighteenth century and presently, because it is the first text to depict the Middle Passage from a slave's perspective. Recent scholarship investigates historical documents in relation to Equiano's claims of an African birth, casting doubt on the veracity of his Middle Passage narration.[103] Yet, this focus on "truth" or nativity can obscure the performative nature of writing, particularly self-authorship. One major thread of current research that, to a small extent, addresses this performance is focused on how Equiano develops a Christian identity.[104] These two veins of research intersect in their investigation of how Equiano represents himself as African *and* British, a hybrid identity reinforced by the *Narrative*'s famous frontispiece that contrasts Equiano's black skin with British clothing. Unfortunately, few studies examine how Equiano develops a unique identity in relation to

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[103] See Vincent Carretta's "Methodology in the Making and Reception of Equiano" (2013) and *Equiano, The African: Biography of a Self-Made Man* (2005), as well as S. E. Ogude's "Facts into Fiction: Equiano's Narrative Reconsidered" (1982). Contrary to Carretta and Ogude is Catherine Ancholonu's "Who was Olaudah Equiano?: Recent findings on the Home of Olaudah Equiano, West Africa's Pioneer Writer" (1987) and "The Igbo Roots of Olaudah Equiano" (2009). Building on this debate, Yael Ben-Zvi's "Equiano's Nativity" argues against a limited "classificatory logic of identity politics" that obscures seeing how the *Narrative* engages with universal human rights discourse.

[104] For more on these arguments, see Katalin Orban's "Dominant and Submerged Discourses in the Life of Olaudah Equiano (or Gustavus Vassa?)" (1993), Adam Potkay's "Olaudah Equiano and the Art of the Spiritual Autobiography" (1994), Eileen Razzari Elrod's "Moses And The Egyptian: Religious Authority In Olaudah Equiano's Interesting Narrative" (2001), Shaun Regan's "Learning Not to Curse: Swearing, Testimony, and Truth in Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative*" (2013), Sylvester Johnson's "Colonialism, Biblical World-Making, and Temporalities in Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*" (2008), and Fisher "The Poetics of Belonging in the Age of Enlightenment: Spiritual Metaphors of Being in Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*" (2013).

place, particularly the ships on which he spent so much time.[105] In other words, spaces shape and constrain Equiano's performance of identity in a way that few scholars are talking about. The Atlantic Ocean informs the identities Equiano narrates: the ship prominently marks Equiano's journey from the African diasporic position to the British sailor. This wooden world is where he is most exposed to British culture during his formative years and largely impacts the development and ultimate representation of his British masculinity. However, no scholarship has discussed how working with and living in the wooden world of the British sailor inform Equiano's self-representation. The discursive space of the ship leads to sailors' distinct performances of identity. Scholars have thus far overlooked how Equiano situates the Jolly Jack Tar, the stereotypical image of the common British sailor, as crucial to his personal transformation: from African diaspora to British tar, slave to freedman, landsman to sailor, and sailor to author.

The discursive representation of this aquatic space, like we find in Equiano's *Narrative*, leads to specific characterizations of sailors. Any discussion of Equiano's British identity must consider the nuances within his expression of one particular British identity (the seaman). Equiano narrates how his journey to becoming British is through the path of a sailor: the sailor's identity is at the heart of his self-representation. Essential to how he depicts his own identity is the cultural image of the Jolly Jack Tar. I propose that Equiano's narrative can be read as part of the many larger social conversations regarding sailors that were found in texts as diverse as sea shanties, plays, and poems. Equiano presents his interactions with seamen as integral to how he constructs his identity, an identity that

[105] Elizabeth A Bohls' "Equiano's Politics of Place: From Roots to Routes" is one of the few studies that explores how Equiano's sea journeys, his time crisscrossing the ocean, contribute to his identity formation (2014). I discuss more of her compelling argument later.

incorporates some traits while actively resisting many stigmas associated with the tar. I argue that Equiano drew on and contributed to dominant representations of the Tar to craft his own self-representation.

This chapter seeks to answer two questions: How do Equiano's depictions of the British tar relate to portrayals found in other texts? And, what aspects of that figure does Equiano adapt to create a new identity? To answer these questions, I consider Equiano's *Narrative* as part of a larger cultural discourse that includes plays, images, and sea shanties (which are particularly important as the sailor is increasingly represented as playing music or singing); all of these texts contributed to creating a recognizable Jolly Tar figure in the mid- to late-eighteenth century.[106] I explore how Equiano's *Narrative* reflects and challenges this form of British masculinity as he narrates both an insider and outsider perspective, providing multiple views of sailors. Since seamen were represented as being both a civilizing force, preserving the nation's security (and economic interests), and a potentially dangerous and volatile group, I pay particular attention to how Equiano depicts both the ship and the sailor as constantly balancing control and violence. Often, the moments of violence in the *Narrative* coincide with Equiano's depiction of himself as powerless; on the other hand, his portrayal of Britishness correlates to scenes in which he exerts control over his own destiny. The balance between civility and violence takes a unique form on the ship, and these instances are at the heart of the type of persona that Equiano presents. Essentially, he constructs his own form of the Jack Tar that is shown as both reflecting the admirable

[106] One text in the late nineteenth century even writes that "the sailor is more constantly at song than the soldier," hence why sea songs are so powerful (Elson 209). While I realize this source is far outside my focus on the eighteenth century, it speaks to how the image of the sailor becomes solidified and aspects of this identity are accepted as fact.

qualities often associated with that figure in popular culture while avoiding the negative stereotypes that typify eighteenth-century sailors in the public's imagination.

This chapter is divided into three sections, each exploring a crucial aspect of Equiano's identity and how it is constructed in relation to the tar identity. First, I examine the common representation of the Tar as a jokester and how Equiano reaffirms and complicates this image by suggesting that maritime humor is tinged with cruelty. Moreover, Equiano's narrative suggests that the Jolly Jack Tar's humor is inextricably tied to control (i.e. exerting influence over slaves or creating the sense of have some measure of control over their own destinies). Equiano positions himself as a cultural informant who can decipher seamen's humor, but distances himself from destructive teasing. Second, I discuss Equiano's characterization of the Tar as brave, one of the most common attributes ascribed to the British sailor. Frequently, British tars' bravery is what distinguishes them from landsmen. Equiano's experience in the Seven Years' War leads him to praise and later mimic the sailors. What comes out of these violent and bloody scenes is Equiano's fellowship with the other sailors, a relationship that leads to his burgeoning nationalistic pride. Last, I consider Equiano's agency, particularly regarding his position as a black sailor and author. The space of the ship created opportunities for English mariner and black sailors alike to gain some agency, mostly through trade. For Equiano, though, potential to earn money as a sailor is limited by racial constraints at sea and on land. Ultimately, I argue that Equiano's text reinforces and critiques stereotypical tar attributes like violence, humor, bravery, patriotism, and agency: by offering a new perspective on the sailor, Equiano suggests that ships create an opportunity for citizens and non-British citizens alike to cultivate an ideal masculine British identity.

The Comic Tar

Equiano's autobiographical reflections on his life at sea share one common characteristic found in representations of Jack Tar, namely humor that incorporates violence. Often, this humor relates to common maritime dangers like storms or sharks. Many depictions found in songs and images show the sailor as carefree or immune to the fear of death, a constant companion during a sea voyage. The *Narrative* contains striking similarities between Equiano's representation of sailors and those found in other late eighteenth-century texts, but with significant differences. In this section, I first explain how humor, specifically humor about death, appears in characterizations of Jack Tar. Then, I argue that Equiano positions himself as both an outsider often at the receiving end of what can be considered particularly cruel seamen's humor and a cultural insider who can translate the tars' humorous perspective on violence to non-sailors. Equiano offers multiple perspectives on shipboard violence chiefly through narrating his perspective as a cultural outsider. This perspective, what I call Equiano's African diasporic position, enables him to offer a slave's view of the severity of the wooden world, one that was absent in eighteenth-century discourse about the slave trade and deep-sea ships.[107] Equiano shows how humor itself becomes a violent act when inflicted upon outsiders, particularly people, like slaves, who are in powerless positions. However, Equiano's text draws on this stereotypical Tar trait to suggest that sailors use humor to perform bravery and a specific type of masculinity. This is not to say that Equiano does not critique this aspect of sailing culture; rather, his criticism is tempered by

[107] Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* was one of the first narratives of the middle passage told from a slave's perspective. Quobna Ottobah Cugoano's *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Commerce of the Human Species* (1787) was the first account, but it did not receive as much attention as Equiano's book did two years later.

his own performance of being a sailor. Equiano's dual performances result in him taking the position of apologist for the British Tar, promoting the sailor's identity as something that is worthy of emulation.

It was well-known in eighteenth-century British society that sailors lived a particularly dangerous life in which they were battling multiple forces threatening their safety and well-being. First, sailors had to contend with the physical realities of shipboard life: climbing the rigging during dangerous storms, eating a diet often lacking in diverse nutrients, getting limited sleep with the pitching of the ship, and enduring backbreaking work at the bilge pump. Second, ships were often strictly regulated with harsh punishments. These two dangers place sailors between what Marcus Rediker calls "the devil and the deep blue sea": the eighteenth-century sailor was literally stuck between the forces of nature and a government-backed captain with virtually limitless power (*Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* 5). Adding to these two issues is that fact that sailors were often faced with a tenuous community onboard the ship where peace and order could be lost if the crew distrusted each other or the officers' skill. Lastly, ships were battle sites, and sailors had to be ready to fight to save their lives in an attack. These reasons contribute to a life at sea being filled with constant struggle and pain, unlike what modern romantic film representations would suggest.

One way that sailors were represented as dealing with dangerous seafaring life was with humor. The tar's lighthearted approach is a defining characteristic in countless depictions of the common sailor, what distinguishes him from landsmen. While "landsmen cry, all's gone . . . The sailor hangs 'twixt sea and sky, / And jokes with Davy Jones" ("A Sailor's Life at Sea", *A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 37). Here, and in other

texts, humor is represented as providing a framework by which to comprehend and control the often volatile and violent wooden world. In an 1817 image titled “Sons of Neptune” (Figure 14), sailors are depicted pinning fish to their clothing and thoroughly enjoying shaving a landsman new to the crew as the boat crosses into the Southern Hemisphere (Cruikshank, Isaac).

Figure 14: Isaac Cruikshank’s “Sons of Neptune shaving a Landsman! (1817).

The image suggests that the humor is tinged with latent violence and borders on the barbaric, or at least is slightly pagan, as one sailor is dressed as Neptune, holding a trident and sitting on a quasi-thrown, while other half-dressed sailors dump water on the blindfolded initiates. Although the lower deck suggests that the sailors are unruly, the image demonstrates the performative nature of the spectacle, as the sailors provide the upper classes in the upper left corner of the image some amusement. “Sons of Neptune” indicates a clear separation

between the crew on the lower deck, who are taking part in these shenanigans, and the officer class on the upper deck, noticeable in their uniforms and a lady holding a parasol.[108] This separation suggests that the tar's humor marks him as socially distinct from polite society. Another well-known example is Frances Burney's Captain Mirvan in *Evelina* (1778). Captain Mirvan, having been at sea for seven years, does not easily fit into London society, and his staunchly English perspective leads him to mercilessly tease Madam Duval, a former British tavern wench who, after having married a Frenchman, poorly imitates French manners. At one time, Captain Mirvan, pretending be a highwayman, overtakes a carriage conveying Evelina and Madam Duval—a prank he finds hilarious, a view not shared by Evelina, the first-person narrator of this novel. In another moment, Captain Mirvan simply cannot abide by Mr. Lovel, a cowardly fop and the antithesis of all portrayals of the tar. In what is the most famous scene from the novel, Captain Mirvan dresses a monkey to look like Mr. Lovel (430-435). In this scene, the ladies scream and scamper to get as far away from the monkey as possible, before the creature bites Mr. Lovel on the ear (432). All the while, Captain Mirvan roars with laughter. Although Evelina's reception of the Jolly Tar's humor is sometimes appreciative, since some of objects of his humor (namely Madam Duval and Mr. Lovel) are contemptable, she is also critical of how his humor disrupts the social order on land. The stereotypical representation of the seaman as jolly and humorous, in both *Evelina* and "Sons of Neptune," reveal how the Tar's breed of humor is not compatible with polite society.

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[108] Women on ships were not as uncommon as one may initially suppose. Although the British Navy officially restricted women from accompanying their men, the captain had the ultimate say, and women from every social class could be found on some navy, merchant, and whaling ships (Volo and Volo 155-176).

Equiano's *Narrative* incorporates this distinctive and often violent humor, showing through the jokes that the sailors are separate from other men. One cruel joke that runs constantly through Equiano's second sea voyage, after Equiano made the Middle Passage as a young slave, relates to cannibalism, specifically the sailors eating the slaves. When a ship slave serving Captain Pascal, Equiano assumes that the sailors on Pascal's ship will eat him. In the span of a little over two pages, Equiano mentions this worry a whopping seven times (64-66). The tars do little to assuage his fear; in fact, Equiano's terror fuels the sailors' amusement. The joke is that Equiano, being black and a non-Christian, would seem to the white sailors to be the cannibalistic savage.[109] The sailors therefore repeatedly tease Equiano about eating him, behavior that Equiano displays as baffling and frightening to those—like Equiano—not in on the joke. Equiano grounds his fearful reaction to the jokes in his violent first exposure to the pervasive violence and incivility of life in the wooden world. He initially feared cannibalism, because of what he witnessed during his first moments on the slave ship, the spectacle of slaves chained near a boiling pot on the slave ship's deck. Becoming convinced that he will be eaten, he subsequently faints (55). Seeing his countrymen chained near the pot marks the sailors as cannibals in Equiano's mind, and the sailors' immediate

[109] Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is a notable example. However, not all depictions of cannibals exclusively focused on non-whites. Cannibalism was used as the ultimate symbol for barbarous or uncivilized behavior. Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* (1729) is the most well-known text that uses cannibalism to create a social argument. Additionally, a 1780 cartoon called "The Allies – par nobile fratrum" shows George III gnawing on a human bone while an American Indian drains the blood out of a baby. The image criticizes George III for providing weapons to Native Americans and engaging American Indians to "not spare Man, Woman, *or* Child." Later, a 1792 cartoon titled "Petit souper, a la Parisienne; -or- a family of sans-culotts refreshing, after the fatiques of the day" uses cannibalism to satirize the French massacres. In this cartoon, a French family can be seen roasting a child, eating various organs, and sitting atop the bodies of their victims (Gillray). Here, we can see cannibalism as the ultimate symbol for other barbarous or uncivilized behavior.

physical violence towards him and other slaves cements this impression.[110] He describes the sailors as "white men with horrible faces, red faces, and long hair" (55), depicting a dramatic racial role reversal. Equiano's words reveal how the sailors on the slave ship have become savages in his eyes—people seemingly capable of cannibalism. Shipboard violence, from his African diasporic perspective, is a marker of European savagery. Equiano's narrative touches on a prevalent fear related to climate theories, that to inhabit warmer climates was to risk losing one's culture and identity—to become Other.[111]

On the one hand, in these moments, Equiano draws the readers' eye to the white body, which forces the British readers to see the white body deteriorating. Rather than tying the sailors' behavior to climate, Equiano instead suggests that their savagery is the result of slave ship culture. As Bohls argues, this representation of sailors with red faces reflects the standard abolitionist rhetoric that vilified the Caribbean as an aberrant region (131). Equiano's slave ship, then, a place encompassing deteriorating British bodies and morals, and reinforces a divide between the good British reader and the evils that were happening on the colonial frontier. Equiano writes, "I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner; for I have never seen among any people such instances of brutal cruelty; and this not only shewn towards us blacks, but also to some of the whites themselves" (56-57). White men in this "hollow place the ship" (57) are "savage" and "brutal." The social performances in this space are ones that create and enforce

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[110] Equiano's assumption from seeing the large pot would not have been read as irrational, especially after 1791; readers of Equiano's text would almost certainly have been reminded of James Gillray's satirical cartoon "Barbarities in the West Indias." The cartoon depicts a West Indian planter boiling a black slave: the image argues that consuming colonial goods is metaphorically cannibalizing black bodies.

[111] For a more detailed discussion of climate theory and Equiano's narrative, see Roxann Wheeler's *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (2000).

savage behaviors and uncivilized identities. In these moments of violence and the slave trade, unlike in other parts of the text, Equiano's point of view remains that of the frightened child. While Equiano later participates in the slave trade and reflects the viewpoint of the British sailor, at this moment Equiano distances himself from their viewpoint and their cruelty, thereby highlighting how the slave trade has the capacity to strip away the performances of British civility.[112] He does not offer another perspective to rationalize these sailors' behavior, so the readers inhabit his perspective, distancing themselves from the sailors.

However, Equiano's narration of the jokes that spring from his fear suggests a much more nuanced representation of the sailor, a depiction that encourages the reader to experience the dual perspective of slave and common sailor. Equiano's attention to these jokes highlights how humor functioned as a tool for control, as much as physical restraints or punishments. In one instance, Equiano notes, "[T]he captain and people told me in jest they would kill and eat me, but I thought them in earnest, and was depressed beyond measure, expecting every moment to be my last. . . . Sometimes he would say to me—the black people were not good to eat, and would ask me if we did not eat people in my country" (64-6). The captain reveals his assumption about Africans, suggesting that what is funny in this instance is that the white men have turned the tables. However, the captain and the sailors are not just jesting: their particularly mean-spirited sense of humor, a quality that is highlighted in other representations of sailors, reiterates Equiano's shipboard status as consumable property.

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[112] In fact, Equiano's most ardent criticisms against the slave trade occur much later in the *Narrative*. He writes, "But is not the slave trade entirely at war with the heart of man? And surely that which is begun, by breaking down the barriers of virtue, involves in its continuance destruction to every principle, and buries all sentiments in ruin . . . . Such a tendency has the slave-trade to debauch men's minds, and harden them to every feeling of humanity!" (110-111). Even here, though, the slave trade itself is the problem, not the sailors themselves.

Through these instances, Equiano represents himself as a young, frightened child who is helpless in the face of both the violent reality of shipboard life and the cruel aspects of the ship's culture. Yet, Equiano does not criticize the sailors for terrorizing him. As Equiano's time with and exposure to British sailors increases, his understanding of British seamen and maritime culture changes from that of white savages to something more nuanced. These jokes are framed as if they are simply part of sailing culture—a culture in which Equiano later takes part as a sailor and one who "gets" the joke because labels it a "jest," a word that indicates a tone or intention that the young Equiano originally did not recognize. Equiano positions his adult self as a kind of cultural insider who can reveal the tar's nuanced identity, but that perspective does not erase Equiano's depiction of himself as a childlike victim of shipboard violence.[113] Thus, Equiano presents multiple perspectives that the reader also inhabits—identifying with the sailors while also seeing problematic aspects of that identity. Equiano displays here two distinct perspectives, the African diasporic and that of the British tar. These two perspectives allow Equiano to simultaneously critique and explain sailors' cruel humor.

Although Equiano seems to present the cannibalism jests as idiosyncrasies of this culture, the readers would have been well-aware that cannibalism was a reality of seafaring life. Cannibalism became, according to A.W. Simpson, a "socially accepted practice" among sailors (qtd. in Wiley 173). Michael Wiley, in "Consuming Africa: Geography and Identity in Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*," notes that British readers would certainly not have read these moments as jokes; instead, readers would have recognized the reality of British

[113] My reading builds on Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s influential argument that Equiano employs a double perspective (the African and Briton) in moments like these to show a multitude of meanings (156).

sailors eating fellow crewmen in times of starvation (173). While a lottery was a typical method for determining who would be eaten among stranded and desperate seamen, readers and the sailors alike, particularly after the events on the American sloop the *Peggy* in 1765, would have known that Equiano would have had a much higher chance of being eaten than the white sailors if the ship ran out of edible supplies (Wiley 173). The *Peggy*, after having been crippled by storms, was floundering. Provisions quickly diminished, resulting in sailors eating leather (Bolster 94). After six weeks adrift, the seamen, over the objections of the captain, cast lots as to who would be eaten. Yet, prior to the drawing, the sailors had decided that Wiltshire, the only African on board, would be the victim (Bolster 94). According to Wiley, sailors enthusiastically consumed Wiltshire (173). After Wiltshire's body was eaten, the sailors would have then killed and eaten David Flatt, a foremastman, who lost the second lottery, but his life was spared first by the captain asking for Flatt to be given time to pray and ultimately by a passing ship that rescued the crew. Knowing that the ship creates a space for cannibalism and witnessing Equiano's fear would have encouraged the contemporary reader to sympathize with Equiano's concerns, or at least not find them ridiculous. Thus, the reader is placed in a dual position—seeing the joke through the sailors' perspective and simultaneously sympathizing with a frightened child.

The reader is further placed in a dual position when Equiano recounts how the sailors teased him about throwing him to the sharks. When Pascal learns of Equiano's fear of sharks during the second voyage, he "diverted himself and others for some time with my fears, which appeared ludicrous enough in my crying and trembling . . ." (67). Equiano establishes a contrast between his younger self who is the butt of the joke and the mature writer who understands it, suggesting that he is now looking back at the situation from the perspective of

a British seaman, someone who can see the limits to and perhaps some reason for the behavior. That being said, his adult perspective does not erase the cruelty of the joke, especially given the reality of the situation: sharks were a daily concern, particularly near the coast of Africa where ships may have anchored for months as the crew rounded up slaves. Moreover, sharks notoriously followed ships because they were attracted to the ship's waste, which trailed behind (Rediker 37-40). This "dread of sailors" became even more of a problem when sailors and slaves inevitably died (Rediker 38). While the crew attempted to keep the bodies of their fellow sailors away from the sharks, often to no avail, the slaves' bodies were summarily thrown overboard. As Rediker states, "the destruction of [black] corpses by sharks was a public spectacle and part of the degradation of enslavement" (39). Additionally, captains used the threat of sharks to control not just the slaves, but the crew as well: captains of naval vessels employed the same strategy to prevent desertion, often feeding sharks to keep them around the ship (Rediker 39). This practice reinforced the hierarchy in the wooden world. Thus, the joke about sharks in Equiano's narrative can be read as one in which the captain and the seamen reinforce the power structures on board and create a firm divide between the sailors and the slaves, and even between the officers and the crew. The sailors' humor about feeding Equiano to the sharks underlies Equiano's powerless position—he is daily reminded that his body is literally consumable.

I suggest that Equiano, in addition to critiquing the culture aboard the ship, gestures to a dominant facet of the tar identity—humor as a performance of bravery. On the one hand, sharks were part of many portrayals of seamen, highlighting the sailors' stalwartness in the face of near certain death. For example, John Singleton Copley's famous painting *Watson and the Shark* (1778) (Figure 15) depicts a harrowing rescue.

Figure 15: John Singleton Copley's *Watson and the Shark* (1778).

A gigantic shark in the foreground, mouth open, attempts to bite the sailor (Brook Watson) in the water, and a second shark's fin can be seen behind the boat, giving the impression of the mariners being surrounded and helpless. Based on real events that took place in 1749, this image presents an intense struggle that unites the crew, including the black sailor, against a common and monstrous creature. All sailors are involved in the rescue effort, by trying to spear the sharks, grab the sailor, or man the oars.[114] In other words, the image presents a

[114] Watson, 14 at the time, had been attacked by a shark while swimming in Havana Harbor. Although losing his right leg to the attack, Watson was saved and grew up to be a successful merchant. Watson commissioned Copley to paint the harrowing encounter, and the painting was displayed at the Royal Academy in 1778. The painting was such a sensation that Copley

community bravely rising up to literally snatch their companion from the jaws of death. On the other hand, though, sharks were represented as a way for sailors to display their bravery in a humorous way. Another example recounts a similar scene of sailors trying, and failing, to rescue their friend from a shark: *Ben Backstay*, attributed to Charles Dibdin, suggests how humor was part of the tar's identity and the performance of bravery in the face of death.[115] In this song, Ben the sailor drinks too much grog and falls overboard.[116] The song humorously narrates the shark attack that leads to Ben's death:

> A shark was on the starboard side
>
> And sharks no man can stand
>
> For they do gobble up everything
>
> Just like the sharks on land.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> They threw him out some tackling
>
> To give his life a hope
>
> But as the shark bit off his head

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produced two other versions (now being held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Detroit Institute of Arts).

[115] The name Backstay references a part of the ship: according to the *OED*, backstays are "long ropes, slanting a little abaft, extending from the upper mast-heads to both sides or to the 'channels' of the ship, where they are fastened to backstay-plates." Combined with the name Ben, which Dibdin used as an appellation of the common sailor in many of his songs, and the impression is an average sailor who can be found on any ship.

[116] Information on this version of *Ben Backstay* is scarce. This version is a revision of the song from a romantic tragedy in which Ben leaves his loving Anna, only to die at sea. She then collapses and dies upon hearing of his death at the end of the song. The first *Ben Backstay* appeared in *The Oddities* (1789). The version I use, though, appears without attribution in many song collections from the period.

He couldn't see the rope. (Scottish 129) [117]

Ben later returns as a headless ghost to warn his fellow sailors not to mix liquors when drinking (Scottish 129). This comedic tune demonstrates how humor about violence is part of the discursive representation of sailors prevalent in the late eighteenth century. Humor certainly can be seen as cruel in itself (which Equiano shows in recounting his fears of cannibalism). It can also be seen as performing a type of British masculinity, not letting the reality of being surrounded by sharks result in unmanly behavior.

Laughing at death becomes emblematic of the tar identity, to some extent. Charles Dibdin's song *Ballad* lightheartedly describes different seamen dying in each stanza, one actually being eaten by a shark: the sailors' chorus is "[but] grieving's a folly, come let us be jolly, / If we've troubles at sea, boys, we've pleasures ashore" (Dibdin 208).[118] Another song titled "The Merry Sailor" encourages men to happily embrace the struggles of sea service: "No mortals on earth can be greater, / Who merrily live till we die" (*The Jovial Songster* 8). In these examples, the dangers of seafaring are always present, but true British tars merrily approach them. An adult Equiano appears to understand this Jolly Tar identity and perspective. Equiano suggests that his fear of being eaten by a shark, "which appeared ludicrous enough," was deserving of the captain's ridicule: his fearful behavior runs counter to how the sailors perform their identity in the face of lurking danger. Equiano's adult self

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[117] Insulting landsmen ("sharks on land") was common in sea shanties and other texts in the mid- to late-eighteenth century. Landsmen were positioned as incompetent, untrustworthy, and unpatriotic. Seamen sought to push against some dominant cultural opinions about sailors, namely that they were criminals and social outcasts unfit for civil society. What these depictions of landsmen do, then, is help the sailors articulate that theirs is a more honorable way of life.

[118] Depending on where this song was published, the song is also called *Spanking Jack* or *The Sailor's Consolation* (but the latter name seems to be erroneously applied since Dibdin has another song with that title).

takes part in laughing at his younger self and reaffirms his new position as one akin to the Jolly Tar. Equiano's self-representation as author, therefore, qualifies his self-representation as child and slave: he both highlights his increased knowledge of life at sea and legitimizes his prior fear. While the African diasporic position is most prominent during the narration of Equiano's time on the slave ship and his first voyage with Pascal, this perspective tends to recede into the background as the *Narrative* progresses, leaving room for Equiano to increasingly embody the role of the British sailor.

Becoming a Seaman: Performing Bravery

In addition to humor being a stereotypical quality continually woven into late eighteenth-century representations of mariners, seamen are also ubiquitously portrayed as being brave and willing to fight for home and country. Various texts, such as Robert English's poem *The Naval Review* (1773) and the songs in *The Jolly Tar's Garland* (1780), depict a common rationale for service at sea being the safety of the sailor's families and of the nation—brave men sail and fight for their country. Tars were also shown as balancing these lofty goals with individual desires for glory and attention, from both the nation and available young ladies back at home. The Tar, then, ties patriotism to a specific style of heterosexual masculinity. Moreover, the seaman is continually distinguished from men who do not sail, called "lubbers," often depicted as effeminate and baseless cowards.[119] Texts, like "The Wandering Sailor" (1790) and "The Jolly Tar" (1780) imply that to be a man and, more

[119] In the song "Bold Jack," the common trope of contrasting sailors is the basis for an argument for the uniqueness of sailors and their ideal masculinity: "While up the shrouds the sailor goes, / Or ventures on the yard, / The landmen, who no better knows / Believes his lot is hard . . . When waves 'gainst rocks and quicksands roar, / You ne'er hear him repine" (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 73-74).

importantly, to be British is to go to sea and bravely defend the country.[120] Equiano's text contributes to this discourse, suggesting that bravely fulfilling patriotic duty is the path to the ideal of British masculinity embodied in the Tar. Equiano distinguishes himself from fellow sailors by more consistently performing the qualities of patriotism and heterosexual masculinity; his cultural insider position allows him to witness and replicate this specific British identity, as well as reveal the limitations within that ideal.

Bravery was a crucial trait in the Tar across genres in the long eighteenth century. Jack Tar was commonly represented as braving the stormy seas to earn a living, ensure the safety of the nation, win the hearts of young women, or garner fame and admiration. In the song "The Wandering Sailor" (1790), the seaman is described in the following way: "The wand'ring Sailor ploughs the main, / A competence in life to gain; / Undaunted braves the stormy seas, / To find at last content and ease" (*The Seamans Garland* 7). The song "Jack Ratlin" (1790) presents a similar image of a dauntless sailor: "No dang'rous toil, but he'd encounter / With skill, and in contempt of fear" (*The Seamans Garland* 8). This trait was so common, that it became almost a bit of a joke. "The Indignant Tar" (1804) (Figure 16) pokes fun at sailors and their unceasing performances of bravery, even when it negatively affects them.

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[120] "The Wandering Sailor" and "The Jolly Tar" describe sailors undauntedly braving the stormy seas to eventually return home (*The Seaman's Garland* 7) and fighting the nation's enemies to win glory and riches (*The Jolly Tar's Garland* 4-5), respectively. The song "The New Mariners" starts out with this contrast between cowardly landsmen and stalwart sailors: "You Gentlemen of England who live at ease, / Ah! little do you think upon the dangers of the seas . . ." (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 48).

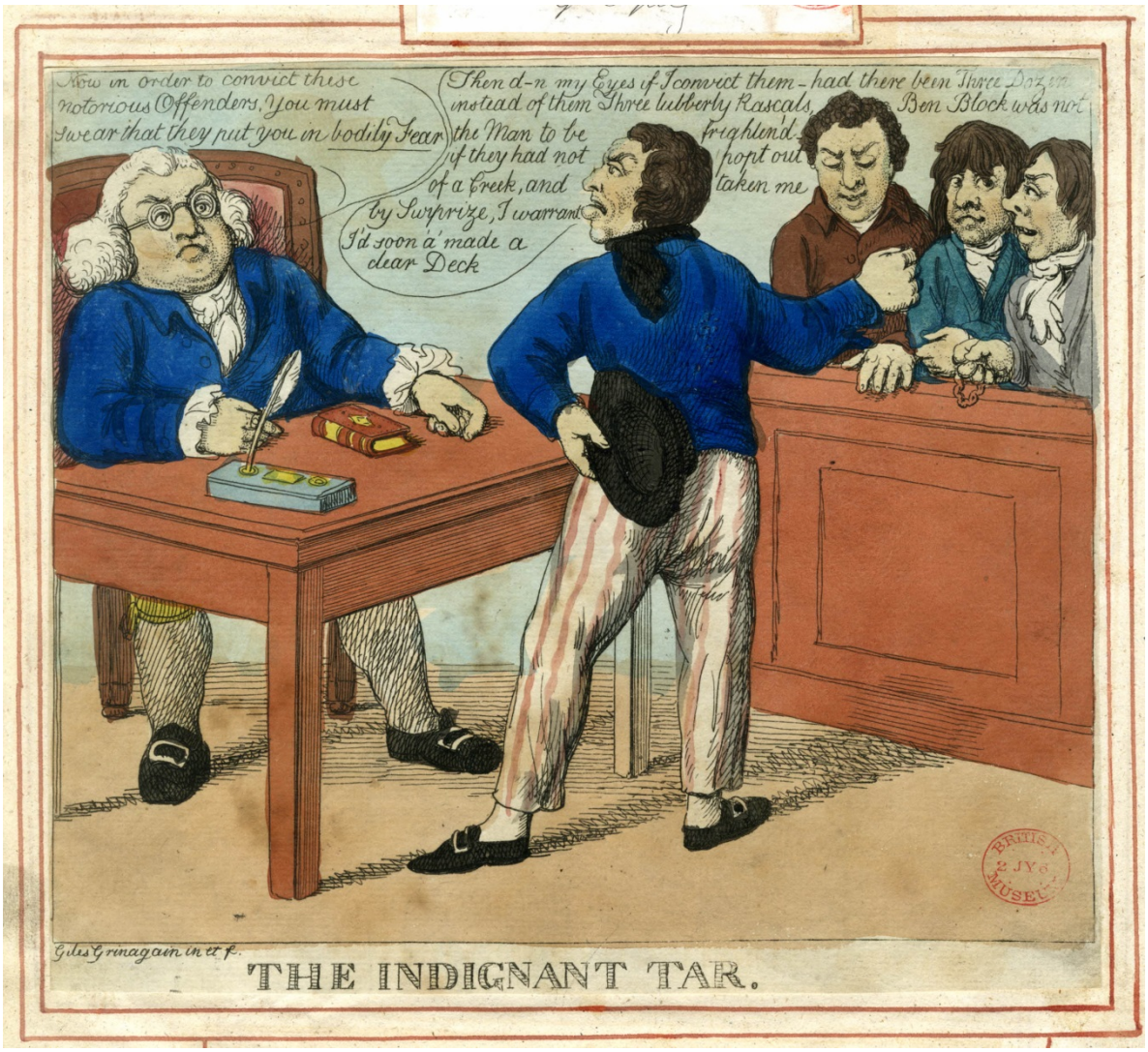

Figure 16: Giles Grinagain's "The Indignant Tar" (1804).

In this image, a sailor stands in front of a judge who says, "Now in order to convict these notorious Offenders, You must swear that they put you in bodily Fear" (Grinagain). To which, the seaman responds, "Then d—n my Eyes if I convict them – had there been Three Dozen instead of them Three lubberly Rascals, Ben Block was not the Man to be frighten'd . . ." (Grinagain). The cartoon pokes fun at sailors and their insistence on bravery as their defining characteristic. The sailor, importantly, is named Ben Block, which (like Ben Backstay, Jack Rattlin, and Tom Bowling) came to be indicative of the common British tar

who was honest and brave, but a little too blustery. Another example that shows the same affectionate and lighthearted ribbing of sailors' strengths and flaws is "The Sailors Progress." This image shows a landsman becoming a sailor and eventually embodying all the stereotypical attributes associated with the Tar.

Figure 17: George Cruikshank's "The Sailors Progress" (1818).

In the top left pane, a man boards a ship as a landsman. In the second image, the landsman has transformed into a sailor, shown by his stereotypical outfit.[121] This scene speaks to the idea of a musical and drunken mariner, while highlighting British sailors' heterosexuality. In this pane, moreover, is a black sailor, hinting at how ships were diverse spaces. In the third scene (top right), the Tar is in irons for getting drunk, calling to mind the idea that mariners

[121] For more on how sailors were styled in print media, see Chapter 2 "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins."

tread a fine line between acceptable revelry and unruliness.[122] In the bottom left pane, the Tar is bravely fighting the French, reinforcing the idea that British seamen were defined by their fearless displays of patriotism. In the center image at the bottom, the seaman has been promoted to an officer, alluding to the social mobility that could be gained through sea travel. And, finally, in the bottom right corner, our sailor is aged and disabled, a Greenwich pensioner wearing his officer's uniform.[123] His story and his body impart the inherent bravery needed to survive certain aspects of the wooden world and speak to how various versions of Jack Tar were simultaneously present in the cultural imagination at any given time in this period.

Even though courage was depicted as a laudable quality, these representations were often complicated by depictions showing the sailor as brutish and prone to fighting. In "Jolly Jack Tar" (1790), a sailor "as drunk as a beggar, as bold as a prince" comes across a group of Frenchmen in a tavern. After insulting them, steeling their food, and instigating a fight, the tar proceeds to club them over their heads (*The Seamans Garland* 2-4). This humorous song certainly adds to the tars' image of being brave, but also presents him as a brawler. This song is also depicted with an accompanying image titled "The British Tar Triumphant, or the Downfall of the French" (1796) (Figure 18).

[122] See Chapter 1 "Defoe and the Emergent, Nationalistic Jack Tar" for more on how sailors' drunkenness was perceived and framed on the stage and in print culture.
[123] For more on representations of disabled Navy veterans, see Chapter 4 "'Not fit to be seen": Depictions of Disabled Seamen in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century."

Figure 18: "The British Tar Triumphant, or the Downfall of the French" (1796).

Figure 18 shows a typical British sailor: his status is signaled by his attire and, importantly, his cudgel, a weapon commonly associated with sailors and men of the lower classes because

it required little skill to wield.[124] Frenchmen lay at the tar's feet, cringing away in horror. A woman, presumably the mistress of the house, looks on the destruction with astonishment. This image presents an interesting portrayal of Jack Tar: he is both heroic for beating the Frenchmen, but he is also portrayed as a bit of a drunkard and uncontrollable. He cannot adhere to social norms on land and instead acts as if he is still at sea fighting Britain's long-standing francophone enemy. Connecting sailors with destruction and violence at home was nothing new by the end of the eighteenth century.[125] The combination of the admirable bravery and dangerous unruliness reveals how the tar represented a complex masculinity that was attractive (and necessary) on the high seas but also frightening in the domestic sphere.

While many depictions do address sailors' propensity for violence at home, their willingness to fight was inherent in their depictions of their masculinity. In fact, sailors' bravery was represented as setting them apart from men in other professions. In the song "A Dialogue between Will and Jack," the lyrics steadily work through common professions and detailing how scared other men are of getting pressed into service: "Our Masons, Slaters, and Joiners, all three, / O cry'd the poor Waller, where shall I hide me, / In some remote Corner where I'll be secure, / Says Jack, if I fly I'm a Son of a Whore" (*The Jolly Tar's Garland* 6).[126] Unlike other men who run from the press gangs, sailors volunteer for service to the

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[124] For a more thorough discussion of cudgels, see Chapter 2 "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins."

[125] One important moment in the eighteenth century that highlighted sailors' potential danger and destructiveness for the domestic space was the Penlez riots (1749), which started when a sailor thought a London prostitute had stolen from him. Intent on seeking revenge, he later returned to the bawdy house with over three dozen other sailors, where they proceeded to ransack the house and set the household items on fire in the middle of the street. Mosley's drawing called "The Tar's Triumph, or the Bawdy-House Battery" (1749) depicts the sailors trashing the bawdy house and destroying many of the prostitutes' belongings.

[126] See Paul Gilje's *To Swear Like a Sailor* (2016) for a discussion how this curse ("son of a whore") was perceived by eighteenth-century seamen.

nation, and in this way distinguish themselves as being more masculine than landlubbers seeking security because sailors bravely accept their fate of getting pressed and facing a decidedly unsecure life at sea. Landsmen are often presented as the tar's complete contrast, highlighting how sea service fosters a strong body and constitution—the implication being that men who stay on land are not masculine in many ways, not just bravery. Figure 19, titled "Nautical Comfort!" (1800-1810), is a satirical drawing that juxtaposes extreme versions of landsmen and sailors:

Figure 19: Isaac Cruikshank's "Nautical Comfort!" (1800-1810).

In this image, the Tar is depicted in traditional sailor attire and his physique suggests virility and strength. The landsman on the left, in contrast, is dressed as if he were on land and he is feeble: his thin legs, bent posture, and scarf around the head are evidence of lacking physical

strength and masculinity, an impression reaffirmed by his words. The landsman reveals his cowardice by asking, “My dear Friend - I understand you are Captain of this here ship - and they says a how the Enemy, is in sight - now could not you put the ship a little on one side, and not be too ventersome - its the best way to be a little cautious - I am but a poor weaver - but however life is sweet’” (Cruikshank, Isaac). The weaver ostensibly asks the captain to play dead, to offer no contest to the enemy and make the ship seem as if it is floundering. The sailor’s speech, in contrast, firmly places him in the category of the jingoistic tar: “Why you paltry land Lubber do you want me to run away? - but however I never bear malice so I’ll give you a little Comfort - before I would strike to an Enemy d’ye see - I would blow the vessel up in the air - So before you could turn a chaw of tobacco you would be out of your misery” (Cruikshank, Isaac). The captain reveals a different value set than the landsman. For him, it is better to destroy the vessel and die than to give up without a fight and let the enemy have the ship. The joke of this image, then, is that the only “comfort” to be had is that the landsman will probably die no matter what. The tar’s language also suggests the perception of the ship as an extension of the nation itself. To let the enemy have the ship is akin to welcoming an invading force into the country. These two figures, then, embody a dichotomous value set that we see playing out in gendered terms where patriotism/bravery and British masculinity are intertwined.[127]

[127] The song “Jack Junk” (1790) compares sailors to men of different professions, including plumbers, bricklayers, doctors, undertakers, and sextons. According to Jack, “Then like men do your duty, / We all have our minute, / And at sea or ashore we shall live ‘till we die, / Hurraw hurraw boys let’s live ‘till we die” (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 93). The sailor differentiates himself from the other men by merrily accepting his fate and not fearing death. He, then, inhabits the role of cultural informant instructing landsmen on how to act like men.

Bravery becomes essential to how Equiano depicts fellow sailors and himself. With a focus on bravery, Equiano narrates his transition to becoming a sailor, as well as his perception of what behaviors and perspectives are essential to inhabiting that identity. After having been on Pascal's ship for a few voyages, he writes,

> However, my surprise began to diminish, as my knowledge increased; and I ceased to feel those apprehensions and alarms which had taken such strong possession of me when I first came among the Europeans, and for some time after. I began now to pass to an opposite extreme. (70)

He suggests that his time on the ship instrumentally changes his perception about the common sailor: the sailors are no longer cannibalistic savages but instead, something else, something worth emulating. Just as his fear of cannibalism is calmed, so too is his concern over being fed to sharks. Equiano implies that as he spends more time with the sailors, he loses his "surprise" and fear, the "opposite extreme" being complete fearlessness. This quote, importantly, suggests a transitional moment for Equiano in that he is neither on the outside nor one of the sailors as they are still referred to as "the Europeans," language that accentuates the sailors' skin color and national origin. Thus, this instance, combined with his narration of the Middle Passage and his first voyage with Pascal, presents dual perspectives that suggest the growth of a composite identity, African and British, slave and sailor.

Equiano develops, though witnessing the tars' performances of a specific type of masculine identity, a composite identity—one that blends his African diasporic identity with aspects of the ideal British Tar image. During his voyages with Pascal, Equiano notes how he actively wants to assume the role of sailor:

> I could now speak English tolerably well, and I perfectly understood everything that was said. I now not only felt myself quite easy with these new countrymen, but relished their society and manners. I no longer looked upon them as spirits, but as men superior to us; and therefore I had the stronger desire to resemble them; to imbibe their spirit, and imitate their manners; I therefore embraced every occasion of improvement; and every new thing that I observed I treasured up in my memory. (77-78)

Equiano begins to want to emulate and mimic the sailors. Importantly, he still refers to an "us," who is different from these "new countrymen," suggesting that he retains his cultural externality to the ship even as he grows to admire the Europeans who inhabit it. This moment reveals Equiano's doubleness, both participating in British ship culture, and as an African slave, standing outside of it. Moreover, what is striking here is that the tar is an object of study. Equiano presents himself as a student carefully observing the sailors so that he can more fully understand and replicate their behavior. Equiano not only understands the English language, but he implies that he understands the tone or implications only available, like the jokes, to European insiders. In so doing, he can understand the tar in a way that non-sailors cannot. Their manners, often represented as coarse and unrefined, are valued, and they have a society of their own. Through this understanding comes the desire to "resemble," "imbibe" and "imitate" the common sailor. In this scene, Equiano implies that in mimicking the sailors he has access to a certain type of Britishness. In other words, Equiano draws on, and reaffirms, how the sailor image results from or is tied to the idea that sailors have a culture of their own, a culture that is only tangentially related to that which is on land.

At the heart of Equiano's depiction of the seaman is the correlation between masculinity and nationality. He relates how courage in the face of near death defines him and reworks him into a new image resembling that of the British Tar:

> From the various scenes I had beheld on ship-board, I soon grew a stranger to terror of every kind, and was, in that respect at least, almost an Englishman. I have often reflected with surprise that I never felt half the alarm at any of the numerous dangers I have been in, that I was filled with at the first sight of the Europeans . . . . That fear, however, which was the effect of my ignorance, wore away as I began to know them. (77-78)

At this point, for Equiano, what defines the sailor, and by extension Englishness, is the absence of fear. My reading of these moments contrasts with Carl Plaza's in "'Almost an Englishman': Colonial Mimicry in *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by Himself*."[128] Plaza asserts that "Equiano's description of himself as 'almost an Englishman' implies a recognition that full Englishness is denied to him on the basis of blackness signaled, in its turn, by the pronoun 'us', alluding to the community of slaves of which he remains a part" (22). However, I argue that Equiano's narrative obscures race in this moment, focusing more on expressing cultural, not racial, distance. Thus, experiencing the inherent dangers that are part of shipboard life alters Equiano's perspective about the sailor identity and how he sees himself fitting into this culture. Additionally, as when reflecting on his reaction to the threat of being eaten, Equiano critiques his former identity to show his emergent position as British cultural insider.

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[128] I am also skeptical of Bohls' argument that this moment is "incidental patriotic flattery for British readers" (137), as that reading obscures how this moment reveals Equiano's performance of the sailor identity.

Equiano's self-representation suggests that the qualities linked to the British tar can be "imbued," that the tar identity is accessible to a wide range of people, including African slaves. Even though he thinks of himself as "almost an Englishman," he implies that the British tar identity is much more inclusive and multinational—that the Tar's essential traits are tied to, but not restricted to, a specific nationality.

Equiano's *Narrative* also reaffirms, like the image "The Sailors Progress," how an essential aspect of the Tar's identity is the performance of bravery in a sea fight. True British seamen of the period are represented in songs and poems as eager for a fight, a quality that Equiano also includes in his own self-representation.[129] The sea battle becomes the ultimate theater for demonstrating his new identity as sailor. This desire for a fight seems to consume Equiano since he repeats the sentiment multiple times in the span of a few pages. He states, "I was so far from being afraid of any thing new which I saw, that, after I had been some time in this ship, I even began to long for an engagement" (70). At one point, the ship Equiano is on nearly gets into a sea fight with another vessel: "I now expected I should be gratified in seeing an engagement which I had so long wished for in vain" (71). His use of "so long" indicates his desire to prove his valor; he gives the impression that he is longing to take part in a crucial aspect of the tar's life—sea battles. Later, Equiano states that he "was in hopes soon to have an opportunity of being gratified with a sea-fight" (73). The battle is an opportunity to demonstrate his new identity: "I was in a small measure gratified in seeing an encounter between our men and the enemy . . . [o]ur troops pursued them . . ." (73). Whereas

[129] One example is the recruitment song "The Jolly Tar" (1780) which depicts brave seamen just waiting to take on the French and Spanish, and earn vast riches from taking any prizes. Moreover, nearly every stanza in this song ends with "On board a Man of War," showing that the place that seamen belong, the place of unlimited opportunity, is the sea (*The Jolly Tar's Garland*).

earlier in the *Narrative* Equiano uses the first person to show a connection with other Africans, here Equiano uses the first person when referring to the sailors. Equiano presents the sea battle as the opportunity when he can essentially perform a British tar identity and become part of this community.

Equiano's focus on courage aligns with the image of Jack Tar reveling in danger that was ubiquitous in late eighteenth-century songs often sung by sailors themselves and actors portraying sailors on the London stage. In the song "Saturday Night At Sea" (1790), sailors are described as being "[w]ith dauntless heart and stout" (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 47). In "The Sleeping Mariners" (1790), the theme is that dangers at sea lull seamen to sleep (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 11).[130] One popular song was *Jack Ratlin* (1790), which describes Jack the sailor in the following way: "No dang'rous toil, but he'd encounter / With skill, and in contempt of fear. In fight a lion—the battle ended, / Meek as the bleating lamb he'd prove" (8).[131] Importantly, the tar can be violent when called for in defense of his country, but he is not inherently violent, and that is an important distinction. The British seaman may act savagely, but these are momentary actions and serve to reassure British readers that the sea remains a space of free trade and the spread of English culture. Equiano's narration of one of the first sea battles he is involved in supports this representation of the tar as a man whose defining characteristic is his willingness to fight for the country, thereby rejecting the notion that seamen are dangerous and violent by nature. Equiano writes, "cheering myself with the reflection that there was a time allotted for me to

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[130] Other examples include "The Swelling Sails", which urges sailors to "not give way to fear" amidst blustering winds (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 126), and "The Wandering Sailor," which characterizes a sailor who "[u]ndaunted braves the stormy seas" (*A Seamans Garland*).

[131] Jack Ratlin is a common name for the Tar; it is also found in Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748).

die as well as to be born, I instantly cast off all fear or thought whatever of death, and went through the whole of my duty with alacrity" (84). Songs like "The New Mariners" and "Blow High, Blow Low" represent the Tar as one who "fear[s] no wounds nor scars" (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 48) and "brave[s] all danger, scorn[s] all fear" (*The Seamans Garland*) in service for his country and to get safely home to their loves. Similarly, Equiano describes himself as bravely carrying on despite the danger, as service to Old England takes away his fear.[132]

Equiano's characterization of the sailors as wholly focused on their duty to king and country, and its subsequent reinforcement of the link between the cultural space of the ship and the nation, coincides with how the Tar was conceptualized in late eighteenth-century political discourse and popular culture. Texts like *The Naval Review. A Poem.* (1773) use this version of the Tar to suggest that sailors should be valued and taken care of after their service ends. In this poem, sailors are described as going to battle for the nation:

> Long had each Naval Breast repining beat
> To lay their laurels at the Sov'reign's feet;
> Indulgent Fortune listens to their pray'r
> And sparkling joy succeeds corroding care. (9)

This poem, like other texts at the time, presents the sailor as a national hero, one who has the nation utmost in mind. The desire for fame and recognition is not presented as shameful,

[132] Dibdin's son "The Sailor's Allegory" also demonstrates the sailor as performing bravery: "Or if the wayward winds should bluster, / Let us not give way to fear; / But let us all our patience muster, / And learn, from reason, how to steer" (*The Jovial Songster* 11). I read this moment as an acknowledgement of fear, not the absence of it, and reconstructing bravery as thinking and acting through the fear.

rather as understandable: the nation should praise these men.[133] The last line of this quote relates to the eroding support for the sailors during peacetime, but war results in "sparkling joy" as the public's need for sailors increases. The poem later depicts sailors "the more determin'd, as the danger more, / Fervent to gain their Country's just applause" (15). What this text alludes to is the sailors' need for their country's support as that was crucial for the economic wellbeing of sailors and their families. In the song "Neglected Seaman" (1792), the audience is presented with a sailor who

> When deep immers'd in sulph'rous smoke,
>
> He feels a glowing pleasure;
>
> He loads his gun, or cracks his joke,
>
> Elated beyond measure . . .
>
> When long becalm'd on southern brine,
>
> Where scorching beams assail him;
>
> When all the canvas hangs supine,
>
> And food and water fail him;
>
> Then oft he dreams of Britain's shore. (*The Jovial Songster* 18)

This song presents some of the many ways in which sailors suffer for their country, which is upmost in their minds. Later in the song, the tar is presented as a beggar wandering the streets, whose only reward is starving at home (19). Similarly, Equiano's *Narrative* positions bravery when fighting within the framework of domestic applause or support. He writes, that

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[133] The argument for needing to support sailors and their families is consistent throughout the long eighteenth century. Many texts, like the play *The Naval Pillar* by Thomas Dibdin (1800), raise the argument that sailors are not given their proper respect and praise, along with the lack of financial support. For more on the debates regarding social safety nets for veterans, see Chapter 4 "Not fit to be seen": Depictions of Disabled Seamen in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century."

he casts off all fear and does his duty while "pleasing [himself] with the hope, if [he] survived the battle, or relating it and the dangers [he] had escaped to the Miss Guerins, and others when [he] should return to London" (84).[134] Like the sailor in the song who was "elated" to fight for his country, Equiano pleases himself with the thought of how his bravery can affect people back at home. Equiano wants to be a hero, relating his brave deeds to women back at home. In other words, these texts reveal how British masculine bravery is repeatedly constructed in relation to a British female audience.

While Equiano's *Narrative* certainly reinforces the image of the brave and patriotic sailor, it suggests that the British Tar identity is limited. His composite identity (African and British, slave and sailor) can help Equiano better survive the trials of the wooden world. In one instance, his ship is floundering, and all the sailors fled to another ship. After the captain determines the ship will not sink, "many of them came back, but some would not venture" (87). This momentary challenge to the dominant representation of the Tar as relentlessly brave is important in two ways. First, it raises the issue that sailors were not always the most receptive to orders or acted for the better good of the country.[135] Secondly, this moment

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[134] Another example of this is in Dibdin's song "My Poll and Partner Joe" (1792). The sailor recounts how he "did my duty manfully, / While on the billows rolling; . . . I brav'd in hopes again to find / The joys I left behind" (*The Jovial Songster* 4). Unfortunately, by the time he arrives home, Poll has left him "for [Joe], a lubber, no!" (5). The song "Black Ey'd Susan" reveals the fear of landsmen seducing the sailors' girls back at home: "Believe not what the landmen say, / Who tempt with doubts they constant mind; They'll tell thee, sailor, when away, / in ev'ry port a mistress find--, / Yes, yes, believe them, when they tell thee so, / For thou art present, wherefoe'er I go" (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 133). This song also reveals the pervasive stereotype that sailors were promiscuous and had a girl in every port—a stereotype that remains prevalent even till this day.

[135] Equiano does briefly mention problems with sailors that readers would have been well-aware of mutiny and cowardice: "While we were at Gibraltar I saw a soldier hanging by the heels at one of the moles. I thought this a strange sight, as I had seen a man hanged in London by his neck. At another time I saw the master of a frigate towed to shore on a grating, by several of the men of war's boats, and discharged the fleet, which I understood

accentuates Equiano's individual strength. More specifically, Equiano appears to have embodied the brave British Tar persona better than many of the other sailors. Equiano's actions suggest that he is building off the British Tar identity to embody a persona that avoids the negative aspects of the British tar image. In another instance, the crew, who is rowing to a small island for safety, spots some flamingos that "from the reflection of the sun, appeared to us, at a little distance, as large as men," causing the captain to swear they were cannibals (152). The crew panics, and the captain urges them to row to a further island, even if it would result in many sailors' deaths (152). Equiano also fears that there are cannibals; in contrast with the Captain, though, Equiano urges them to head straight toward shore with hopes that the cannibals would run (152). This moment is in stark contrast to his previous fear over cannibals when he was first loaded onto the slave ship and when he was teased by Pascal. Rather than faint or panic, as he did when he was a child and faced with the fear of being eaten, Equiano faces the danger and saves the crew. This instance significantly shows Equiano's composite identity as being more adept at negotiating this situation and the resultant fear.

Equiano establishes his distinct identity by differentiating himself using the same criteria (bravery) that distinguishes mariners from other men. In fact, he shows that many sailors do not conform to the tar identity and in fact drink to escape their duty, a breakdown in the ship's delicate balance of labor that could spell tragedy for everyone on board. The *Narrative* presents sailors unable to work when faced with what appears to be certain death, resulting in sailors getting drunk and neglecting their duty. In one instance, Equiano's ship is

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was a mark of disgrace for cowardice. On board the same ship a sailor was also hung up at the main-yard-arm" (80). He does not dwell on these images, though. Instead, his text spends much more time narrating a contrast between his actions and those of the sailors that he encounters.

about to run against some rocks (148). Equiano alerts the captain three times before the captain appears on deck (148). At this point, the ship is doomed to hit the rocks, and the captain orders the sailors to nail down the hatches, trapping the slaves in the boat, but Equiano objects, effectively saving the slaves from going down with the ship (150). Equiano writes, "I then advised to get the boat prepared against morning, and some of us began to set about it; but some of us abandoned all care of the ship, and themselves, and fell to drinking" (150). This representation of sailors abandoning their duty to drink is extremely unusual for eighteenth-century depictions of Jack Tar.[136] Most texts show sailors harmlessly drinking as part of a celebration after a sea battle. Figure 20 presents this celebratory sailor, whose drinking after the battle of the Nile is well-deserved (1798):

[136] Notable exceptions to this are portrayals that criticize maritime culture, particularly the drinking that is a large part of communities at sea. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Charles Johnson's *General History* are two such texts.

Figure 20: Thomas Rowlandson's "Admiral Nelson recreating with his brave tars after the glorious Battle of the Nile" (1798).

This image explicitly links the partying tar with his victory for the nation as the Union Jack waves in the background and everyone is in their uniforms.[137] Even Admiral Nelson, the pride of the Royal Navy, is shown drinking, thereby sanctioning and legitimizing the crew's behavior.

Unlike this representation of sailors that link British brave masculinity to drinking, Equiano's text shows how drunkenness was a way to avoid being brave, to relinquish control and neglect duty. Like cruel humor, it is a potentially destructive coping mechanism. For

[137] The chorus of the song that is written beneath the image also reinforces how the Tar is constructed in relation to a female audience as it says, "Put the Bumpers about & be gay / To hear how our Doxies will smile" (Rowlandson "Admiral Nelson").

Equiano, bravery is the defining marker of the British mariner, and it is a trait that does not reside exclusively with white men:

> There were only four people that would work with me at the oars; and they consisted of three black men and a Dutch creole sailor, and though we went with the boat five times that day, we had no others to assist us. But, had we not worked in this manner, I really believe the people could not have been saved; for not one of the white men did anything to preserve their lives; and indeed they soon got so drunk that they were not able, but lay about the deck like swine, so that we were at last obliged to lift them into the boat, and carry them on shore by force. (151)

Like his presentation of the sailors who treated him so badly on the slave ship, Equiano distances these men from sailors in general. Again, Equiano discursively separates himself from these sailors by calling them "white men," not sailors. These men are no longer sailors in this instance: they are almost less than human ("swine") to Equiano. Moreover, these men are no longer part of "some of us" as they become "the people." The "we" he uses in the last line of this quote refers to the non-white sailors who bravely face the challenge of saving everyone on board. Equiano could not be plainer when he says, "I could not help looking at myself as the principal instrument in effecting our deliverance" (151). This scene, then, challenges two dominant representations of the sailors, bravery and drunkenness. In doing so, Equiano shows how he has more fully performed as a tar than British seamen themselves. No longer is he merely mimicking their behavior, but he is capitalizing on the exalted qualities of this persona and carving out a niche for himself.

Equiano and Sailors' Agency

Having established his understanding of honorable tar qualities and demonstrating how he can embody those attributes, Equiano highlights the limitations black sailors face in the maritime world. In this section, I examine how Equiano's text articulates the limitations to agency, or control over their lives, that sailors face. Many eighteenth-century texts represented sailing as a path to agency, and these texts focus on financial success as a crucial marker of control over one's life. Equiano's text suggests that agency can be gained through sailing, even for black sailors. However, his text highlights the limitations that black sailors face even in the wooden world, a place where maritime laborers were judged more by skill than race. Through various scenes towards the end of the *Narrative*, Equiano shows that he fully participates in this tar identity, in many respects, bridging his African diasporic and British sailor identity, but his strong identification with the British sailor neither protects him on land nor ensures the preservation of his "free" legal status. Equiano cannot make a living and remain free in the wooden world because since his freedom is tenuous, so is his agency. Like many sailors in the eighteenth century, Equiano became an author, allowing him agency over his life and what identify he can perform. I argue, in other words, that Equiano's move to authorship creates an authoritative identity from which he carves out a unique space for the black tar within British society.

Equiano's *Narrative* engages with a dominant narrative related to naval service during the eighteenth century—that sailing was a way to earn agency and that life at sea would result in freedom and happiness back in Old England. In many texts of the time, wealth is one facet of agency. As previously noted, songs like *The Wandering Sailor* (1790) present the sailor as bravely sailing the storming seas to find a life of ease (presumably with

wealth) back at home (*The Seamans Garland* 7).[138] A lottery advertisement from 1798 (see Figure 21, below) reinforces how sea life was presented as both a patriotic duty and a golden ticket to a better life:

[138] Other songs present the tar as holding out hope for quick riches. *The Jolly Tar* (1780) says, "There's Riches to be got Boys, / While we are on the Main, / And many a Rich Prize, / From the Spaniard we have ta'en" (3). In this representation, the desire for wealth correlates to patriotic duty (fighting the Spanish). Another song states, "We fight for Old England not lucre of gain, / For freedom and beauty we conquest pursue, / And still fight the fiercer by thinking of you" (*A Collection of the Most Favorite New Songs* 164).

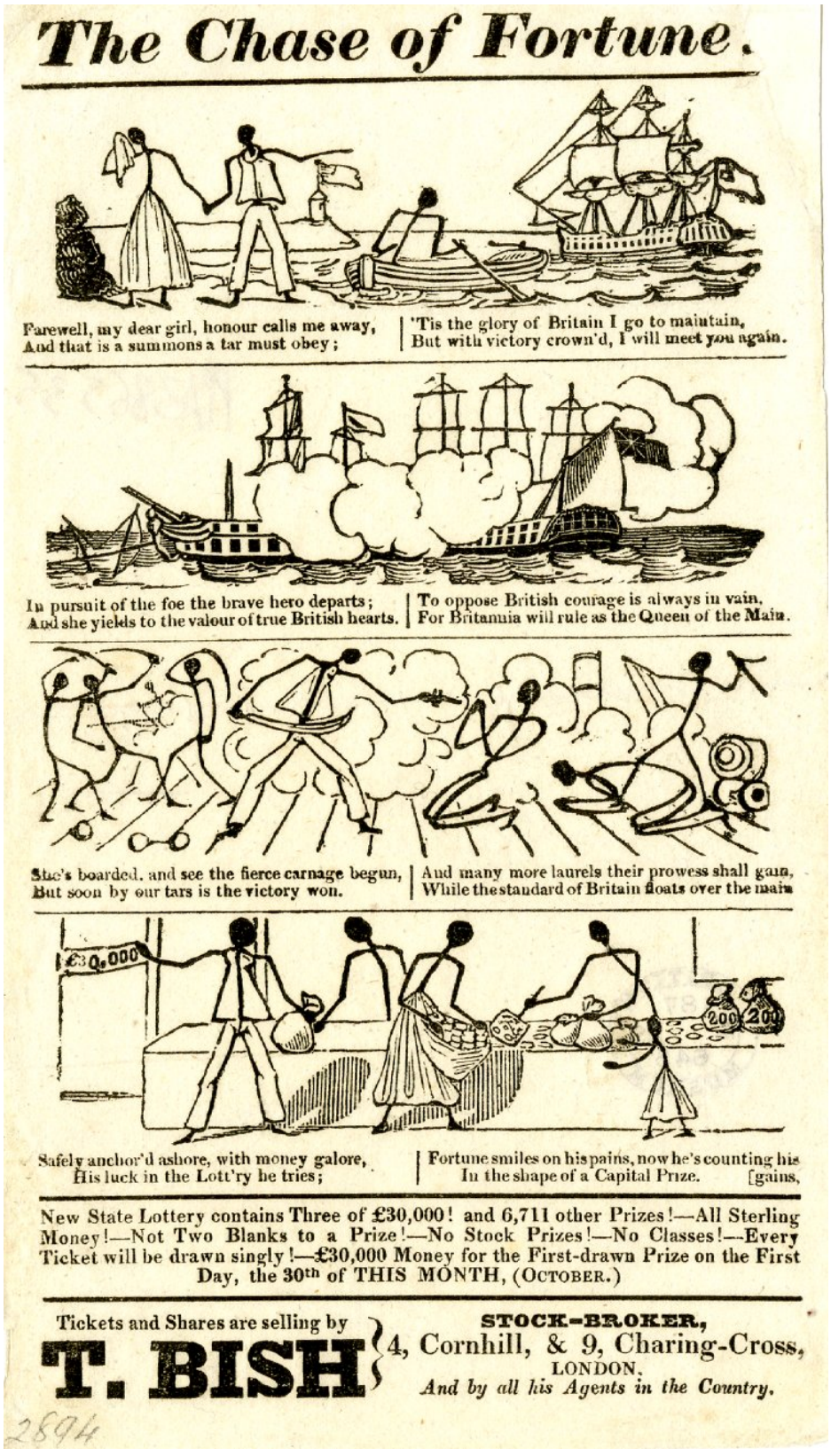

Figure 21: George Cruikshank's "The Chase of Fortune" (1798).

"The Chase of Fortune" contains four vignettes tracing a sailor's journey to sea and back again. Unlike "The Sailors Progress" (Figure 17), the focus of this representation is not on sea life changing a man so much as it reinforces how service can eventually lead to financial agency and stability. The first scene shows a sailor leaving his beloved and saying, "Farewell, my dear girl, honour calls me away, And that is a summons a tar must obey; 'Tis the glory of Britain I go to maintain, But with victory crown'd, I will meet you again" (Cruikshank, George). As in previous drawings of sailors and in Equiano's text, masculinity is defined in relation to a female domestic sphere, here represented by the crying woman. The second scene reaffirms the tar's bravery and patriotism as the caption reads, "In pursuit of the foe the brave hero departs; And she yields to the valour of true British hearts. To oppose British courage is always in vain, For Britannia will rule as the Queen of the Main" (Cruikshank, George). No one, not even the sweet English lass from the first scene can turn a true hero from his duty. The lines of the poem are sandwiched between images of violence as a sea battle begins in scene two and continues in scene three. Scene three shows our stout heroes gaining the upper hand through the "carnage." Again, the discussion is framed in terms of bravery and patriotism. However, scene four changes the terms of the discussion, as sailors use their earnings to gain fortune with the lottery: "Safely anchor'd ashore, with money galore . . . Fortune smiles on his pains, now he's counting his gains . . ." (Cruikshank, George). The image shows the sailor holding a bag of money and a banner indicating that he won £30,000, while a woman beside him stuffs her apron with coins as someone shovels more money onto her stash. The scene is one of boundless wealth, reinforcing the belief that going to sea was a way to make a fortune and, by extension, gain control over life back on land.

Equiano's *Narrative*, on the one hand, reinforces this idea that some sailors can gain status and agency by going to sea. Sailors could earn promotions during a voyage, even moving from crew to the officer class, because high mortality rates could wipe out ranking officers and skill held a great deal of weight. Equiano's text demonstrates how ships, since they were more of a meritocracy than places on land, could be routes to agency. During one journey toward the end of the narrative after Equiano purchases his freedom, he must take over the running of a ship because the captain has died, and the first mate is too sick to take over the duties. Equiano remarks how people were astonished that he safely brought the ship into the harbor and says, "I now obtained a new appellation, and was called captain" (144). What Equiano reveals here is not that he was the captain, as the first mate would have that title, but that he was "called captain" by fellow sailors as an affectionate nickname. He is, in a sense, one of the guys and has near complete control over the ship and her crew. Interpreting this moment as the sailors jesting with Equiano or satirically calling him captain would be to disregard two important points. First, Equiano reveals that he was quite pleased by this appellation and does not indicate that this moment is anything other than being praised for doing his job well. Second, as numerous scholars have noted, race relations on the wooden world were distinct from those on land. As Bolster notes, "The shipboard order in which late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century black and white sailors found themselves was maintained through a precise 'distinction of role and status.' . . . Racial boundaries certainly existed, but they were often secondary to those established by the institution of the ship" (75).[139] In other words, race did not disappear, but actions sometimes spoke louder in

[139] Bolster also writes, "Race relations had their own logic aboard deep-sea ships. Hoary shipboard traditions and a rigid shipboard hierarchy did not have as much place for race as the customs associated with many occupations ashore. . . . Aboard ship, social relations were

the wooden world than complexion. Equiano's narrative suggests that as a sailor he could earn a place of companionship and status because the wooden world's culture was distinct from that of the land.

Equiano's status and control over his life are temporary, dependent entirely on which ship he lives. During one of his last sea voyages, Equiano describes how his freedom depends on the whims of white sailors. In this instance, Equiano boards a sloop, owned by a man named Hughes, for Jamaica (211). Hughes orders Equiano to sail with his other ship, a schooner in need of men (211). When Equiano refuses, he is tied up and threatened with slavery (211-212). Equiano then pleads his case to a white crewmember who successfully argues to Hughes that treating Equiano badly may endanger Hughes' interests because Equiano has influential white friends on land (212). This experience demonstrates how the wooden world, while a place of opportunity for black sailors, is also a space of tenuous freedom. Though "black seamen found access to privileges, worldliness, and wealth denied to most slaves" (Bolster 37), their agency on board was constrained by the racial disparity pervasive in societies on land. In other words, while black sailors were able to earn a measure of control over their lives, especially in comparison to life on land, their status and place in ship culture was tenuous at best.

Even though Equiano suggests that some agency, albeit temporary, can be found in the wooden world, particularly for black sailors, he also highlights how race prohibits his performance of the sailor identity. In fact, his focus on a lack of economic agency highlights black sailors' systemic limitations inherent in the wooden world. Equiano, throughout the

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not determined primarily by technology, tradition, or the challenges of the marine environment; they were made by men with vested interests in a certain social order that, coincidentally, did not depend on race for its perpetuation" (74).

narrative, discusses how he attempts to earn extra funds by trade to buy his freedom. The *Narrative* reinforces the reality of "black men, like white sailors, often turned to petty trading to supplement their incomes" (Bolster 86). Yet, the text demonstrates the limits to a black man's economic agency that differentiated them from white sailors. While in Charlestown, Equiano tries to sell his goods, but is instead faced with racial violence:

> Here I disposed of some goods on my own account; the white men buying them with smooth promises and fair words, giving me, however, but very indifferent payment. There was one gentleman particularly who bought a puncheon of rum of me, which gave me a great deal of trouble; and although I used the interest of my friendly captain, I could not obtain any thing for it; for, being a negro man, I could not oblige him to pay me. (128)

Equiano's depiction of the "white men" is particularly interesting in that he brings race to the forefront, as he did when he was first introduced to European sailors. In this moment, as before, the mention of racial difference highlights Equiano's cultural distance from white sailors. He also refers to his captain as "my friendly captain," the use of first person suggesting a strong personal as well as professional relationship with his commanding officer. However, Equiano wrongly assumes that shipboard culture, namely the captain's influence, will translate to success or even civil treatment on land. Instead, Equiano realizes that his race, "being a negro man," inhibits his agency in a way that is distinct from other sailors. Later, Equiano tracks down the gentleman and, with the help of the captain and a bunch of fellow sailors, gets some repayment. Yet, much of this money is worthless copper coins, which Equiano is forced to accept while repeating that "he took advantage of my being a negro man" (129). Equiano argues that the problem is his race: societies on land do not

accept the word of a black man over that of a white man, regardless of his new identity as an "able-bodied sailor." [140] Thus, agency, or lack thereof, manifests through scenes of Equiano's economic struggles on land.

Along with petty trading, sailors turned to authorship to gain even a small measure of control over their lives. Equiano's turn to authorship should not be read as a rejection of the sailor identity. Although some crewmembers did publish their sailing experiences anonymously, many sailors-turned-authors were white officers who served in the Royal Navy: examples include, Captain Manly wrote the poem *A Summer Voyage to the Gulph of Venice* (1750), Admiral Robert English penned the poem *The Naval Review* (1773), Captain Constantine John Phipps wrote *A Voyage towards the North Pole undertaken by His Majesty's Command 1773* (1774), Captain Lieutenant William Bligh published *A Voyage to the South Sea* (1792), Captain Winterfield wrote *The Voyages, Distresses and Adventures of Captain Winterfield* (1798).[141] Equiano's *Narrative* is similar to these texts in that he recounts his journeys and establishes his naval experience as foundational for his British identity. As Jocelyn Stitt notes, "By participating in the print culture of late-eighteenth century England, Equiano inserts himself into the narrative of an emerging English national identity." I argue that the sailor identity provides an avenue for Equiano to assert a (authorial) place for the freed black sailor in British society. Through authorship, then, Equiano conveys how the British tar identity is not restricted to white sailors, but instead is a trans-racial identity. My argument builds on Roxann Wheeler's claim that "the narrative shows Equiano's attempts to keep whiteness separate from a notion of Britishness in order for him,

[140] As Equiano writes, "throughout the West Indies no black man's testimony is admitted, on any occasion, against any white person whatever" (162).
[141] John Marra, a Gunner's mate for Captain Cook during the 1770s, used his journals to write the first accounts of Cook's journeys.

a former slave, to claim an authoritative public identity" (235). I modify Wheeler's argument by inserting a consideration of how Equiano's performs the sailor identity even within his role of author. Equiano claims the "authoritative public identity" by having established the tar as a figure that can be trans-racial and by showing how he fits into that mold.

Conclusion

The tar identity becomes an essential tool with which Equiano carves out a unique place for himself in British society. By engaging with the Jolly Jack Tar image, Equiano articulates how he can "imbibe" what it means to be English and can show that the Tar identity is not restricted to white sailors. Instead, this multifaceted identity relies on a handful of qualities that sailors on these multicultural deep-sea vessels could emulate. Moreover, the sailors' vulnerable experience becomes the perfect model for Equiano to articulate the limited agency inherent in the wooden world. Although Equiano found some measure of control on certain ships, his agency was fleeting and subject to the whims of future captains and crews. It is not when Equiano buys his freedom that he becomes his own master: it is when he becomes an author that he is able to gain lasting agency, which was a challenge to all sailors, particularly black sailors, in the eighteenth century.[142]

[142] I disagree with Plasa's argument that, until he becomes his own master, "Equiano occupies the position of an object of constant appropriation, commodification and exchange" (Plasa 14). In fact, I would argue that his position as sailor keeps him an object of exchange as sailors were commonly impressed, both when at home and in foreign ports. Equiano has limited agency, like other sailors, because the wooden world treated all sailors as commodities.

Chapter 4: "Not fit to be seen": Depictions of Disabled Seamen in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a new representation of Jack Tar emerged. He was physically changed, often missing a leg or an eye, was destitute, and lacked virility as well as the carefree attitude so often part of the Jack Tar image in the early and mid-eighteenth century. Thomas Rowlandson's *A Distressed Sailor* (Figure 22) is typical of these portrayals of the broken tar.

Figure 22: Thomas Rowlandson's *A Distressed Sailor* (1788).

Here, a barefoot child clings to her father, a sailor with one leg amputated above the knee and his toes poking through a worn boot. This family, like their clothing, is in tatters, accentuating the bleak existence disabled sailors faced when returning home. Although many late-eighteenth century images of Jack Tar on the home front show seafarers on the dockside or in taverns, cavorting with women of dubious repute and reinforcing the idea of sailors as carefree playboys, Rowlandson's sketch presents a loving father, literally holding up his family. By highlighting the disabled sailor's destitution and his role as a family man, Figure 22 captures many of the sentiments swirling through British culture regarding sailors' roles after returning home from war; it criticizes society's disinterest in, and subsequent deplorable support for, seamen during peacetime.

A demobilized naval workforce was an increasingly pressing issue as this period was marked by a series of wars (American War of Independence, French Revolutionary War, and the Napoleonic Wars) that required tremendous increases in Britain's naval manpower. After each conflict, the resultant peacetime lull necessitated the discharge of thousands of seamen, both able-bodied and disabled, who returned to Britain without a clear social role or path to resume work. Their unemployment, combined with the fact that the majority of seamen were of lower-class origins, raised the specter of vagrancy and criminality. Moreover, sailors' altered bodies were physical evidence of the violence required to maintain naval supremacy. As we have seen, over the course of the century, the figure of Jack Tar was varied and complex, displaying often contradictory conceptions of the British sailor: this unstable identity at any cultural moment reflects disagreement over seamen's relationship to the home. Joining this variety at century's end, the portrayal of the disabled sailor, as

exemplified in Rowlandson's image, proliferated across a multiplicity of print sources. The variety of these representations of Jack Tar, both able-bodied and disabled, in the context of large numbers of returning seamen, suggests that the sailors' role in British society during peacetime (and even during the many wars that punctuated this period) was contested in the public's imagination.

In this chapter, I answer the following questions: What do the range of depictions of sailors on the home front suggest about Britons' understanding of seamen and, by extension, the Navy in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century? How do literary and cultural texts represent seamen's complicated relationship to the home and the family, particularly when seamen were, by the nature of their profession, typically far from Britain? How was the altered and perhaps even disabled body of the sailor portrayed and how do these representations change based on the social status of the amputee? Lastly, how do representations of demobilized sailors (both able-bodied and disabled) in the novel of manners, a genre largely concerned with courtship and the formation of families, take up and transform the Jolly Tar inherited from earlier images, songs, and other fictional texts?

To answer these questions, I explore Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (1817), a novel that considers how the Royal Navy and generations of its sailors are intimately woven into the familial and social fabric of early nineteenth-century Britain. I am particularly concerned with Captain Harville, an impaired sailor described as peacefully and productively reintegrating into the home. Much scholarship has focused on Austen's relationship to the Navy and depiction of naval heroes, yet Harville is an understudied figure, as are

representations of physically disabled tars more broadly.[143] To understand this character and the cultural work being done by *Persuasion*, I consider how this novel relates to the varied depictions of disabled tars found in a multiplicity of texts, including images (ranging from cartoons to paintings), songs, and joke collections.[144] Demobilized seafarers at the turn of the century were imagined as pitiable peg-legged vagrants, as clean-cut family men, as randy youths frequenting brothels, or as humorous Greenwich pensioners living out their lives in happiness. Austen's novel simultaneously reinforces and contradicts numerous characteristics like these long associated with various versions of Jack Tar by reflecting a pervasive concern over how demobilized seamen (both able-bodied and disabled) can reintegrate into the family and, more broadly, the nation. I argue that, in many ways, Austen's novel is like other depictions of seamen that reflect a gradual domestication of the sailor, a turning away from

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[143] For more on Austen and the Navy, see Susan Morgan's "Captain Wentworth, British Imperialism and Personal Romance" (1996), Jeffrey Cass's "'A Sailor's Wife': Anne Elliot, Marginality, and Active Prudence" (1999), Tim Fulford's "Romanticizing the Empire: The Naval Heroes of Southey, Coleridge, Austen, and Marryat" (1999), Brian Southam's *Jane Austen and the Navy* (2000), John Peck's *Maritime Fiction: Sailors and the Sea in British and American Novels, 1719-1917* (2001), Jocelyn Harris' *A Revolution Almost beyond Expression* (2007), and and Taylor Walle's "'He looked quite red': *Persuasion* and Austen's New Man of Feeling" (2016). Historical scholarship on sick or disabled sailors includes Martin Wilcox's "The 'Poor Decayed Seamen' of Greenwich Hospital, 1705-1763" (2013), and Cori Convertito's "Mending the Sick and Wounded: The Development of Naval Hospitals in the West Indies, 1740-1800" (2016), to name a few. Whereas I am concerned with physical disabilities, historian Roland Pietsch in "Hearts of Oak and Jolly Tars? Heroism and Insanity in the Georgian Navy" (2013) explores mental illness in the Navy. Scholarship focusing on representations of disabled sailors, though, is fairly limited: see Teresa Michals' "Invisible Amputation and Heroic Masculinity" (2015). Simon Parkes' "Wooden Legs and Tales of Sorrow Done: The Literary Broken Soldier of the Late Eighteenth Century" (2013), although focused on disabled soldiers, is particularly helpful in understanding how injured sailors were constructed in the cultural imagination.

[144] There were some versions of disabled sailors on the stage: for example, Commodore Chace in *The Glorious First of June* (1801) presents a scene in which the "wounded old Tar" is preceded by "Servants all dressed like Sailors--Wooden legs--arms hurt" (qtd. in Worrall 133). However, in this chapter, I am more concerned with print texts, rather than the stage. For my analysis of sailors on the stage, see Chapter 2: "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins."

previous Jack Tars that reframes the mariner less as a social outcast (necessary for but incompatible with the British home) and more as an essential component of British familial life. That said, representations of sailors' disfigured bodies, even as they contain seamen and reframe them as harmless and, subsequently, more compatible with femininity and domesticity, are bound to the stereotypical virile and potentially disruptive Jack Tar caricature prevalent throughout the long eighteenth century.

Jack Tar's Visible Impairments

From weather-beaten visages and rolling gaits to missing limbs, sailors' figures bore the visible markings of Britain's expanding colonial influence: the disabled or disfigured bodies of sailors were immediate evidence of the brutality inherent in the wooden world and colonial periphery. Depictions of visibly impaired seamen are varied: while some texts present Navy veterans as pitiable figures, others highlight stereotypical Tar qualities, reinforcing the image of the national naval hero who joyfully accepts life's challenges, whose patriotic sacrifices have not quenched his vigor and thirst for life's simple pleasures. Many of these texts construct peg-legged Navy veterans as harmless patriotic figures, easing the audience's potential anxiety over lower-class seamen returning home, becoming vagrants, and perhaps falling into a criminal existence. Their bodies and nationalistic fervor are evidence of their place in society ashore. Austen's novel directly engages with concerns over the myriad of physical changes sailors experienced due to their life on the high seas and how these thousands of altered men would fare when returning to the home front after war. Contrasting with typical representations of sick, aged, and impaired sailors is Austen's Captain Harville. Whereas the tar's body is the central focus of many popular versions of the

disabled Jack Tar, his amputated limbs haunting the texts, Austen deemphasizes Harville's injury, separating him, and the new professional class of sailors he represents, from the stereotypical Jack Tar.

The Royal Navy during this period was larger than ever before and in constant need of able-bodied men that, upon the ceasing of hostility with rival nations, were returned home, often physically changed. Before the start of the French Revolutionary Wars, the Royal Navy was comprised of approximately 16,613 men. Yet, after war began in 1793, those numbers increased rapidly to 69,868, and by 1797 the Navy employed approximately 118,788 men (Lloyd 194). Furthermore, in 1813, a time when Britain was at war with France and the United States, 130,127 men were in the Navy: in 1817, during peacetime, the Navy employed 22,944 men (Lloyd 267).[145] A series of advancements meant that fewer men died at sea during war: shorter voyages and the Navy's adoption of lemon juice rations in 1795 meant that many of these sailors who would have perished or become infirm due to scurvy could have avoided that debilitating illness.[146] This is not to say that disease did not run rampant on warships. In fact, diseases (like cholera, typhus, dysentery, and tuberculosis) and accidents were responsible for 81.5% of the deaths (84,440 men) between 1792 and 1815 (Lloyd

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[145] As previously discussed, it is important to note that manning figures are difficult to state with a high degree of accuracy. While calculations based on a ship's full complement could give some sense of the numbers of seamen, few ships during war ever left port fully manned. Records were also notoriously problematic since men could desert or get pressed into service while on shore leave from another ship. Even considering these variables, Lloyd's calculations speak to the fluctuation in manning corresponding to outbreaks or ceasing of conflict as well as the gradual increase in the size of the British Navy.

[146] Scurvy had long plagued the Navy. In 1759, there were 119 cases of scurvy and 393 cases of typhus recorded at the Royal Hospital Haslar, located in Gosport, England. In 1782, cases of scurvy rose to 329 while typhus fell to 257 cases (Lloyd 260). Although James Lind, suggested in *A Treatise on the Scurvy* (1753) that fresh fruit, vegetables, and lemon juice could combat scurvy, the Royal Navy did not adopt lemon juice rations until nearly 40 years later (Marcus 385).

263).[147] Yet, various advancements in hygiene and victualing ensured that thousands of sailors, who in prior wars would have perished, returned home at the end of war.[148] As to the amount of sailors who suffered injuries and returned to Britain with disabilities, those numbers are incredibly difficult to locate because of the diffuse nature of the Navy's hospital system.[149] That being said, the records from Greenwich Hospital speak to how the vast majority of injuries recorded in pensioners unsurprisingly relate to the leg or the arm (Wilcox 79), making it difficult for veterans to find gainful employment.[150] Even though "the office of Cook on board all ships was reserved for maimed men" (Lloyd 98), those positions were relatively few. Therefore, the vast majority of impaired mariners had to seek employment outside of the merchant marine or the Navy, their leg and arm injuries hindering their chances and contributing to sailors eventually seeking out support from Greenwich Hospital.

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[147] Foundering, wrecks, and fires made up 12.2% (12,680) of fatalities and enemy action accounted for 6.3% (6,540 men) of the total deaths over the course of these two decades (Lloyd 263).

[148] After the Navy instituted lemon juice rations, the number of scurvy cases at Haslar in 1799 dropped precipitously to an astounding 20 cases: typhus cases also fell, albeit less dramatically, to 200; a focus on clean clothing for sailors, behind which the Marine Society was a driving force, most likely contributed to the decline in typhus (Lloyd 260). For more on how individual officers sought to improve the health of their sailors, see historian G. J. Marcus' *A Naval History of England: The Formative Centuries* (1961).

[149] Part of the struggle with quantifying seamen's injuries was because sailors were treated in hospitals around the Atlantic and in regional hospitals in Britain, not to mention the care seamen received in private homes. Even if these numbers could be located, it would be virtually impossible to trace what became of sailors when they left hospital if they were discharged as an invalid in a distant port. However, some scholarship has been done to resurrect the medical outcomes of injured sailors in colonial hospitals. For instance, between 1743 and 1744, 1,180 seamen were put ashore at Jamaica hospitals (Convertito 510). Of those men, 10% were discharged as invalids (Convertito 510). Piecing together the records from distant hospitals over the long eighteenth century to provide insight into the Royal Navy as a whole, though, may not be possible given the loss of hospital records.

[150] Wilcox notes that, although records show a quarter of pensioners admitted to Greenwich Hospital in the mid-eighteenth century were injured, with a "preponderance of wounds to the arms and legs," the numbers in the Hospital records are likely underestimates by a large margin since only serious injuries were recorded (81).

Unsurprisingly, Greenwich Hospital, and its potential to contain the threat inherent in returning tars, figures prominently in the discourses surrounding Navy veterans. Founded in 1694 by King William III, the hospital was designed, according to the Royal Warrant, to provide support to Royal Navy sailors whose "Age, Wounds or other disabilities [make them] uncapable of further Service at Sea and [are] unable to maintain themselves" (qtd. in Wilcox 66).[151] The hospital opened in 1705 and admitted 42 pensioners and by 1815 there were 2700 men living at the hospital.[152] The life of an aged or disabled sailor on land was, in all likelihood, tragic. Seamen's chances of obtaining gainful employment on land when they were less physically capable of laboring were slim because most employment that would have utilized their knowledge of ships was still physically demanding, and many of these men initially went to sea out of economic need, thereby suggesting that they had little to no training in other professions. Wilcox argues that "for many men there must have been a space of several years between leaving the sea and entering the Hospital. . . . it seems clear that many had slipped into, or returned to, poverty" and the sailors' petitions for admission stressed how they were "miserable and starving" (78). Additionally, seamen were also less likely than other men to have family on which to rely in their time of need in part because their highly mobile existence was incompatible with establishing lasting relationships with women on land or even having strong ties with their original parish (Wilcox 78). Greenwich Hospital, then, became a literal lifeline for economically-struggling veterans.

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[151] While the Hospital's directive was to help Royal Navy sailors, some Royal Dockyard workers received assistance as well (Wilcox 67). For more on how men were deemed qualified for admittance, see Christopher Lloyd's *The British Seaman*.

[152] Martin Wilcox in "The 'Poor Decayed Seamen' of Greenwich Hospital, 1705-1763" presents a comprehensive overview of the hospital and the men who stayed there. He provides a breakdown of the pensioners based on age, length of service, birthplace, duration of residence, and injury type.

Representations of the aged or disabled tars speak to continual cultural debates about how Britons should care for their returning sailors. In many respects, the disabled sailor's body was publicly displayed throughout the vibrant print culture of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century as a symbol for the nation's problematic reliance on the ideal Jack Tar. The song "The Neglected Tar" (1792) highlights Britons' hypocrisy in celebrating sailors during wartime when these men are far from home but doing nothing to support seamen during times of peace:

> When mad-brain'd war spreads death a-round,
> by them you are protected;
> But when in peace the nation's found,
> these bulwarks are neglected.
> Then, O! protect the hardy tar,
> be mindful of his merit,
> And when again you're plung'd in war,
> he'll shew his darling spirit. (*The Greenwich Pensioner's Garland* 2)

The singer's use of second person pronouns pointedly accuses the listener of being complicit in British warfare and personally benefiting from the sacrifices of the "hardy tar." By stating that tars' bravery will be needed in the future, an argument that seems especially prescient since Britain was involved in the French Revolutionary Wars the next year, the singer frames supporting sailors in terms of national security and further demands the listener witness sailors' suffering:

> Behold him move along the pier,
> pale, meagre, and dejected.

Behold him begging for employ!

behold him disregarded!

Then view the anguish in his eye,

And say, Are tars rewarded! . . .

To them your dearest rights you owe;

in peace, then, would you starve them? (3)

These lyrics command the listener not to turn away from what British society, through its neglect, is doing to the nation's brave defenders. The "hardy tar" who fights for the nation at sea in the beginning of the song is, when discharged from duty and making his way on land, "pale, meagre, and dejected" with "anguish in his eye." This song makes visible the suffering lower-class sailors' experience when returning to land by using the stereotypical Jack Tar identity as a springboard for arguments advocating for charity.

It is within this cultural moment, in which thousands of demobilized Navy veterans, some of whom injured, were thrust back into British society in which representations of the disabled Jack Tar proliferated. One prevalent concern revolved around tars being able to financially support themselves when they came ashore. Thomas Rowlandson's "Roasted Apples; Singing Birds; Distressed Sailors" (1820-23), similar to his drawing *A Distressed Sailor* (Figure 22), paints a piteous image of disabled seamen begging on the street (Figure 23):

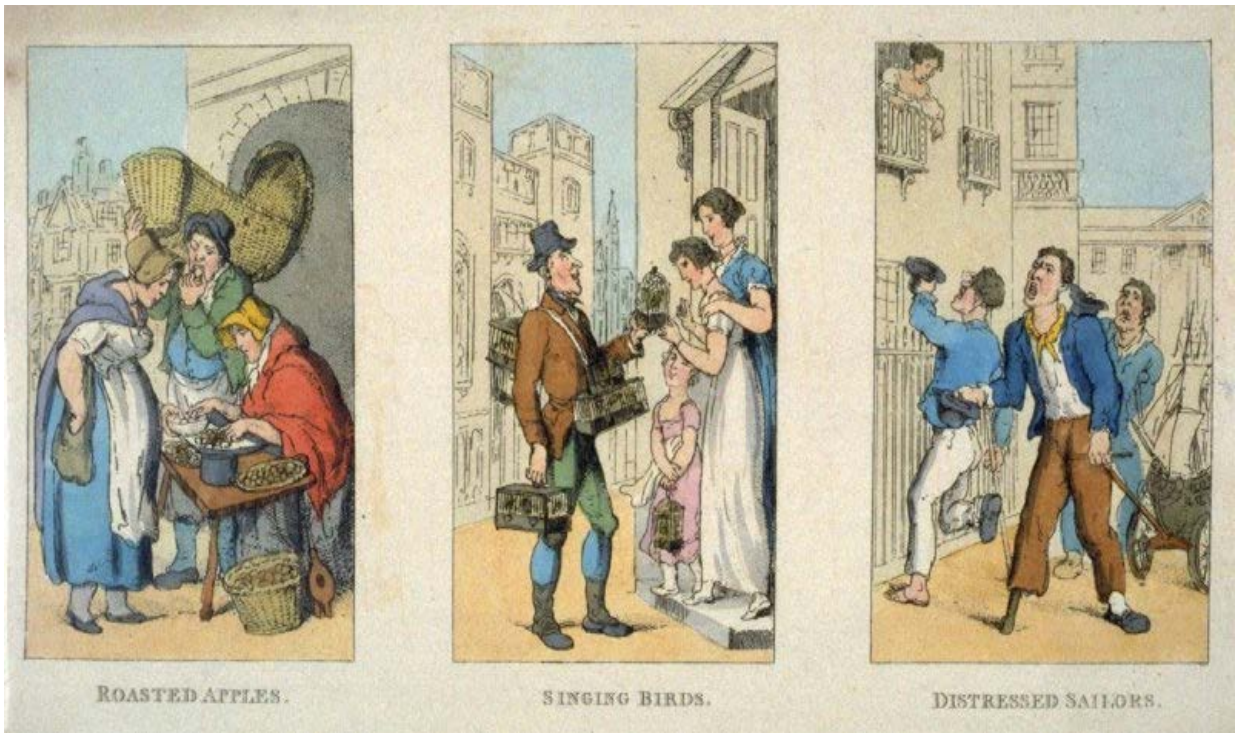

Figure 23: Thomas Rowlandson's “Roasted Apples; Singing Birds; Distressed Sailors” (1820-23).

The British sailor in the foreground of the far-right panel, with tattered pants and a wooden leg, calls for money while he pulls a large model ship with his left hand. In his right hand is his cap, held out to receive charity. Both mariners behind him also have their hats raised in one hand while they lean on crutches. The sailor on the right has one bare foot, accentuating his poverty, and he reaches up to catch a lady’s money. The image of the poor, disabled sailors is juxtaposed with two scenes of domestic happiness, femininity, prosperity, and tranquility. On the one hand, this comparison is shocking, the seamen’s deplorable situation in stark contrast to the scenes of prosperous domesticity. Yet, this sequence of images also presents begging tars as an everyday occurrence, like the mundane glimpses of British life demonstrated in the other drawings: “Distressed Sailors” are presented as equivalent to “Roasted Apples” and “Singing Birds.” The image reflects the bleak existence faced by

disabled sailors on the home front: abject poverty.[153] In this way, Rowlandson highlights Navy veterans' plight while also suggesting that their experience is all too common.

Many late eighteenth-century texts, like Rowlandson's images, speak to a broader concern of disabled mariners resorting to begging, their vagrancy tinged with suspicion of criminality. One text that captures these themes of seafaring, disability, destitution, vagrancy, and the lower-class sailor's aura of lawlessness is Isaac Bickerstaff's *The Life, and Strange, Unparallel'd and Unheard-of Voyages and Adventures of Ambrose Gwinett* (1770). Gwinett, through a series of unfortunate events, is falsely accused of murder, imprisoned, convicted, and hanged (6-10). After miraculously surviving the hanging, Gwinett goes to sea with a captain of a privateer (12). After a series of misfortunes, culminating in him being taken captive by pirates and losing his leg in a sea battle (24), Gwinett finally makes his way back to England. The narrative ends with the following line: "Though not an old man, I was so enfeebled by hardships, that I was unable to work; and being without any manner of support, I could think of no way of getting my living but by begging" (24). This short story reinforces some of the concerns related to disabled seamen found in other texts. First, having lost his leg at sea, Gwinett, although still young, must turn to begging, alluding to the reality that disabled sailors faced when they returned home and competed with able-bodied men who were also desperate for employment. Second, the captain's offer to help this convicted murderer escape justice (the captain is ignorant of Gwinett's innocence) reinforces the image

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[153] Wilcox writes, "Fundamentally, the options for aged and disabled seamen ashore were few and usually unattractive. . . . Although there were occupations for which men who had retired from the sea were well fitted, such as ship-watching and rigging, these were poorly paid, insecure and available only to those physically able to do them. For the remainder, the options boiled down to the same as the rest of the aged working class: family, charity or the Poor Law" (78). Historian Jenny Uglow similarly states that many demobilized and disabled sailors had to resort to begging or peddling on the street (632).

of sailors as criminals culled from prisons. Thus, this image of the impaired tar links concerns over sailors' inability to work with suspicions over their lower-class origins, which invariably raised the specter of criminality—Bickerstaff's text, then, highlights the fact that disabled sailors struggled to reintegrate, and it reinforces the idea that their presence in society is, at least to a small extent, disruptive.

The idea that the Navy or merchant marine welcomed social degenerates, like Bickerstaff's character, springs from historical precedence and fear related to sailors' lower-class origins. During the Tudor period, "pressing was based largely on class and served as a form of 'preventative policing' of idly and unwanted persons in English towns" (Brunsman 22). Vagrancy Acts provided the Elizabethan government "the means by which convicts, vagrants, and vagabonds could be conveyed on board navy ships as an alternative to laboring in workhouses" (Brunsman 22). At the heart of these policies was the pervasive belief held by the middling sorts and the aristocracy that idleness went hand-in-hand with criminality: in fact, anyone who could not give a "good account of themselves" was labeled a criminal (Hitchcock, Crymble, Falcini 509).[154] The long-standing concern over vagrancy relates to significant economic and social changes, like the enclosure of common land and massive population growth, which "produced a vast landless surplus population, highly mobile, and desperate for work and sustenance" (Frykman 75). For many of these poor landless men, the Navy or Army were the only options; correspondingly, "the largest group of new recruits that found themselves on warships in the 1790s were the sons of the European peasantry"

[154] For more on vagrancy laws, see Tim Hitchcock's *Down and Out in Eighteenth-Century London* (2004), Anne-Marie Kilday's "'Criminally Poor?'" (2014), and Nicholas Rogers' "Policing the Poor in Eighteenth-Century London: The Vagrancy Laws and Their Administration" (1991).

(Frykman 75). By enlisting these poor men, the military reinforced the belief that their ranks were teeming with men from the demographic most inclined to be criminals.

It was also popularly believed that the Navy, because it was desperate for men during wartime, would gladly accept dangerous and deadly men. While poor men during peacetime may have looked to the Navy's daily grog ration and regular hot meals as powerful incentives, the Navy's propensity for churning through men meant that even this large population of seafarers who had few economic prospects were less inclined to volunteer during a protracted war. Rather than help press gangs locate unwilling men who had sailing experience, since sailors would hide when the press gang was in town, city magistrates would often try to foist their criminals and reprobates onto the Navy (McLeod 94). Even though such men were often rejected because captains did not want troublemakers on board (McLeod 94), the association between the Navy and criminals persisted in the cultural imagination. Popular culture reflected these long-standing views. For instance, William Hogarth's "The Idle 'Prentice Turn'd Away, and Sent to Sea" (1747) depicts a degenerate apprentice rowed toward ships in the distance (Figure 24):

Figure 24: William Hogarth's "The Idle 'Prentice Turn'd Away, and Sent to Sea" (1747).

Although a mid-century example, Hogarth's cautionary tale captured in his 12-plate series called *Industry and Idleness* illustrates the well-established belief that the maritime world contained Britain's unsavory elements. Tom Idle (pictured in a light-colored shirt on the left in the boat) is depicted in other prints in this series as behaving deplorably: he is lazy and prefers to gamble when he should be worshipping at church. Having lost his apprenticeship, his only option is life at sea. Hogarth's image reinforces the link between criminality and sailing: one seaman points ominously to the ships and gallows in the distance while another teases the idle apprentice with the cat-o-nine. Later in the series, Tom returns to Britain,

becomes a pistol-toting criminal, teaming up with a prostitute. Hogarth's "The Idle 'Prentice return'd from Sea, & in a Garret with common Prostitute" (Plate 7 of *Industry and Idleness*) further this imagined link between criminality and the men who are forced into seafaring (Figure 25):

Figure 25: William Hogarth's "The Idle 'Prentice return'd from Sea, & in a Garret with a common Prostitute" (1747).

The pistols in the lower left corner of the image combined with the pocket watches and other trinkets beside the prostitute suggest Tom has become a common thief. Moreover, the title of the image reinforces the connection between seafaring and Tom's degenerate behavior. Read in the context of how Jack Tar was often represented alongside prostitutes, the title suggests

that seafaring fosters a masculinity unacceptable in Hogarth's London. Athough, representations of Jack Tar rarely, if ever, depicted sailors in bed with prostitutes, Jack Tar's heterosexuality, unquenching libido, and rakish behavior are strongly implied. Still later in the series, Tom is eventually executed for murder, having been betrayed by his criminal companion.[155] Hogarth's series, like Bickerstaff's story, alludes to the idea that the maritime world was a place rife with either social degenerates or men from a social class most likely to turn to begging or crime. Given this wide-spread assumption, large-scale demobilizations that occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century resulted in considerable increases in "general anxiety about crime during peacetime, not only because of the return of soldiers and sailors to society but also because war was no longer available as a means of social regulation" (Russell 9). In other words, the association between sailors and lawlessness, relating to the belief that the maritime world would absorb Britain's proletariat criminals, and the representations that propagated this correlation were at the heart of Britons' increasing anxiety about veterans returning home.

In addition to capturing Britons' concerns over demobilized disabled sailors begging or otherwise disrupting polite society on land, some depictions of visibly impaired sailors challenge concerns related to veterans' destabilizing effect on British society by accentuating the Tar's extreme patriotism despite his broken body. Many of the portrayals of the disabled mariner showcase Jack Tar's indominable spirit; in doing so, these songs and images make the sailor both an adorable embodiment of Britain's triumphs and a laughable caricature.

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[155] In "The Idle 'Prentice betray'd by his Whore, & taken in a Night Cellar with his Accomplice." (Plate 9), the prostitute can be seen, for the price of a coin, betraying Tom to magistrates as Tom's murder victim is dropped through a trapdoor. In "The Idle 'Prentice Executed at Tyburn" (Plate 11), Tom travels to the gallows where he will be summarily executed for murder.

George Cruikshank's "The Battle of the Nile" from *Greenwich Hospital* (1826) showcases this humorous treatment of the disabled male body (Figure 26):

Figure 26: George Cruikshank's "The Battle of the Nile" (1826).

This image captures a group of veteran officers reliving their glory days of fighting in the Navy. The Battle of the Nile (August 1-3, 1798) took place at the mouth of the Nile between British and French forces. The Royal Navy triumphed, dealing a tremendous blow to Napoleon's strategic position in the Mediterranean, a battle that was essential to Britain's eventual defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. Cruikshank affectionately satirizes the Jack Tar's characteristic qualities: namely the tar's propensity for drunken revelry, indicated by an overturned tankard and the punch bowl between a sailor's legs, and his undying fighting

spirit as the seamen celebrate trouncing the French. The punch bowl, in particular, is heavily encoded, speaking to three important aspects of Jack Tar in this cultural moment. First, it signifies a patriotic fraternal community strengthened by inebriated celebrations of British naval victories. Bound together, not by class or traditional social hierarchy, these veterans are united by their shared sacrifice. Second, this punch party conveys a bawdy manly identity. Historian Karen Harvey in "Barbarity in a Teacup? Punch, Domesticity and Gender in the Eighteenth Century" argues that punch bowls, especially when depicted alongside a group of men "engaged in raucous and merry sociability," signify chaos, excess, and incivility (208).[156] The punch bowl in Figure 26, thus, simultaneously incorporates the image of demobilized tars inhabiting the fringes of polite society and the youthful able-bodied Jack Tar drunkenly living it up in port. Lastly, the punch bowl reinforces the gradual transition of Jack Tar from a lower-class icon to a professional sailor more closely tied to the middling sorts. According to Harvey, "in contrast to some other alcoholic drinks, the cost, spaces, and objects tie punch not to the labouring or elite propertied classes, but rather to a more indistinct middling group" ("Ritual Encounters" 180). The punch bowl gestures to a new type of seaman who is neither of the stereotypical lower orders or from the landed gentry, similarly reflected in the (seemingly) discordant combination of officers' uniforms with the rough and tumble appearances usually signifying a lower-class tar. Cruikshank's drawing, in bringing together competing versions of Jack Tar, reflects changing perceptions of sailors' social roles and manly identity at the turn of the century.

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[156] In "Ritual Encounters: Punch Parties and Masculinity in the Eighteenth Century," Harvey states that punch "had connotations of the exotic" because it initially was created from foreign goods (173). Punch bowls, although used in some homes, were more common in public venues, "straddling both the alehouses that served beer and ale and were associated with the poor and common, and the bigger and grander inns that served wine and spirits" (178).

Furthermore, even as Cruikshank's drawing comedically constructs the aged patriotic seaman, numerous lost limbs haunt this image. The missing arms, peg legs and eye patches call attention to the everyday violence that is part of Britain's colonial endeavors, and they make visible the idea that seafaring thoroughly changes men: their bodies speak to male patriotism even as they also speak to their marginality to both the British economy and British models of ideal domesticity. While I agree with Margarette Lincoln's assertion in *Representing the Royal Navy* that the many amputations and exaggerated gestures contribute to the drawing's humor, I disagree with Lincoln's argument that the image "is without a trace of respect" (197).[157] Viewed along a continuum of representations of Jack Tar, Cruikshank's image reflects the well-established idea of sailors embodying an indomitable fighting spirit and their ability to lightheartedly adapt to the tragedies of life at sea. As previously mentioned, their uniforms, which indicate that these men are officers, suggest that some traditional characteristics associated with the lower-class Jack Tar were becoming more widely applied—that the Tar identity, even as it was intimately tied to common sailors, was also expanding to encapsulate a new class of professional sailors, including those who rose through the ranks to officer status.[158] Additionally, the able-bodied barman in the lower right corner contrasts with the wounded men upon which he gazes. His smile suggests delight as he shows audiences how to view the effusive patriotic display in which he, a landlubber, cannot fully partake. That being said, the celebration of a long-past victory is tinged with the

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[157] Lincoln argues that the officers are dehumanized. For example, the figure in the foreground on the left has a wooden leg that closely resembles a chair leg (197) I agree that the amputations are humorously depicted, that the caricature is a bit extreme. However, I am skeptical that the humor negates the image's focus on veterans' personal sacrifice and enduring patriotic spirit.

[158] For more on how naval uniforms for officers, introduced in 1748, contributed to the professionalization of the Royal Navy, see Amy Miller's "Clothes Make the Man: Naval Uniform and Masculinity in the Early Nineteenth Century" (2015).

realization that these disabled veterans remain on the margins of a British society and economy that rely on the labor of younger men. They are relics of a time when the Navy's glorious battles ensured Britain's maritime dominance. Therefore, while the amputations reframe the mariner as non-threatening in his nationalistic fervor, Cruikshank's disabled sailor recalls versions of a young and virile Jack Tar, highlighting the stark contrast in his present personal and social situation.

Cruikshank's image is fairly typical of many depictions of impaired tars that appeared in various genres across the cultural landscape and suggests that disability had become an integral characteristic of the Jack Tar identity. For example, joke collections like *The Sailor's Jester* (1795) comedically frame amputation as part of the Tar identity: "A droll fellow who had a wooden leg, being in company with one who was something soft and credulous, the latter asked the former how he came to have a wooden leg. 'Why,' says the fellow, 'my father had one, and my grandfather before him; *it runs in the blood*'" (21). Like Cruikshank's drawing, this joke presents a sailor unfazed by amputation. The landsman is characterized by being "soft and credulous," a description that recalls and reinforces the pervasive idea that landlubbers were simple and weak. The landsman's softness is juxtaposed with the "droll" and witty sailor, a comparison which suggests that landlubbers benefit from the sacrifices of braver men. Additionally, the line "runs in the blood" jokingly refers to the all-to-common nature of amputation in the military, a type a birthright that connects individual sailors to those who came before them. Amputation and disability, when incorporated into representations of Jack Tar, become further signifiers of the Tar's place in British domestic culture even as he is marginal to it. The Tar, like the maimed soldier, serves as "an example of service and sacrifice useful to the shoring up of myths of stoical British characteristics that

were helping to cement a more robust national identity" (Parkes 206). In other words, the disabled Jack Tar presents physical injury as a part of the patriotic sacrifice entailed in building empire. At the same time, he reaffirms an exclusive masculine subculture that cannot be easily incorporated into the British economy and domestic family.

These late eighteenth-century images and songs depicting the Jack Tar persona can help us gain insight into Jane Austen's *Persuasion,* which notably confronts concerns over demobilized sailors' effect on the home. The prejudiced Sir Walter famously objects to seafaring because, in addition to creating opportunities for social mobility, it "cuts up a man's youth and vigour most horribly; a sailor grows old sooner than any other man . . . and of becoming prematurely an object of disgust himself. . . . [Sailors] are all knocked about, and exposed to every climate, and every weather, till they are not fit to be seen" (22). For Sir Walter, sailors' disfigured bodies call to mind the distressing reality of how expanding empire has created the conditions for a new Britain in which the value of masculinity is not confined to social status and the appearances that go along with it. His comments suggest that seamen, rather than ensuring the protection of British society and economic growth, lose their place in society. Perhaps more significantly for the bigoted Sir Walter, their bodies bear the unmistakable signs of labor: officers, although gentlemen, are not men of leisure. While this moment certainly speaks to Sir Walter's general unease with challenges to a traditional social hierarchy, I suggest that it also speaks to the ways Jack Tar as a figure was nuanced and unstable, changing with the cultural landscape. Sir Walter is assuming an older model of the Tar that does not account for the complexity of the late eighteenth-century model. By focusing on physical difference and labor, Sir Walter recalls the depictions of salty sea dogs (tarpaulins like Tobias Smollett's Tom Bowling) of the mid-eighteenth century who rose up

from the ranks of ordinary seamen to become officers.[159] Those tars were often defined in terms of their rejection of or disinterest in polite society.[160] Thus, Sir Walter's bigoted statements are additionally discredited when read alongside late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century representations of Jack Tar and the Royal Navy.

Austen's characterization of a new type of British Tar is embodied by Captain Harville, a demobilized officer with a virtually-invisible impairment. Harville experienced a leg injury that affects his ability to walk considerable distances, but the instances when his injury is made visible are fleeting. Having received a "severe wound" two years prior (79), he is described as "a little lame . . . and from strong features, and want of health, looking much older than Captain Wentworth" (82) and as being unable to walk long distances (91). In contrast with the emphasis placed on the disabled tar's body in other genres, Austen acknowledges the damage done to the sailor's body while minimalizing the grotesquely comic potential of the Tar's caricature. In caricature, as previously discussed, injury (often depicted through amputation) is prominently displayed: these images balance masculine ideals related to strength, bravery, and carefree spirit, tightly woven into the Jack Tar figure, with the sailors' inability to reintegrate into British society ashore. Harville's injury is minimized, the focus shifting to his place in the domestic space of the home and, by extension, the nation. The most important and critical aspect of his character, then, is his role as a father and husband, not his patriotic sacrifice. His home is filled with his "ingenious contrivances and nice arrangements . . . to defend the windows and doors against the winter

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[159] For more on Tom Bowling, see Chapter 2: "An Officer and a Gentleman: Smollett's Tom Bowling and Tarpaulins"

[160] I agree with Brian Southam's argument that Sir Walter's rejection of maritime social mobility should be read within the context of Nelson's celebrity (267). Nelson is the most famous tarpaulin, having been born to a clergy father and rising through the ranks at sea.

storms to be expected" (83). Austen frames his domestic industriousness as a defense, phrasing that is reminiscent of his role as a military man and linking his professional duties to his role as a husband. Harville is not an object of pity or humor, a perpetual social outcast existing on the margins of British culture like other representation of disabled tars. Rather, Austen articulates how the disabled tar is compatible with British domestic life, necessary for its continual safety and security.

The bodies of ruling class naval officers were similarly portrayed in late eighteenth-century portraiture. As Teresa Michals argues, disabled officers were drawn in ways that made their bodies appear whole, representing national strength (Michals 26).[161] One way that artists made physical injuries disappear, Michals notes, is by turning the figure away to hide the missing limb (26); the injury is always present but rarely directly faced. Similar to techniques in portraiture, Austen's depiction of Harville fleetingly acknowledges the injury while simultaneously passing over it; Harville's portrayal, then, gives the impression of aesthetic similarity to Captain Wentworth and Captain Benwick, his two friends. In this way, Harville, although similar to portraiture of some officers of the landed gentry, breaks with other dominant representations of the disabled Jack Tar found in caricature by reinforcing the idea of a British community in which physical sacrifice is an essential component of the sailor's identity but does not preclude him from resuming his domestic role after demobilization.

[161] Michals notes that portraits of Nelson did not fit this pattern. Instead, because he was a disabled active-duty officer, rather than retired, his portraits incorporate amputation into "images of heroic masculinity and national identity" (17).

Jack Tar's Relationship to Women

Jack Tar's brand of heterosexuality had long been an essential component of the figure. Throughout the course of the long eighteenth century, seamen were depicted as being randy party boys who frequented brothels (or, when denied shore leave, enjoyed the company of prostitutes who would be rowed to the ships). Simultaneously, though, they were also imagined as eschewing the company of women or as being a young, star-crossed lover gazing wistfully across the sea in the direction of his distant English lass. Thus, sailors' relationship to women was highly contested in the cultural imagination and is a central component of representations of visibly impaired sailors in Britain. In this section, I explore how portrayals of the injured tar are bound to conceptions of a sexuality that is morally suspect and incompatible with respectable femininity as well as domesticity. The disabled tar's sexuality is constrained in various ways, making the demobilized sailor more suitable for but still separate from the company of women. Austen's *Persuasion* presents a model of reintegration that, like Rowlandson's *A Distressed Sailor*, positions the seaman as a family man and essential to the efficient running of the home. As demonstrated by nearly all of Austen's sailors in the novel, seafaring can be morally edifying by refining men and preparing them for the home.

Many portrayals of disabled tars allude to Jack Tar's brutal and damaging lifestyle. C. J. Grant's *The Way of the World* (1834), while it was published after the long-eighteenth century, shows a grim future for Jack Tar and reflected changing perceptions of sailors' behavior and manly identity (Figure 27):

Figure 27: C. J. Grant's *The Way of the World* (1834).

In the foreground of this image are two disfigured and disabled sailors: one has lost both his legs and his arms, while the other is missing an arm and leg. This depiction of sailors is not tragic, though, so much as it is grotesque. The sailor without any limbs is made horrible by

the harpoon-like hooks for hands, his short stature, and his corpse-like visage. The taller seaman embodies impotence and poverty. First, his syphilitic scars are combined with the crooked wooden leg that is topped by two protrusions vaguely resembling testicles. Furthermore, the ill-designed artificial limb indicates the sailor's inability to afford a more natural prosthetic.[162] While much more shocking than one of Cruikshank's sailors who has a syphilis patch above his eyebrow (Figure 26), Grant's diseased sailor engages with, in much the same way, aspects of Jack Tar's stereotypical identity. The text at the bottom of the image satirizes the belief that sailors' difference from unpatriotic landsmen lies in their good-natured acceptance of tragedy. It reads, "Ah Messmate, you are a happy Fish to what I am. You have only got an Arm and a Leg lopp'd off. Whilst I haven't a Limb left about me but what's of Timber with one Eye out and my Nose damaged." To which, the tall fellow replies, "Go it, Joe, grumble grumble. You are like the rest of the World. Never Contented" (Grant). The tall sailor encodes the British Tar's light-hearted embrace of the dangers in the wooden world but also forces the reader to confront the brutal existence faced by demobilized sailors. Furthermore, rather than presenting sailors as young, attractive, and sexual, Grant's drawing defamiliarizes seamen by showing how behaviors associated with a stereotypically masculine Jack Tar, like fighting and having sex with prostitutes, lead to decay and helplessness.[163] By

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[162] Historians David M. Turner and Alun Withey, in "Technologies of the Body: Polite Consumption and the Correction of Deformity in Eighteenth-Century England," discuss the development of prosthetic technologies. "Natural" prosthetics, like the cork leg, were ideal (785) but costly.

[163] Grant's drawing reflects how the very characteristics that differentiate the tar and are accepted during wartime are reconsidered as antisocial, ensuring that military men, if not actually on the outskirts of British society, could be viewed as dangerous outsiders: Simon Parkes writes, "The negative image attached to servicemen represents for John Bonehill and Geoff Quilley 'the cultural ambiguity' of war in which those who were seen as a 'pillar of the nation' during conflict 'were also feared for a propensity for licentious, irreligious and riotous behavior that kept them on the margins of mainstream culture and society" (192).

displacing concerns about war, demobilization, and changing gender norms onto the tar's body, this image makes visible the bodily cost of the Jack Tar lifestyle even as it suggests that demobilized sailors are not a threat to British society.

Grant's depiction of syphilitic mariners should be read in the eighteenth-century context of sexualized images of the Jack Tar. Representations of physically impaired sailors are always wrapped up in previous versions of Jack Tar; each successive portrayal of a seaman in the theater is haunted by the fictitious mariners who tread the stage in the eighteenth century.[164] In other words, even in images where the physically disabled and destitute tar is not engaged in sexual activity, his history of sexual escapades frames the tar's reintegration and relation to society. These allusions to sailors' sexuality are bound to pervasive depictions of the sexually-active seamen with a girl in every port that cropped up across the cultural landscape throughout the long eighteenth century. One famous example from the British stage is Willmore in Aphra Behn's play *The Rover* (1677): Willmore is an occasional sailor, an exiled cavalier who serves as a Navy captain; he spends the entire play chasing women and making lewd sexual innuendos. Robert Dighton's *A Rich Privateer Brought Safe into Port, by Two First Rates* (1782) similarly suggests that seafaring, rather than being morally edifying, instead gave sailors access to money and, by extension, prostitutes (Figure 28):

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[164] Marvin Carlson's *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (2001) argues that "we are able to 'read' new works--whether they be plays, paintings, musical compositions, or, for that matter, new signifying structures that make no claim to artistic expression at all--only because we recognize within them elements that have been recycled from other structures of experience that we have experienced earlier. This 'intertextual' attitude, approaching the text not as a unique and essential self-contained structure but as an open-ended 'tissue of quotations,' has become now quite familiar" (4-5). He explores how performances are always haunted by repetition of character and image, and I find this concept particularly useful when reconstructing the development of Jack Tar in various genres across the long eighteenth century.

Figure 28: Robert Dighton's *A Rich Privateer brought Safe into Port, by Two First Rates* (1782).

Dighton's drawing is a stereotypical image of Jack Tar on the home front (for another image depicting Jack Tar's sexual escapades, see Appendix C: Sailors and Prostitutes). Here, the

"rich privateer" appears to be in a brothel. An older woman walks into the room carrying a punch bowl while the sailor proudly displays his wealth, guineas cascading out of his hand into his hat, as two prostitutes hang on his arms. Dighton satirizes sailors' actions when returning home: in this image, a mariner unknowingly loses his possessions (he is "brought safe into port") as women of dubious repute steal his pocket watch and reach for the gold. As this fleecing shows, Dighton's sailor is ill-adept at navigating British social relations on land. The sexually active, physically healthy seaman is no more able to negotiate life on land than Rowlandson's "Distressed Sailors" with their broken bodies and hats held out in supplication (Figure 23), echoed in the money-filled hat of Dighton's able-bodied sailor. The disabled sailor, in stark contrast to his capacity to bring wealth back to the home front before becoming impaired, is unable to function in Britain's economy.

Lastly, Grant's drawing (Figure 27) satirizes other images of disabled sailors that show sailors against a backdrop of Greenwich Hospital. Whereas Grant's *The Way of the World* focuses the viewer's attention on the officers' inability to be part of or contribute to British domestic life after war, other images of disabled tars in proximity to Greenwich Hospital present ideal versions of seamen returning home to peacefully and joyously live out their days. *The Greenwich Pensioner* (1791), published by Robert Sayer, is one such image that presents a version of reintegration in which the sailors are framed in relation to the Greenwich Hospital (Figure 29):

Figure 29: *The Greenwich Pensioner* (1791) published by Robert Sayer.

Instead of a bent wooden leg symbolizing impotence, the peg leg in this image is straight: these men, although disabled, are not emasculated, an impression further strengthened by the

young woman gazing perhaps in adoration or respect at one veteran's face. She, like the barman in Cruikshank's "The Battle of the Nile" (Figure 26), mirrors the audience's appreciation for the men's heroic sacrifice. Furthermore, sailors' potential for bringing the violence that made them patriots at sea back to domestic settings, although hinted at by the two cudgels in the image, is minimized because the weapons resemble canes: these symbols of a lower-class masculinity, then, become props for the performance of a new type of masculinity, one in which brutality no longer plays a prominent role. In other words, symbols of the tars' sexuality and masculinity are recontextualized within a thoroughly domestic scene of two sailors sharing a pint. Moreover, Greenwich Hospital looms over the heads of the sailors, like how "The Helpless Ward" contextualizes seamen in Grant's *The Way of the World* (Figure 27). The hospital becomes a form of containment, promoting the health and well-being of the pensioners and, perhaps more importantly, ensuring that these disabled seamen were not roaming the streets as beggars or engaging in criminal behavior. Thus, in contrast to caricatures that seek to contain Jack Tar by making him grotesque or drawings that accentuate the piteous existence of disabled sailors, the image presents a useful model of returning tars as normal and respected men.

The song on which *The Greenwich Pensioner* (Figure 29) was based speaks to how Greenwich Hospital, amputation, and patriotism are intricately connected in conceptualizing the Tar in the late eighteenth century. Charles Dibdin's popular "The Greenwich Pensioner" (1789), first performed in *The Oddities*, was reprinted in various songsters throughout this period (in addition to the represents with various illustrations). Dibdin's song tells the tale of a sailor's multiple near-death experiences as he journeys for years around the world. During a sea fight, the sailor loses a limb but not his loyalty:

Altho' I'm quite disabled,

And lie in Greenwich tier;

The King, God bless his royalty,

Who sav'd me from the main,

I'll praise with love and loyalty,

But never to sea again. (*The Greenwich Pensioner's Garland* 3)

The sailor's body is prominent in the audience's imagination. At the start of the verse and in the last line, the amputation ties the seaman to the home front. By starting with "altho' I'm quite disabled" and connecting that physical state to patriotic loyalty, the song alludes to a potential concern Britons on land may have felt when thousands of veterans, many of whom were suffering from injuries that prevented them from financially supporting themselves, returned home. The line "who sav'd me from the main" speaks to how sailors experienced high mortality rates at sea (the "main"), and it indicates that this sailor's loyalty ("I'll praise with love and loyalty") is closely correlated with the crown's continuing care for disabled sailors. Moreover, the sailor's location in Greenwich evokes the value of the perpetually-underfunded Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich, colloquially called Greenwich Hospital. Drawings accompanying this song, like *The Greenwich Pensioner* (Figure 29) further reinforce the connection between non-threatening loyal tars and Greenwich Hospital (for more examples, see Appendix C: Greenwich Pensioner).

Whereas many texts reinforce the need for governmental safety nets to both repay disabled mariners for their sacrifice and safeguard the home, Austen suggests that physically impaired sailors can fill a role in the early nineteenth-century home. The Harvilles' residence

is a testament to how British domesticity and a sailor's seafaring experiences can be combined:

> The varieties in the fitting-up of the rooms, where the common necessaries provided by the owner, in the common indifferent plight, were contrasted with some few articles of a rare species of wood, excellently worked up, and with something curious and valuable from all the distant countries Captain Harville had visited, were more than amusing to Anne: connected as it all was with his profession, the fruit of its labours, the effect of its influence on his habits, the picture of repose and domestic happiness it presented, made it to her a something more, or less, than gratification. (83)

This sentence is significant for understanding Austen's portrayal of how the British home can be shaped by sailors in general and disabled seamen, particularly. First, the materials of empire, directly alluded to in the "curious and valuable" items "from all distant countries," complement the "common necessaries" already present in the home. Anne is captivated, not just by the rare and beautiful objects, but by the comparison between those colonial artifacts and the everyday/English possessions placed around the domicile in a "common indifferent" way. Second, Austen discusses seafaring as a profession: "labour" here is framed as a national and personal good, directly contrasting with ideal of an upper-class gentleman who lives a life of leisure (ideals embodied by Sir Walter). Third, Harville's labor enables the "repose and domestic happiness" in which Anne delights. The end of the sentence, thus, extends Harville's influence from physical labor and material advancement, connecting it to the moral superiority of ideal domesticity. The Harvilles' home, in essence, is a model for the nation itself, suggesting that demobilized sailors, including those with disabilities, enhance

British domesticity. Rather than separating the physically impaired seamen from the domestic sphere, Austen argues for seamen utilizing their unique talents gained in the wooden world to support the home in more ways than just financially.[165]

Austen portrays a new domestic manhood in which the disabled veteran seaman is unique in his industriousness, ensuring a fruitful relationship with women and the home. For example, Austen writes that Harville is constantly active, despite his disability:

> His lameness prevented him from taking much exercise; but a mind of usefulness and ingenuity seemed to furnish him with constant employment within. He drew, he varnished, he carpentered, he glued; he made toys for the children, he fashioned new netting-needles and pins with improvements, and if everything else was done, sat down to his large fishing-net at one corner of the room. (83)

Here, Harville's injury contextualizes his commitment to improving the domestic space of the home. Although not displaying the physical vigor commonly associated with the Tar, Harville remains productive, able to labor for his family. In the same way that his seafaring was presented as directly tied to improving the home, his "mind of usefulness and ingenuity" is directed toward productively contributing to a traditionally feminine space. Harville is presented as a family man making items that delight or contribute to feeding his family, taking the supportive, parental role of Rowlandson's sailor, with a child on his back, one step further. Austen suggests that physically impaired mariners can be productive members of

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[165] Much cultural attention had been given to sailors' ability to bring wealth and material goods back to the home. Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1747), by describing how Tom Bowling supports Roderick in his schooling, showcase how wealth earned through seafaring could translate to opportunities in Britain. Images like Thomas Stothard's mezzotint *The Benevolent Tar* (1802) and William Redmore Bigg's etching *The Sailor Boy's Return* (1780s-1837) capture this idealized version of the seafaring leading to tangible wealth for poor families (see Appendix C: Returning Tar for these images).

society, that they can contribute to the home and are not marginal figures unable to reintegrate into British domesticity and society at large.

Harville, in addition to being hardworking and industrious, demonstrates qualities of a gentleman, qualities that differentiate the captain from the typical Jack Tar figure. Harville is described as having a "sensible, benevolent countenance," and, "though not equaling Captain Wentworth in manners, was a perfect gentleman, unaffected, warm" (82). While Harville is certainly a gentleman because of his officer status, he lacks money or land, making his claim to "gentlemanly" status tenuous according to an older social order. According to Lisa Freeman, though, the early nineteenth century witnessed a shifting cultural landscape: "As the middling classes pressed forward to gain social legitimacy and recognition, moreover, the very definition of what it meant to be 'gentle', or in more particular terms, what it meant to be a 'gentleman', underwent considerable change, moving away from a reliance on birth and inheritance to a new emphasis on merit and the acquisition of manners" (74). Austen's emphasis on moral qualities, manners and gentility, is important in two ways. First, it reinforces this new class order closely tied to meritocracy and professionalism. Second, when considered alongside representations of disabled common sailors and officers in the long eighteenth century, Austen's focus on manners shifts her representation of sailors away from the stereotypical Jack Tar that was encoded as lower-class. Even when visibly impaired sailors were portrayed as officers, their uniforms indicating a status that separated them from common seamen, the specter of the unrefined Jack Tar remained. The previously mentioned "The Battle of the Nile" (Figure 26) demonstrates this crossover between Jack Tar and disabled officers. Austen's focus on manners and morality creates a new version of the fictional disabled sailor, reconciling

different versions of domestic and naval masculinity. I agree with Peck that "with these new men at the heart of the navy, and increasingly at the heart of society, the world seems to have moved on from the eighteenth century" (45). While he refers to the waning dominance of Sir Walter and the social system he represents, I argue that Austen equally moves on from the eighteenth-century Jack Tar, a character that, to a large extent, was defined by his incompatibility with the home.

Austen further demonstrates Harville's commitment to domesticity and compatibility with femininity when describing his relationship with his wife, Mrs. Harville. In one of the first references to Harville, Wentworth describes Harville in terms of his friend's desire to provide for his wife: "You know how much he wanted money—worse than myself. He had a wife. –Excellent fellow! I shall never forget his happiness. He felt it all, so much for her sake" (58). This quote aligns Harville's concern for his wife and Wentworth's affection for his friend, as if the one forms the basis for the other. In other words, not only is Harville characterized as a loving husband whose professional actions directly correspond to his domestic duty, but this devotion to his wife is part of what forms the basis for Wentworth's esteem ("I shall never forget his happiness"). For Wentworth, Harville's love for and commitment to his wife is part of the fraternal bond that binds the two men. This scene is also important when considering how the Navy's connection to privateering lingered into the nineteenth century, casting a pall over prize money. Peck writes, "The navy [in the early nineteenth century] cannot entirely shed its roots in privateering; nor can it shed its image as a chancy, not-quite-respectable profession, for prize money for every naval officer was always an important consideration" (38). Although discussing the Navy in *Mansfield Park*, Peck's comments shed light on Sir Walter's dislike of naval officers. To him, they are little

more than pirates. Austen's discussion of Harville, though, recontextualizes prize money, not as greed, but as earning a living to ensure familial well-being. In this way, Harville's profession as a sailor and his role as a husband are intimately connected, a startling departure from depictions of Jack Tar that proliferated in the early and mid-eighteenth century.

Austen's professional sailors are defined more by their relationship to the home than they are by characteristics typically denoting the Navy veterans' uniqueness among other men. The novel's last line speaks directly to this shift: Austen writes that "the dread of a future war all that could dim [Anne's] sunshine. She gloried in being a sailor's wife, but she must pay the tax of quick alarm for belonging to that profession which is, if possible, more distinguished in its domestic virtues than in its national importance" (203). Austen's seamen are still defined by physical sacrifice at sea, their patriotic duty reverberating through their families who must also "pay the tax of quick alarm" when war invariably begins again. Yet, these lines speak to a reconfiguring the seaman as essential to the well-being, felicity, and prosperity of the home. Whereas many eighteenth-century representations of the tar (able-bodied and disabled) showcase his patriotism, Austen's veterans are noted for their commitment to the family and the home.

Conclusion

Depictions of disabled tars in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century speak to cultural concerns over demobilized sailors returning home. These seamen, often defined by their unsociable behavior, were viewed with suspicion and struggled to find a place in a society that could not absorb the thousands of men returning from war, many of

whom bore the physical trauma of sea battles, harsh discipline, or backbreaking labor. Representations of the disabled tar during this time show ambiguity regarding the impaired sailor's place in society, revealing tension between the ideal vigorous Jack Tar and his destitute and piteous counterpart. These texts simultaneously express and ease Briton's anxiety surrounding demobilization and influx of disabled sailors by reinforcing his patriotic sentiments or tying him to Greenwich Hospital. Austen's disabled sailor has a vital role to play in ensuring the productivity and well-being of the domestic sphere. Austen's novel, in its portrayal of Captain Harville, rejects many aspects of the stereotypical Jack Tar, instead crafting a modern version of the common sailor. The novel displaces the lower-class figure with one more fluid in class affiliation: the sailor-officer constitutes a new professional class that competes with many versions of the disabled tar that draw from and are bound to the earlier figure of the Jack Tar. The disabled sailors' bodies, then, are a site on which the British public's understanding of the changing Navy and its sailors was reconfigured as authors and artists attempt to allay concerns over the sailor, to find ways to incorporate him in the British domestic spaces of the nation and the home.

Conclusion

Eighteenth-century culture was infused with portrayals of the British sailor that encapsulated tensions surrounding Britain's colonial expansion. While greater trade around the Atlantic certainly brought exotic and valuable commodities back to the homeland, the cost of protecting this economic system included a changing social landscape in Britain, a Navy that expanded alongside a growing merchant fleet, and the systematic abuse of seamen. On the whole, the caricature of the Jolly Jack Tar, with his love of grog and dancing, is a quaint figure that sanitizes the desperate lives lead by men on deep sea ships and, by extension, Britain's colonial endeavors that were reliant upon the sacrifices of lower-class men. While many representations of the common seaman draw on similar themes of jingoism, stoicism, good cheer, heterosexuality, and authenticity, the Jack Tar figure was complex, shifting with the historical events and reflecting changing sentiments about 1) the Admiralty's policies of manning ships and caring for seamen, 2) the gradual rise of the middle class alongside the influx of money gained from the colonial periphery, and 3) discord around the Atlantic that continually drained the British government of funds.

By tracing the development of the Jack Tar figure through the long eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth century, my dissertation articulates how the Tar became and functioned as a recognizable cultural icon while also mutating over time, displaying a constant tension between uniformity and variation: I argue that complex and often contradictory literary and cultural representations of the Tar reflected Britons' anxieties and hopes of the changing social landscape at home and emergent masculine identities. Additionally, my dissertation suggests that the Tar figure was taken up by black and white seamen, worn as a badge of honor, as they argued for a place in British society. By tracing

this icon and resurrecting how it appeared across the cultural landscape, my project suggests that the Tar was a vital figure in how Britons, including sailors themselves, imagined the maritime world and the nation's role in the colonial periphery.

My work suggests that, in the early eighteenth century, the Tar figure was taking shape against a backdrop of unruly pirates terrorizing the Caribbean, their sensational antics and personalities continuously splashed across the pages of newspapers that made immediate and visible the volatility inherent in the wooden world. Daniel Defoe's immensely popular *Robinson Crusoe* and Charles Johnson's thrilling *General History* speak to how the maritime world was imagined to be rife with unsavory elements against which Britain's civilizing Naval forces were pitted. Within these and other texts (like Edward Ward's *The Wooden World Dissected*), characteristics of the stereotypical Jack Tar, like drinking to excess, are repeated—this repetition shaping the figure in the cultural imagination. Early eighteenth-century portrayals of seamen, furthermore, show how cultural reproduction reinforces nationalistic ideology. Patriotism frames the British seaman as someone who was loyal, whose ideals would ensure fealty to his distant king and country even when he was faced with the temptation to mutiny or turn pirate.

By the mid-eighteenth century, Jack Tar was fully recognizable in print, song, and on the stage. Representations of the common British seaman reflect growing concerns over sailors' social mobility, a more prominent issue after the Seven Years' War in which the protracted conflict (mainly fought at sea) opened more opportunities for men "bred to the sea" to rise through the ranks. The seaman's potential for social mobility and Britons' subsequent concerns related to the shifting social landscape at home are reflected in texts like Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random*. The proliferation of appearances of Smollett's beloved

character Tom Bowling on the British stage in the mid- to late eighteenth century speaks to the role of the theater in shaping the Tar identity while presenting seamen as lovable, non-threatening and authentic men who value integrity and fairness even as they destabilize society. This is not to say that the Tar persona was not challenged, that theatrical and print portrayals of an affable seaman were somehow static in the mid- to late eighteenth century. Instead, texts like Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* stress the problems associated with this masculine identity, articulating the dangerous and problematic contradictions within the Jack Tar figure—particularly as they relate to seamen interacting with their enslaved counterparts. Equiano highlights black sailors' roles on ships, thereby contrasting the sense of racial and ethnic homogeneity invariably imposed on the wooden world by representations of a white Jack Tar. Equiano crafts his own self-representation in relation to Jack Tar, arguing for a unique sailor identity that draws on many of the Tar's beloved characteristics. Equiano's *Narrative* speaks more broadly to how British seamen were reacting to and shaping Jack Tar, that the cultural figure was not a creation imposed on seamen but part of how sailors fashioned themselves.

Sailors and their supporters most notably utilized Jack Tar when advocating for changes to Admiralty policies, particularly those related to wages, and the need for a social safety net to ease mariners' burdens after demobilization. Jack Tar was a tool that reframed destitute seamen into symbols of the failing British state. At the end of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, the issue of reintegrating seamen was more pronounced than ever, a problem compounded by the fact that many of these men returned home with physical disabilities and were therefore unable to find gainful employment. While the sailor's physical prowess and ability to bring wealth back to the homefront had long been essential

components of the Jack Tar caricature, late eighteenth-century portrayals of disabled seamen reveal a renegotiation of these idealized manly qualities. Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, through the character of the injured Captain Harville, suggests a new way that Navy veterans can take part in and serve the domestic sphere. Rather than fashioning sailors according to a mid-century model, in the vein of Tobias Smollett's Tom Bowling who disrupts society and rejects nearly all women, Austen presents a professional sailor whose time at sea has refined him, making him uniquely suited for companionship with women and taking part in the British home. While Austen's portrayals of seamen, both able-bodied and disabled, reject many core aspects long associated with the stereotypical Jack Tar, her characters are bound to previous versions of a more disruptive, uncouth lower-class sailor—versions that were still reproduced across popular cultural in the late eighteenth century. Ultimately, any representation of sailors in the long eighteenth and early nineteenth century, I argue, is informed by and, therefore, must be read in terms of the Jack Tar figure. Examining portrayals of seamen in a multitude of cultural texts reveals how this caricature was complex and contested even as it was recognizable and seemingly static.

My work further gestures to how and why the Tar rose to prominence in the early eighteenth century, but his cultural relevance waned in the nineteenth century. The expanding Navy corresponded with the reinstatement of the theater in the Restoration and a multiplication of print sources in the early eighteenth century. Portrayals of seamen, whose numbers continued to rise as increasingly more men were drawn to shipping or into maritime conflicts, were repeating across the cultural landscape, gradually taking shape into the Jack Tar figure, thereby imposing some order on the chaotic wooden world. By the end of the eighteenth century, though, Britons' perception of seamen and the Navy was changing.

Mutinies at Spithead and Nore, on Britons' doorstep, and disabled seamen begging in the streets, were a stark contrast to the affable, able-bodied, carefree Jack Tar found in popular culture. Furthermore, the gradual professionalization of the Navy was at odds with an early eighteenth-century idea of the wooden world as a space rife with drunken homosocial revelry. Standardizing uniforms for the crew, which did not take part until the 1850s, further challenged the relevancy of Jack Tar. Portrayals of Jack Tar throughout the long eighteenth century give the impression of uniformity, particularly in dress, thereby easing anxiety over seemingly uncontrollable and diverse men on whom the nation depended. Uniforms, in a comparable way to the typical image of the Tar, project the sense of a monolithic group of men, but regulation attire makes visible the sailor's relationship to the state, a reminder that the potentially dangerous seaman is controlled. This is not to say that representations of sailors in the nineteenth century do not call on the image of the stereotypical Jack Tar, that the figure slips out of the cultural imagination. Indeed, the English language reflects the residual cultural force and presence of Jack Tar when phrases like "swear like a sailor," "a girl in every port" or "three sheets to the wind" call to mind stereotypical Jack Tar behaviors. Instead, my work suggests that the eighteenth-century Jack Tar played a distinct role in British culture, by reflecting anxieties and concerns over the expanding empire, and impacted how sailors constructed their own gendered identity performances.

Appendix A: Chapter 1 Supplemental Texts

Appendix A: Blackbeard

Figure 30: "Captain Teach commonly call'd Black Beard" (1734).

Appendix B: Chapter 2 Supplemental Texts

Appendix B: Actors' Portraits

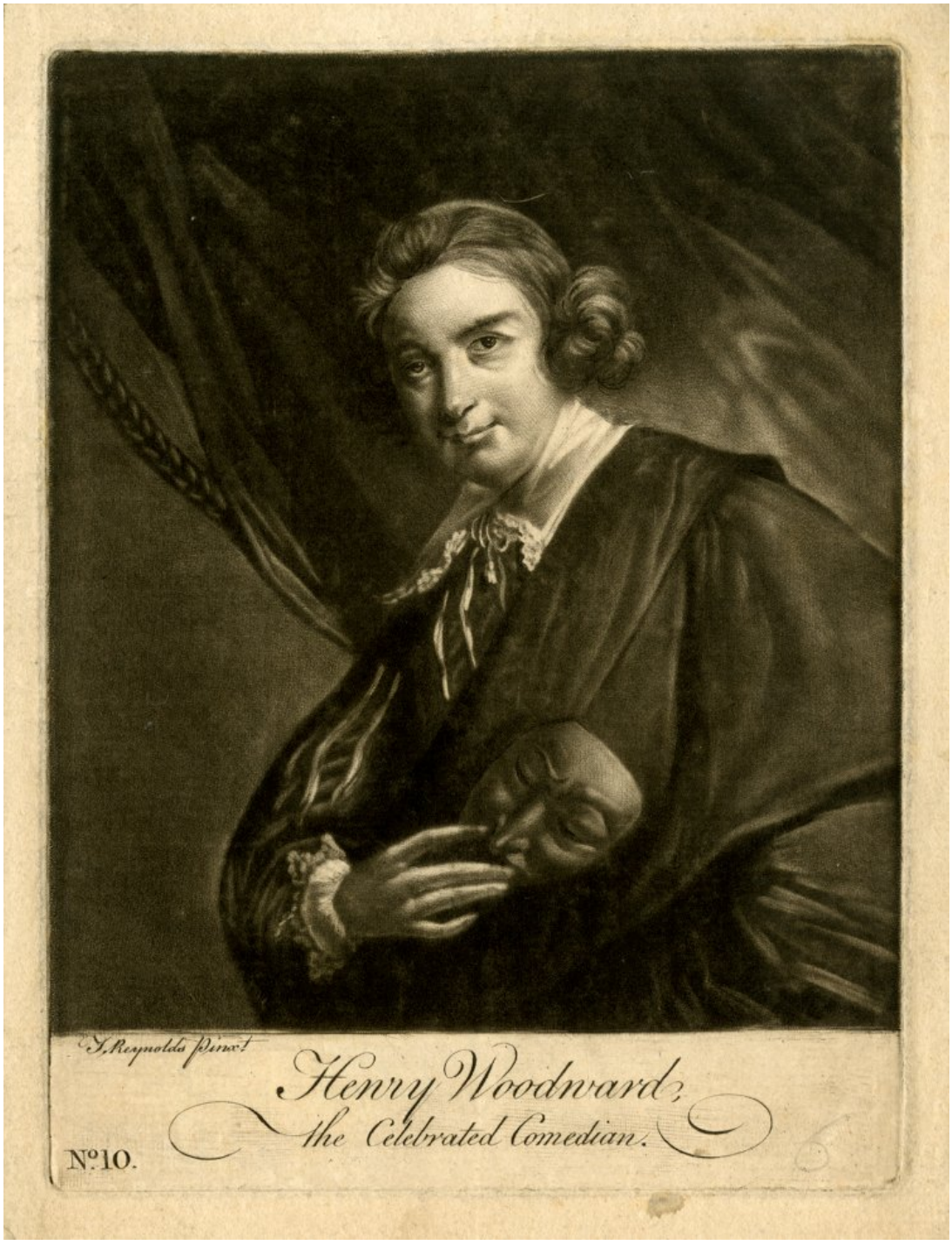


Figure 31: James Watson's mezzotint from Joshua Reynolds' portrait of Henry Woodward (1765-1775).

Figure 32: John Raphael Smith and Mather Brown's portrait of John Bannister (1787).

Appendix B: Dancing Jack Tar

Figure 33: *The Flowing Can* published by Robert Sayer (1791).

Figure 34: Thomas Rowlandson's *The Last Jig or Adieu to Old England* (1818).

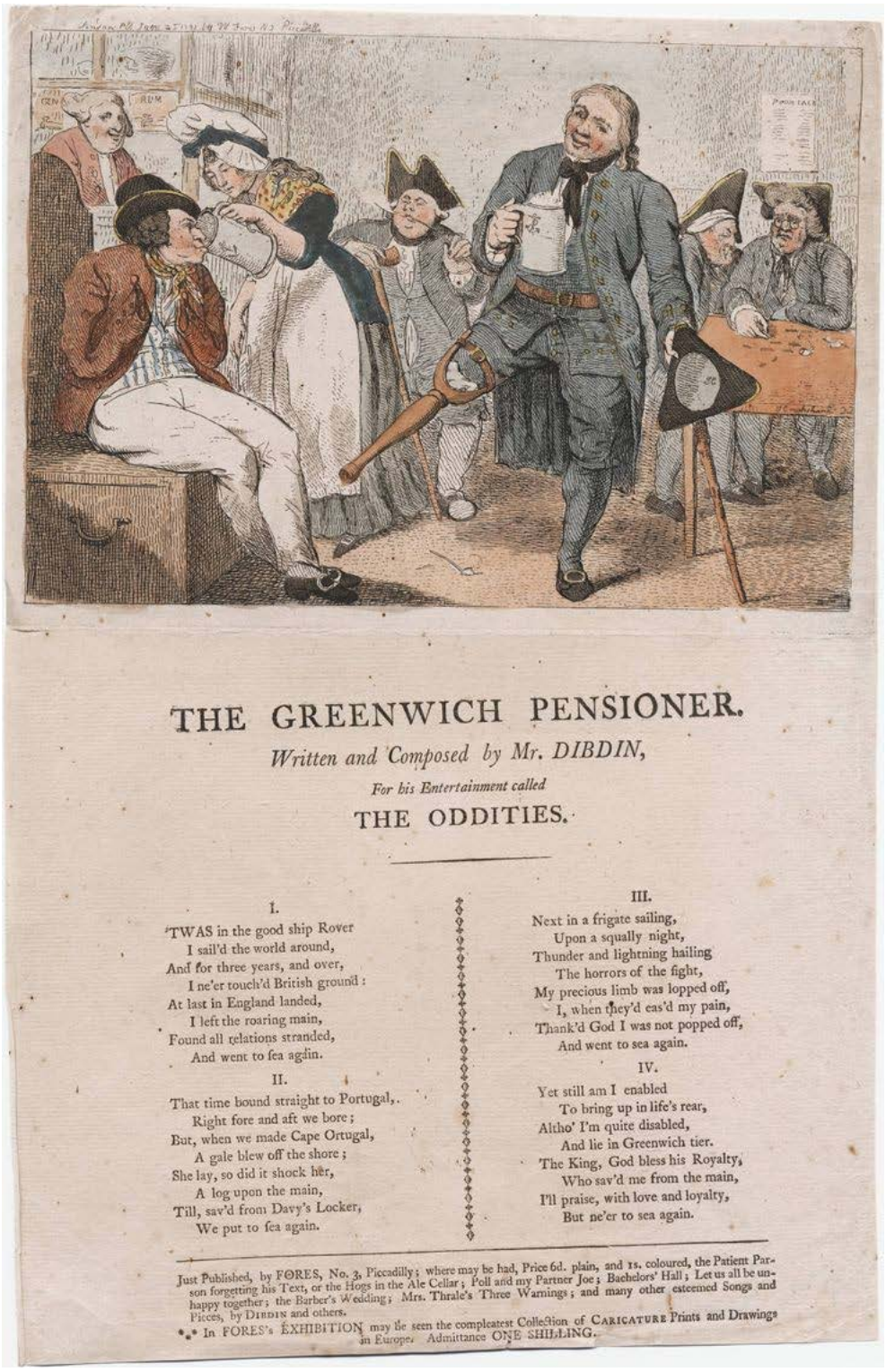
Figure 35: George Cruikshank's "Sailors carousing, or a peep in the Long room" (1825).

Appendix C: Chapter 4 Supplemental Texts

Appendix C: Sailors and Prostitutes

Figure 36: Thomas Rowlandson's *Dispatch or Jack Preparing for Sea* (1810).

Appendix C: Greenwich Pensioner



THE GREENWICH PENSIONER.

Written and Composed by Mr. DIBDIN,

For his Entertainment called

THE ODDITIES.

I.

'TWAS in the good ship Rover
I sail'd the world around,
And for three years, and over,
I ne'er touch'd British ground:
At last in England landed,
I left the roaring main,
Found all relations stranded,
And went to sea again.

II.

That time bound straight to Portugal,
Right fore and aft we bore;
But, when we made Cape Ortugal,
A gale blew off the shore;
She lay, so did it shock her,
A log upon the main,
Till, sav'd from Davy's Locker,
We put to sea again.

III.

Next in a frigate sailing,
Upon a squally night,
Thunder and lightning hailing
The horrors of the fight,
My precious limb was lopped off,
I, when they'd eas'd my pain,
Thank'd God I was not popped off,
And went to sea again.

IV.

Yet still am I enabled
To bring up in life's rear,
Altho' I'm quite disabled,
And lie in Greenwich tier.
The King, God bless his Royalty,
Who sav'd me from the main,
I'll praise, with love and loyalty,
But ne'er to sea again.

Just Published, by FORES, No. 3, Piccadilly; where may be had, Price 6d. plain, and 1s. coloured, the Patient Parson forgetting his Text, or the Hogs in the Ale Cellar; Poll and my Partner Joe; Bachelors' Hall; Let us all be unhappy together; the Barber's Wedding; Mrs. Thrale's Three Warnings; and many other esteemed Songs and Pieces, by DIBDIN and others.

*** In FORES's EXHIBITION may be seen the compleatest Collection of CARICATURE Prints and Drawings in Europe. Admittance ONE SHILLING.

Figure 37: Isaac Cruikshank's drawing accompanying Dibdin's "The Greenwich Pensioner" (1791).

Figure 38: Robert Dighton's illustration to *The Greenwich Pensioner* (1790).

Appendix C: Returning Tar

Figure 39: Thomas Stothard's *The Benevolent Tar* (1802).

Figure 40: William Redmore Bigg's *The Sailor Boy's Return From a Prosperous Voyage* (1780s-1837)

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