Introduction: A sailor's progress?

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The common nineteenth-century cultural motif of the 'sailor's progress' depicted the journey of the sailor from boy to man against the backdrop of the sights, sounds, and demands of the maritime world. In George Cruikshank's widely disseminated 1819 etching of that name (Figure 1) the British sailor's life was one of dancing, drinking, fighting, and 'exercising his authority' on wooden decks, as he moved from inexperienced landlubber to raconteur pensioner.

Figure 1: George Cruikshank (1792–1878), The Sailor's Progress, 1819, Art institute Chicago, 1928.1399, https://www.artic.edu/artworks/90055/the-sailor-s-progress, accessed 13 September 2019.

In the period covered by this volume, from 1815–1940, the seafarer navigated life-cycle, relationships, technologies, war, empire, exploration, and the sea itself to make his mark as a man – and he did so in a world marked by the emergence of social, cultural and technological modernity across the globe. The sail ship was overtaken by the rise of the machine-driven steam, and then oil-powered ships. It began as a period of global empires, and ended with two world wars. After a century of frequent naval warfare, there was the advent of the PaxBritannica, and the phenomenon of navies which barely fought. Despite this, popular navalism emerged across Europe and North America in modern media, including advertising, pageantry, and popular literature, and was the subject of photography and then film. At the same time, cultural ideals of masculinities were subject to the same forces, undergoing considerable shifts in a period that in civilian life advocated differing styles of

manliness including Christian manliness, muscular Christianity, the domestic man, and the professional hero of modern life. The armed forces deployed tropes of masculinity such as bravery, stoicism, and endurance to the extent that military and maritime modes of manliness could be held up as aspirational models for all men and became perhaps more accessible with the growth of mass democracy. By 1940 the sailor was a short-haired, square-jawed uniformed, patriotic fellow with his state-of-the-art, technologically advanced ship behind him (Figure 2). And yet, for all the obvious changes in the figure of the sailor, a seafaring life was still described as a 'man's life'.

Figure 2: 'A man's life in the Royal Navy', Royal Navy recruitment poster, variously dated as 1930s and 1940s, and still in use in the 1950s. Image source: Alamy.

The interplay of masculinities in the maritime world is a critical area of enquiry if we consider Christopher E. Forth's '*double logic of modern civilization*' in which commerce, politics, technology and the world of ideas bolsters male dominance while simultaneously creating the polite, cerebral, consumerist and sedentary lifestyles that damage the minds and bodies of men. Technological advanced machines, for example, extended male power, but as they required little physical strength they also threatened to diminish the corporeal legitimacy of that male power. As a result we observe a sustained 'insistence upon an essential, embodied and recuperable masculinity lurking beneath the veneer of civilization' throughout the long nineteenth century.[1]

This volume explores some of the paradoxes of masculinities and modernity through the figure of the sailor, a working-class man whose representation fulfilled numerous political and bio-political ends and whose body was deployed in the interests of the nation state during the long nineteenth century. This collection offers an international scope both in terms of contributors and the thematic

content of the chapters, covering maritime masculinity in Britain, America, North Pacific, Finland, Germany. It aims to open up an international dialogue in maritime and masculinity studies which are both typically more strongly positioned within national contexts. The volume begins with the enduring image of romantic, heroic veterans of the Napoleonic wars, takes us through challenges to masculinities created by encounters with other races, ethnicities and cultures, and with technological change, shifting geopolitical and cultural contexts, and ends with portrayals of threatened and fragile masculinities at the beginning of the twentieth century. In doing so, this edited collection shows that maritime masculinities (ideals, representations and the seamen themselves) could be highly visible despite the fact that so much of what went on in the Navy and merchant marine was over the horizon at sea or geographically marginalised in sailortown districts that were removed from the great metropolitan centres. The chapters in this collection explore these volatile sites in which men negotiated the tensions of masculinities with civilisation, race, technology, patriotism, citizenship, and respectability from the beginning of the eighteenth century up to the second World War.

Employing the term 'modernity' in our title is risky. As John Tosh warned back in 2005, its criteria are 'notoriously unstable'.[2] It can be used to evoke time, places, peoples that are progressive, civilised, urban, individualistic. When it does, it simultaneously invokes all that is lost in conditions of 'modernity': tradition, authenticity, nature, community. Other features implied by 'modernity' conjure particular losses for men: prolonged periods of peace removed opportunities for them to prove their courage in war, declining interpersonal violence averted the need for physical fitness, and increased responsibility in domestic arrangements precluded opportunities for adventure. For historians, the features of 'modernity' that describe change may divert attention from continuities: the spread of democracy, for example, can occlude interrogation of enduring class-based markers of difference.

The notion of 'modernity' has, however, 'been a persistent – perhaps distinctive – feature of the repeated reworking and adaptation of masculinity.'[3] The observable changes in masculinities in nineteenth-century Britain were, as Tosh highlights, responses to the requirements of an urbanising, market-led, and increasingly industrialised society. If there was an ascendancy in particular masculine attributes it was because those attributes increased men's potential for success in this changing material world.[4] Change, however, is always contingent, specific, and uneven, as just two examples from the chapters that follow show: the dominance of politeness as an ideal seems to have held longer sway in the new republic of America than it did in Britain, and the move to steam powered ships was later in Finland than other European countries.[5] All the chapters in this collection focus on such particularities to illuminate the resulting contradictions and tensions.

Modernity, in all its complexity, transformed the maritime world, and each of its forms posed unique challenges to sailors' individual experiences and concepts of masculinity at sea and ashore.

The transition from sail to steam-powered vessels, which came first to Britain and European fleets and later to American ships, radically transformed long-established and time-honored systems

of sailors' labour and comradeship at sea.[6] As the chapters in this volume argue, these changes provoked anxieties over a general 'de-skilling' of a profession in which experience and skill at the sailors' craft was often conflated with concepts of manliness.

The industrialisation of maritime labour at sea also created transformations of sailors' lives ashore. Steam power allowed for the production of larger, faster ships, capable of transporting higher volumes of cargo around the world with increased speed at sea and rapid turnaround in port. Older, more artisanal systems of maritime labour and culture ashore declined, removing sailors further from communal or familial anchors that had previously maintained connections between sailors and their shoreside networks. Industrialisation also altered the ebb and flow of maritime commercial markets, posing challenges to sailors' control over the terms of their own labour, keeping them on longer and more distant voyages and imposing restrictions on their mobility in port.[7]

Ashore, these industrial transformations positioned sailors' leisure and working-class culture as battlegrounds in which labourers asserted their own agency independent of their employers, often subverting expectations for respectable behaviour. In turn, sailors ashore were subject to bourgeois society and state attempts to shape working-class culture into an arena in which to cultivate responsible and dutiful members of national arenas of Empire and navalism.[8] Dense urban districts in port towns and cities, known as sailortowns, became central sites for encounters and negotiations between sailors' mobility and assertions of masculine sailor cultures and their shoreside counterparts, with stakes high at local, national, and global levels.[9]

At sea, intensified imperial contests increasingly positioned sailors at the centre of international military conflict. For British sailors, the Napoleonic Wars and ongoing competition with the German navy created a timeline of war from which sailors came to embody symbolic heroism, patriotism and manliness that would resonate within the imagination of Empire, most explicitly in the figure of Nelson. In the United States, entry into the cauldron of imperial conflict originated at sea, involving early encounters with British impressment, Barbary Pirates and French privateers. From these international perspectives, navalism became inseparable from both imperialism and preparedness, with powerful maritime nations acting either as aggressors or reluctant participants in an increasingly militarised maritime world.

These ideologies of navalism, spurred on by maritime modernisation, demanded national preparedness in the forms of a robust naval and merchant fleet and the recruitment of a pool of trained and capable bona fide sailors to man it. In order to inspire and sustain public support for such imperatives, state governments, civic institutions, artists and philanthropists collectively played upon the manifestations of anxieties that modernisation had provoked: the imperative of national maritime strength, the decline of skilled maritime labour and the threat of lost national maritime heritage. Underpinning all of these anxieties were an array of reckonings with issues of masculinity, and its

essential position at the centre of strategies for addressing and harnessing the forces of modernisation in the maritime world.

The historiography of the maritime world has been enriched by recent work on port towns and cultures that have expanded our understanding of the sea's relationship with the land.[10] Such work has been instrumental in the 'clear shift from seeing maritime affairs as separate and separable, to a growing awareness of their complex relationships with wider historical processes' that Quinton Colville, Elin Jones, and Katherine Parker have identified. And this shift includes a growing interest in gendered experiences of the maritime world, at sea and ashore.[11] Issues of maritime masculinities – representations, ideals, emotions, material culture, paternalism, patriotism, and the sailor's relationship with the state, to name a few – now feature in a vigorous, growing scholarly field.[12] The chapters in this volume contribute to the field.

Negotiation and change

R.W. Connell's ground-breaking and highly influential work in the field of masculinities may now seem out-dated, yet revisiting Connell's work is rewarding. In 1993 Connell highlighted the institutional context of masculinity, with the most important institutions being the state, the workplace/labour market, and the family. 'It is not too strong to say,' wrote Connell, 'that masculinity is an aspect of institutions, and is produced in institutional life, as much as it is an aspect of personality or produced in interpersonal transactions.' In what could now be read as an invitation to so much subsequent work on masculinities – including a recent collection on 'martial masculinities' in the long nineteenth century[13] – Connell claimed further that: 'One cannot be masculine in a particular way (which is to say, engage in particular practices constructing a given form of masculinity) without affecting the conditions in which that form of masculinity arose: whether to reproduce them, intensify them, or subvert them.'[14] The chapters in this collection add detail to those practices and conditions and their complex consequences for men and their gender identities.

One recent re-examination of Connell's work on 'hegemonic masculinity' by Ben Griffin identifies key problems of the model including its inability to account for the way that individual men move between masculinities in the course of their lives. Griffin offers some constructive modifications that deploy Simon Szreter's notion of 'communication communities', Szreter's term for the social groups in which ideals are formed and behaviours are learned.[15] This volume begins with **Karen Downing** taking up the notion of 'communication communities' to investigate what might account for the discernible changes in ideals and representations of masculinities in Britain between the Georgian and Victorian periods. Downing offers the naval veteran of the Napoleonic Wars as an explanatory figure. The British Royal Navy at the end of the eighteenth century was an institution attempting to meet the challenges of technological innovation, administrative change, and active

warfare. In this environment class-based notions of independence, physicality, work, and domesticity were reshaped, and men from all classes shared in the rhetorical and actual successes of the institution. But opportunities for social mobility, financial security, and new aspirations were curtailed in 1815 when naval veterans returned home. Their naval training fitted them for new roles in a nation-state that was market-led, urbanising, industrialising and pursuing the expansion of an empire, but it also raised men's expectations that their skills and the fulfilment of their duty would be rewarded, including through increased political participation. This was an expectation increasingly shared by men across classes.

Contemporaneously across the north Atlantic, the men of the republic of America struggled to define a national identity that distinguished them from the British from whom they were newly independent. Classic republican discourses of the time treated trade with suspicion. As Caroll Smith-Rosenberg explains, trade was instrumental in Britain's prosperity and imperial dominance, it was allied to science and invention, and expanded knowledge of the world, but 'trade depended on credit, which hung upon opinion. It fed fantasy and desire. It introduced virtuous British citizens to the luxuries of the 'Orient', led them into debt, the alienation of their estates, economic and political dependency.' Within this depiction the polite British gentleman was 'effeminised.' Commerce, however, was not something that the Americans could ignore. Classic republican ideas of liberty and political responsbility could be successfully deployed against the 'tyranny' of the British monarchy but a rejection of trade, gentility and consumerism left Americans open to charges from the British that they would be 'reduced to a state of savagery'.[16]

Dane A. Morrison, in chapter two, considers this quandary in describing how, in the aftermath of the American War of Independence and amidst ongoing national conflicts, 'Yankee' mariners 'employed conventions of masculine gentility to navigate the fraught social and commercial waters of the early modern maritime world.' These Americans were men of commerce, merchants and traders, sensitive to British taunts about their lack of honour and honesty. In their encounters at sea and in foreign ports, men such as Samuel Shaw, Amasa Delano, Edmund Fanning, and Richard Jeffry Cleveland, used politeness to both shore up their own masculine credentials and highlight slips in the courteous behaviour of their opponents and rivals. In this unstable context the foreigner whose embodiment of strength, courage, generosity and tenderness seemed most gentlemanly was Abba Thulle, a Polynesian ruler. Morrison's close reading of these mariner's self-writings illustrates the weaving together of 'three faces of modernity – the face of the capitalist, the face of the genteel and feeling man, the face of the white racist – in and through their self-representations as virtuous republicans'. The result of 'this inharmonious fusion of contradictory discourses' through which 'European Americans constituted their self-image as modern republican citizens and modern men,' was, according to Smith-Rosenberg, 'an internally contradictory and inherently unstable national identity.'

When a nation's self-image is a reflection of its male citizens any doubt over the fitness of those men, especially their fitness for war, is a national concern. During just such a period of doubt in Britain towards the end of the nineteenth century, **Mary O'Neill** finds that fishermen were presented as reassuring figures who had never lost the courage, skill, morality and heroism that Britain, and particularly its Royal Navy, now needed. Paintings of fishermen and their families maintained a prominent presence at Royal Academy exhibitions in the 1880s and 1890s, second only to peasants as the most popular genre subject. In her examination of the pervasive 'fisherman imagery' in painting, and photography, O'Neill argues that the popularity of this imagery is explained not by an urban audience's nostalgic fascination with notions of the 'primitive' – as it has often been interpreted – but by the consolation offered by manly figures that embodied desirable attributes at a time when men's possession of those attributes was in question. O'Neill's discussion explicates contemporary links with British maritime nationalism that art-historical readings of the fisherman have largely neglected. O'Neill also shows that in Britain the long-held idealisation of independence and physical strength and the newer idealisation of work and domesticity that was visible at the beginning of the century endured in the figure of the fisherman at the end of the nineteenth century.

Technology and contestation

New technologies during the nineteenth century fuelled anxieties in many areas of society. One of the most visible were railways which were 'simultaneously the ultimate symbols of progress and technological triumph and a focus for the anxiety and horrors of modern life.'[17] There was particular disquiet about the effects of advanced technologies on men, and military and defence innovations were greeted with a high degree of ambivalence. Use of the breech-loading rifle, for example, required greater initiative and self-control in individual soldiers but it did not require physical fitness. And when troops were forced to fight at close quarters, as the British were in Zululand in 1879, they found themselves physically outmatched.[18] The machine gun was a 'model of industrial efficiency', conceived to reduce the number of men needed to produce the largest number of casualties. In Britain the navy saw its potential for shipboard defence and the Gatling gun was officially adopted by the navy in 1871 three years before the army in 1874. It's use, however, was seen as tarnishing military glory and, Michael Brown tells us, 'some believed that the machine gun constituted the ultimate deskilling of the British soldier and the final nail in the coffin of martial vigour.'[19]

Alexa Price traces the eddies of these types of concerns in 1890s British debates about the preservation and display of H.M.S. *Foudroyant*, once Lord Nelson's flagship. Amid the urgent expansion and modernisation of Europe's navies – that created a particular rivalry between Britain and Germany – the sale of the *Foudroyant* for scrap to a German shipbreaking firm sparked a push to save not only Britain's heritage, but also the manly skills and courage that appeared to have been lost

in the move from sail to steam. The story of the *Foudroyant* was the story of Britain's struggle to reconcile its romantic and, perhaps, more glorious naval past with its cold and technological naval present. Warfare had been more brutal before modern technology, conceded the author of a Jubilee fleet review in the *Illustrated London News* in 1887, but Britain's 'manhood' was more 'abundantly proved' during the battles fought on wooden ships.[20]

Those wooden ships were in wider use for longer in Finland than in other Western countries and steam ships did not outnumber sailing ships until 1925: the result was that Finnish ships were generally old and in poor condition. Finnish sailors working in these first decades of the twentieth century made a virtue of the consequent hardship of their working lives in contrast to the comfortable conditions of the steam ship crews who followed them. This is the account that **Laika Nevalainen** finds in an archive of 'sailors' reminiscences' collected by the Ethnology Department at the University of Turku in 1963. With this archive Nevalainen challenges the equation of a sailor's life with 'bachelor culture', arguing that sailors cannot be treated as a homogenous group. They did not share unanimous attitudes to work and family: attitudes which, moreover, were mediated by age and economic and social structures. What they did value in common was skill and endurance, and in their reminiscing they could not see how men could attain or demonstrate these traits in modern ships.

In the United Sates the transition from sail to steam power that required increasingly skilled sailors threatened to sideline Marines as unskilled, and even unruly. Established in 1834 to be infantry units on naval vessels, Marines held an ambiguous role aboard ship and by the end of the century the Corps usefulness to the Navy was in question. **Heather Venables** describes how the US Marine Corps deployed rhetoric and imagery of an assertive, risk-taking masculinity to ensure the existence of Marines in a transforming Navy. In a public relations campaign, the Corps capitalised on its participation in confrontations such as the Veracruz landing in 1914 to frame Marines as 'real' fighters, in contrast to sailors whose iron ships and technologically advanced weaponry kept them at a distance from the action. Central to this imagery was the wooden row boat that took sailors and Marines to shore. Not only was it a reminder of the harsh conditions in which previous generations of sailors had served, it also allowed the Marines to cast sailors as merely support crew, the passive men who rowed the men of action into battle. As in most representations of gender, Venables points out that such depictions belied the reality of Marine and naval personnel engagement in conflict.

Patriotism, citizenship and respectability

The relationship between masculinities and national identity, nationhood and the nation-state – and *ipso facto* with modernity – has been the focus of much historical scholarship on gender. Jock Phillips' 1987 claim of New Zealand that '[t]here can be few nations which have so single-mindedly defined themselves through male heroes,'[21] could surely be reframed as 'is there any nation which has

not defined itself through masculinities?'[22] Forth goes as far as saying that '[n]ation-building and man-building were co-extensive processes, and the rigorous even painful working of the body was the cement of each.'[23] The significant but troubling role of the sailor in this nexus of masculinity and nation, in both his representation and reality, has begun to be explored –by scholars such as Joanne Begiato, Isaac Land and Mary Conley in Britain, Paul A. Gilje and Nathaniel Perl-Rosenthal in the US, and David Brandon Dennis in Germany.[24] For all their necessity in achieving a nation's ambitions of conquest and trade, sailors were uneasily accommodated ashore. Their peripatetic lives seemed antithetical to domesticity, their seemingly carefree onshore habits disruptive to standards of respectability, and their travels a conduit to suspect 'foreign' influences.

Sailors in Germany's merchant navy were viewed through these types of transnational tropes as prodigals, rogues, or reprobates. During a massive expansion of Germany's battlefleet between 1898 and 1914 such stereotypes presented a problem. The merchant sailors needed to man these new ships would need to be redeemed in order to represent Germany as a maritime nation. **David Brandon Dennis** explains how the cultural reframing of the 'German seaman' as an aspirational figure was supported by private and public efforts to reform and protect the seafarers by transforming sailors' rights, labour relations, safety, and health, as well as their sexuality, marital status, discipline, and military preparedness. The culture of maritime enthusiasm during this time, Dennis argues, allowed Germans a view of Wilhelmine 'world policy' that was mediated through 'the drama of redemptive masculinity.'

The rescue of sailors was also on the minds of evangelical reformers throughout the nineteenth century in the United States where sailortown communities and their boardinghouses were key sites for these reformers' anxieties. Whether portrayed as victims of rapacious boardinghouse, saloon and brothel keepers, or as existential threats to domestic stability and all its associated moral values, sailors were a problem in need of fixing. **Johnathan Thayer** uses census data and archival sources to more closely examine disputes over the concept of 'sailors' homes', and the boardinghouses that fulfilled this function, that were waged between reformers and merchant seamen during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What the Board of Commissioners for Licensed Sailors' Hotels and Boardinghouses tried to achieve through heavy regulation and surveillance, was also the aim of the Seamen's Church Institute in New York City in establishing their own boardinghouses in New York's sailortown: the creation of surrogate domestic spaces that would save sailors from the temptations on offer during their times ashore and keep them close to their land-bound families and communities.

'Virtues' were also deployed in the campaign in Britain to rescue the H.M.S. *Victory*, Admiral Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar. This campaign was an appeal to patriotism, a call to memorialise nation, empire, and heroic masculinity, and, as in the campaign to preserve the H.M.S. *Foudroyant*, it played on fears of the loss of particular 'manly virtues'. Unlike the earlier campaign the 'Save the *Victory*' appeal in Britain in 1922 had a distinctly racialised inflection. **Sarah Westbury** outlines how

Geoffrey Callender and his colleagues in the Society for Nautical Research mobilised a particular rhetoric of heroic masculinity during their participation in the appeal. Callender was head of History and English at Greenwich Royal Naval College, and had also taught at Osborne and Dartmouth: he had, writes Westbury, 'spent most of his career attempting to turn boys and young men into the pride of the Royal Navy.' The particular heroic masculinity that Callender and his colleagues were advocating – the endurance, stoicism, sacrifice and commitment to duty, the ideal masculine values which Nelson purportedly embodied – were presented not just as part of the English 'national character' but as specifically 'Anglo-Saxon' values. For conservatives such as Callender and his colleagues, this distinction was necessary to counter the 'foreign' influence of socialism and communism.

Nascent and fragile masculinities

The 'Save the *Victory*' appeal was consciously aimed at children: the organisers wanted 'every boy and girl in the Empire to give something'.[25] But it was boys who were being asked to emulate 'manly virtues'. Turning boys into men was a particularly vexed enterprise in the nexus of masculinities and nation, where any perceived degeneration of men or loss of 'manliness' or 'masculinity' was a threat to the sovereignty of the state. 'The boy problem', as Ken Parille terms it in a study of fiction and educational materials written about and for them in America from 1830 to 1885, was enduringly defined by unresolved tensions. Youths were, nonetheless, considered to be in flux, journeying to maturity, with occasional moral slips tolerated because they were still learning self-control.[26] As such, boys' education in the long nineteenth century was aimed at character building and emotional control, often showcased through notions of militarism.[27] This was not entirely new. John Locke had outlined many of these in 1693 in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*. Locke admitted, for example, that it seemed strange to warn against physical punishments, yet advocate the necessity of fortifying children against pain. A young man, however, needed such skills so 'that when he comes to launch into the deep himself, he may not be like one at sea without a line, compass or sea-chart: but may have some notice beforehand of the rocks and shoals, the currents and quicksands, and know a little how to steer, that he sink not before he get experience.'[28] This naval analogy illuminates an enduring trope of the sea as a training ground for the manly men that a sovereign nation needs.

In the penultimate chapter in this collection, **N.C. Fleming** describes the activities of the Navy League and the Imperial Maritime League in Britain in the years before the First World War that aimed to increase the supply of reservists available to the Royal Navy. The presence of Leagues reached inland far beyond the port cities in which they would be expected to be found, but their navalist message, Fleming finds, seemed stubbornly resisted outside of the middle- and upper-classes. Activities organised for youth were designed to imbue a 'sea-mindedness' and fervent patriotism in

boys and girls, but practical training was segregated: boys learned rifle shooting, girls learned first aid. As Fleming argues, 'navalist' rhetoric was both gendered and, with echoes of the 'Save the *Victory*' campaign, racialised: 'British men had to prepare for conflict, British women had to encourage them, and "lascars" and foreign seamen were deemed unsuitable and suspect.'

The last chapter in this collection, by **Lucie Bea Dutton**, places director Maurice Elvey's 1918 silent film *Nelson* into the context of naval recruitment. Amid increased needs for sailors to crew ships, the film's primary message was that any boy, no matter how frail, could do his patriotic duty through service in the Navy. The film is unsubtle in its call to boys. It is framed and interspersed by a boy reading Robert Southey's 1813 *Life of Nelson*, as though he is reading along with events as they are unveiled on screen. To ensure that the film's message is not lost in its historical setting, it ends with a tableau of 16-year-old Cornwell, remaining by his gun on HMS *Chester* and awaiting orders while under fire at the more recent Battle of Jutland. The fear that 'there will never be another hero like Nelson' is shown to be unjustified. The anxiety that British men may not be fit enough for military service was not unfamiliar, as we see in other chapters, but, depicting Nelson as heroic in his physical infirmity does seem to be new in the second decade of the twentieth century. Even so, naval veterans whose bodies were disabled by war had, in the long nineteenth century, already been associated with valour, bodily symbols of their sacrifice for nation.[29]

Historicising masculinities

Historians of masculinities are beset by the tensions between change and continuity encountering, as they so often do, 'stubborn continuities' when they 'would rather be describing change'.[30] The chapters in this collection have been arranged, loosely, in chronological order to draw out the fine-grained detail of change across the long nineteenth century when recurring themes threaten to obscure the nuances of that change.

Most clear is the physicality of manliness – a preoccupation with the fitness of men's bodies – that recurs throughout the chapters. Connell wrote in 2000 of the importance of the materiality of men's bodies in the configuration of social practices that we define as masculinity,'[31] and the accounts collected here corroborate this observation. But during the period covered it is a suspicion that men's bodies were unfit that is the preoccupation. Fears of the effeminising effects of luxury and politeness in an industrialising, commercialising world that emerged during the eighteenth century, were compounded in the nineteenth by concerns that years of peace and prosperity were similarly enervating. The result was a specific formation of masculinity as an 'object of loss and grief,'[32] and nostalgia is pervasive in many chapters: for British fishermen's traditional practices that were metaphors for stability and continuity; in the fights to save Nelson's flagship H.M.S. *Foudroyant* as a training ground in traditional shipboard life for ship's crews and boys; in the campaign to 'Save the

Victory' the ship on which Nelson had died at Trafalgar as a memorial to 'heroic masculinity'; and, especially, in the various ways that replacement of sail ships with steam ships undermined men's opportunities to attain, test, and prove their physical prowess. Nostalgia, however, was not the only response to a sense of loss: deficiencies in physical strength could be reconfigured as advantages. Finnish sailors, for example, added the capacity for psychological endurance – captured in the term *sisu* – to the necessary attributes of successful sailors, and Maurice Elvey's film valorised Nelson's physical frailty as proof that any man could do his patriotic duty. These are historically specific instances of change in the role of men's bodies in the representation and practices of masculinity.

Seamen have particular potential for achieving the status of 'heroic' masculinity, understandably during wartime but also during times of peace. The ever-present threat of disaster in the vast bodies of water and changeable weather in which sailors work, provides ample tests of their skills and courage and plentiful possibility to shine. British fishermen's voluntary service in manning lifeboats was a popular artistic theme in the 1880s and 1890s because of its uplifting message of self-sacrifice and duty. The men who, in 1899, managed to get the storm-damaged S.S. *Bulgaria* hundreds of miles to safety with a make-shift rudder, with only the loss of two out of its 80 crew and 54 steerage passengers, were lauded internationally as heroes and paragons of manly virtue. Yet in 1918 simply overcoming physical frailty to join the navy or remaining martyr-like at your gun post – for which the 16-year old Jack Cornwall received a posthumous Victoria Cross – was cast as heroic. By 1940 Geoffrey Callender, a mover and shaker in the campaign to commemorate Nelson's heroism by saving the *Victory* sixteen years earlier, had come to question the value of hero-worship, fearing that stimulating boys' imaginations without instilling practical training might make them over-confident and complacent. Such changes in the acts claimed as heroic, and in the value that was placed on the concept of heroism, might easily be obscured by the sustained rhetoric of heroic masculinity and it takes the detailed interrogation of sources that we see in the following chapters to tease them out.

Work is an indispensable arena for querying the construction of men's identities, and historical scholarship often foregrounds its relationship to shifting formations of masculinities during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[33] Work features in the following chapters in thought-provoking ways. There is a sense of loss in artistic representations of British fishermen at the end of the century, in O'Neill's chapter, which invariably depicted them working with traditional practices despite the technological advancement, increasingly international market and ecological change that, though unevenly experienced, were changing those practices. Work is a point of contestation during the transition from sail to steam power with both newly skilled and newly unskilled men making claims to the relative 'manliness' of their capabilities. Marines in the United States navy, as described by Venable, made a virtue of their supposed lack of shipboard skills by invoking a rugged, reckless, masculinity that reminded sailors of what they might be losing in a professionalising, modernising institution. Skills attainment, however, was fundamental to the move to meritocracy in many nineteenth-century workplaces and bolstered the sense of a 'democratisation' of masculine

attributes.[34] Although this shift was evident in the maritime world, it is also the case that young men had always become sailors through their acquisition of knowledge and experience in the practices and language of the ship and sailor culture – wherever, whenever and however that culture was organised. And the sailor's profession remained, as one Finnish sailor in the early twentieth century in Nevalainen's study said, 'a real man's profession.'

In the homosocial world of ships, many of a sailor's necessary skills were actually domestic, yet cooking, cleaning, washing and sewing could also be a source of pride, something to boast about to their women at home, as sailors in Nevalainen's study did. Domesticity is another aspect of changing masculinities often highlighted in scholarship in the nineteenth century,[35] and it is an intriguing facet when considered in relation to men at sea who can too easily be perceived as escaping, evading, or ignoring the domestic sphere. As O'Neill points out, fishing was a family-based enterprise and fishermen were embedded in their families. To conceive of sailor's as 'bachelors' is to deny the married status of so many of them and the responsibility they took for wives and children: Nevalainen is correct to draw out the structural issues of maritime industries that hinder men's participation in family. 'Sailors' homes' in New York, established in the early twentieth century in competition to traditional boardinghouses were, as Thayer tells us, 'surrogate domestic spaces' intended not only to provide homely accommodation but also to keep sailors in contact with their real homes, through writing rooms and post offices, and reunite sailors with estranged families, through guidance on being responsible husbands and fathers and even the direct intervention of letter-writing to aggrieved wives.

The reformers behind New York's 'sailors' homes' were motivated by the perceived threat to domesticity posed by the transience of sailor's lives and their shore-leave recreations. This threat was usually wrapped in a rhetoric of 'respectability', a third aspect of shifting masculinities. In the chapters in this collection respectability takes different guises. In Thayer's examination of New York's sailortown in the early twentieth century, respectability encompasses middle-class values of stability, duty, and family. In the middle of the nineteenth century the American mariners in Morrison's chapter mobilised techniques of respectability – of 'gentility' and 'civility' – to defend themselves from accusations that their isolation from the civilisation of Europe made them barbaric. In Germany at the turn of the century, sailor's lack of respectability was a matter of national importance, an impediment, as Dennis explains, to Wilhelmine dreams of Germany as a proud maritime nation.

As Mary Conley points out in the epilogue, this collection does not contribute to the burgeoning field of maritime sexuality: to sexual identities and behaviours, their regulation and discipline, and their queering.[36] And while the chapters in this collection draw out issues of class, place, age, representation, and culture in thoughtful ways, this volume notably lacks contributions from the global south: such perspectives would surely expand our understanding of masculinities as well as the concept of 'modern'. Race is considered in three chapters – adding complexity to notions

of 'civilisation' in Morrison's, and inflecting the rhetoric of 'British' manhood in Westbury's and Fleming's – but further study of Black sailors, who manned American ships in great numbers during the Age of Sail and navigated racial and gendered hierarchies of labour at sea, will enrich our understanding of maritime masculinities.[37]

What does become evident in the following chapters is the myriad ways in which states, maritime institutions and industries, and sailors themselves, deployed and debated, accommodated and adapted, rearticulated and reshaped, the perceptions and practices of masculinities in a modernising world – and how that navigational work was never complete.

[1] Christopher E. Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West: Gender, Civilization and the Body* (London, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 5–6.

[2] John Tosh, "Masculinities in an Industrializing Society: Britain, 1800-1914," *Journal of British Studies* 44 (2005): 330–42.

[3] Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard, "What Have Historians Done with Masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History, circa 1500-1950," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005): 274–80, 279

[4] Tosh, "Masculinities in an Industrializing Society,' 331.

[5] Morrison and Nevalain, this volume.

[6] Leon Fink, *Sweatshops at Sea: Merchant Seamen in the World's First Globalized Industry* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 145.

[7] Daniel Vickers, *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 245-246; Judith Fingard, *Jack In Port*: *Sailortowns of Eastern Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 1982), 82–139.

[8] Brad Beavan, *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Culture* (London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2005), 8.

[9] Graeme Milne, *Sailortowns: People. Place, and Power on the Nineteenth Century Waterfront* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), 63–102.

[10] Quintin Colville and James Davey, *A New Naval History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018); Brad Beaven, "The Resilience of Sailortown Culture in English Naval Ports, 1820–1900," *Urban History* 43, no. 1 (2016): 72–95; Brad Beaven, Karl Bell and Robert James (eds), *Port Towns and Urban Culture: International Histories of the Waterfront c.1700–2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); David Worthington (ed), *The New Coastal History: Cultural and Environmental Perspectives from Scotland and Beyond* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[11] Quintin Colville, Elin Jones and Katherine Parker, "Gendering the Maritime World," *Journal for Maritime Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 97–98.

[12] For example: Mary A Conley, *From Jack Tar to Union Jack: Representing Naval Manhood in the British Empire, 1870–1918* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Isaac Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor, 1750–1850* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Ellen Gill, "'Children of the Service': Paternalism, Patronage and Friendship in the Georgian Navy," *Journal for Maritime Research* 15, no. 2 (2013): 149–65; Joanne Begiato (Bailey), "Tears and the Manly Sailor in England, 1760–1860," *Journal for Maritime Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 117–33; Beverly Lemire, "'Men of the World': British Mariners, Consumer Practice, and Material Culture in an Era of Global Trade, c. 1660–1800," *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 02 (2015): 288–319; Beverly Lemire, "A Question of Trousers: Seafarers, Masculinity and Empire in the Shaping of British Male Dress, 1600–1800," *Cultural and Social History* 13, no. 1 (2016): 1–22.

[13] Michael Brown, Anna Maria Barry and Joanne Begiato, *Martial Masculinities: Experiencing and Imagining the Military in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019).

[14] R.W. Connell, "The Big Picture: Masculinities in Recent World History," *Theory and Society* 22, no. 5 (1993): 602.

[15] Ben Griffin, "Hegemonic Masculinity as a Historical Problem," *Gender & History* 30, no. 2 (2018): 385–387; Simon Szreter, *Fertility, Class, and Gender in Britain, 1860-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 546–558;

[16] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Republican Gentleman: The Race to Rhetorical Stability in the New United States," in *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Stefan Dudink Karen Hagemann and John Tosh (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 62–68.

[17] Amy Milne-Smith, "Shattered Minds: Madmen on the Railways, 1860–80," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 21, no. 1 (2016): 24; Ralph Harrington, "The Railway Accident: Trains, Trauma, and Technological Crises in Nineteenth-Century Britain," in *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870–1930*, ed. Mark S. Micale and Paul Lerner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 31.

[18] Michael Brown, "Cold Steel, Weak Flesh: Mechanism, Masculinity and the Anxieties of Late Victorian Empire," *Cultural and Social History* 14, no. 2 (2017): 159, 163–164.

[19] Ibid., 165–169.

[20] *The Illustrated London News*, 30 July 1887, 126.

[21] Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male: A History* (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1987), vii.

[22] Michèle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (London and New York: Routledge), 1996; Stephen Whitehead, "Masculinities, Race and Nationhood – Critical Connections (Thematic

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[24] Joanne Begiato (Bailey), "Tears and the Manly Sailor in England, 1760-1860," *Journal for Maritime Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 117–33; Mary A Conley, *From Jack Tar to Union Jack: Representing Naval Manhood in the British Empire, 1870–1918* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Isaac Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor, 1750–1850* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Paul A. Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution* (Penn.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Nathaniel Perl-Rosenthal, *Citizen Sailors: Becoming American in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); David Brandon Dennis, 'Seduction on the Waterfront: German Merchant Sailors, Masculinity and the "Brücke zu Heimat" in New York and Buenos Aires, 1884–1914', *German History* 29, no. 2 (2011): 175–201.

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[36] B.R. Burg, *Boys at Sea: Sodomy, Indecency, and Courts Martial in Nelson Navy* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Mary Conley, 'The Admiralty's Gaze: Disciplining Indecency and Sodomy in the Edwardian Fleet' in *A New Naval History*, eds Quintin Colville and James Davey (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018); Seth Stein, LeJacq. 'Buggery's Travels: Royal Navy Sodomy on Ship and Shore in the Long Eighteenth Century', *Journal for Maritime Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 103–16; Stephen Maynard, 'Making Waves: Gender and Sex in the History of Seafaring', *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region* 22, no. 2 (1993): 144–53; Steven Maynard, 'Queer Musings on Masculinity and History', *Labour / Le Travail* 42 (1998): 183; Sherry Zane, '"I Did It for The Uplift of Humanity and The Navy": Same-Sex Acts and The Origins of The National Security State, 1919–1921', *The New England Quarterly* 91, no. 2 (2018): 279–306.

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