Beware the Women: The Depiction of Anglo-American Female Pirates in Popular
Culture, 1721-1995

by

Sarah K. Toye

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For Anne Bonny and Mary Read, who have come to feel like friends. I can only hope they would be amused to know that they have become twenty-first-century feminist icons and subjects of academic study.

Stay wild.

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Abstract

Anne Bonny and Mary Read were female pirates who were active in the early-eighteenth century in the Caribbean during the Golden Age of Piracy. Little is known of the two women other than what was recounted in Charles Johnson's 1724 *A General History of the Pyrates*. However, Anne and Mary have rarely left Western cultural consciousness since their final fates in 1721. As seafarers they were outsiders to mainstream culture, as pirates they were outsiders to sailors and then even more so as women. This thesis explores the many different ways in which these two women, in an entirely unique position as being outsiders thricefold, have been depicted in popular culture. I use the mechanisms of the heroine/harlot dichotomy, the process of mythologisation and visual portrayals to demonstrate how their depictions reflected and challenged contemporary ideas regarding gender, sexuality and morality, and how those ideas evolved over the centuries.

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Chapter One
Introduction

Anne Bonny and Mary Read are two of the most famous female pirates in western history. Many people would very likely recognise their names, and even those who did not would be familiar with their image. In recent years female pirates have been represented most notably in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise, the STARZ television series *Black Sails*, the video game *Assassin's Creed: Black Flag* and countless podcasts and websites. Anne and Mary, and female pirates in general, have become go-to representations of feminist and queer resistance. This is especially true of the treatment of Anne and Mary on the internet on websites such as tumblr, which is known to be a breeding ground of social activism and commentary. It was a conversation on tumblr about Anne and Mary that first piqued my interest in how eighteenth-century female pirates are treated in modern media, and I became curious about how that modern perception came into existence. The conversation on tumblr was about a sculpture of Anne and Mary by Erik Christianson (figure 1.1) in which Anne's breast is revealed. The following comments (figure 1.2) were primarily a discussion around their sexualisation, and in the substantial final comment a user recounted a part-myth-part-fact version of Anne and Mary's lives. This struck me: where did this person hear this story? What are the origins of the less-than-accurate points? Why are Anne and Mary so meaningful to them? It was this moment that inspired me to trace the cultural history of the depiction of female pirates in popular culture so I could learn from where these myths around their narratives first appeared, and how they became so politicized in feminist and queer communities.

This idea of Anne and Mary (and female pirates in general) as feminists is something that can be seen throughout twenty-first pirate fiction. In *Black Sails* Anne Bonny is bisexual and polyamorous, embodying the idea of piracy as the ultimate freedom from social oppression. As it turns out, that idea is one that reaches as far back as the Golden Age of piracy itself in the eighteenth century, though it manifested itself in many different ways. This is the evolution that I am exploring in this thesis: how Anne and Mary's stories, from 1721 to 1995, have grown and changed.

Figure 1.1: *Sisters of the Sea* **by Erik Christianson, 2010.**

"Anne Bonny and Mary Read were pirates, as renowned for their ruthlessness as for their gender, and during their short careers challenged the sailors' adage that a woman's presence on shipboard invites bad luck."

Sculpture by Erik Christianson.

I'm not entirely sure that the statue really needed to have a tit out.

How dare women try to have nipples.

Actually I've seen this before and I can tell you— it's because these women were bad ass pirates and when they killed someone they'd expose one or both breasts so that when their victim died, (s)he knew that they were killed by a woman.

ACTUALLY Anne Bonny purposely wore loose fitting clothes and displayed her breasts openly at all times during battle - mainly because men were distracted by them, and she took pleasure in killing said men while they were too busy staring at her breasts. Mary Read dressed mainly as a man (after posing as her deceased brother, Mark, for the entirety of her childhood) and both ladies cross-dressed from time to time, hopping between ships. They were known as the 'fierce hell cats' due to their ferocious tempers, and were key elements to Captain 'Calico Jack' Rackham's crew - they were the only two known female pirates in the Golden Age of Caribbean piracy. IN FACT, when the ship was captured by the British Navy, Anne and Mary were the ONLY TWO pirates who fought while the males of the crew hid - they were all tried to be hung as pirates but Bonny and Read were both pregnant and were pardoned.

Calico Jack was a lover to Bonny, and as he was to be hung, Bonny's final words to him were, "Had you fought like a man, you need not be hung like a dog." Bonny and Read were possibly two of the most badass fucking pirates and they were FEMALE. The more you know.

Figure 1.2: A conversation on the website tumblr about Erik Christianson's *Sisters of the Sea*

Over the years Anne and Mary again and again provided answers to questions around gender, sexuality and morality. Every time their stories were retold they changed slightly, and it is those changes that betray contemporary beliefs around gender and morality. The core of the stories remains the same, but in the scores of times they have been told over the centuries there have been additions and alterations that resulted in the tumblr conversation I discussed above (figure 1.2). These differences primarily reveal themselves through the recurring mechanisms of the heroine/harlot dichotomy, the

process of mythologization and visual representation. The heroine/harlot dichotomy is the device I use to analyze the ways in which sources differentiate between Anne and Mary's morality based on their sexual behaviour. Consistently, right up to the twenty-first century, Mary is depicted as the heroine figure and Anne as the harlot; more often than not, they are depicted together. Even when one is represented without the other the role of heroine or harlot remains, as it does for the fictional female pirates who, though they may not carry the name Anne or Mary, still fall within their cultural legacy. What does change, however, is the favouritism that sources show towards either the heroine or harlot character. In the eighteenth, nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries there is a definite preference and sympathy for the heroine/Mary figure, though in the second half of the twentieth century that changes drastically. A notable trend in the depiction of Anne and Mary is that female pirates were consistently portrayed visually in addition to textually – be it by illustration or by thespian. Both the heroine/harlot dichotomy and the many visual depictions contribute to Anne and Mary's immediate and continuing mythologization. The sources in this chapter are both the origins and results of this mythologization process, beginning mere years after their trial.

While Anne and Mary have been familiar figures in popular culture since 1721, it is only in recent years that they became a topic of academic study. Since the rise of pirate scholarship at the end of the nineteenth century 'big name' pirates like Edward "Blackbeard" Teach, Henry Avery and William Kidd and the North African Barbary Corsairs had been the focus more often than any female pirates. However, with the rise of feminist, gender and cultural histories in the last few decades of the twentieth century female pirates have become of interest to historians. This was partially due to a number of influential texts that complicated the idea of gender at sea, including *Iron Men, Wooden*

Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920, a compilation of essays that explored the oft-neglected role of gender in maritime culture and history edited by Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling. Other significant texts on this topic are *Women Sailors and Sailor's Women: An Untold Maritime History* by David Cordingly, *Women and English Piracy, 1540-1720* by John C. Appleby, *Women at Sea: Travel Writing and the Margins of Caribbean Discourse* edited by Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert and Ivette Romero-Cesareo and Hans Turley's *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality and Masculine Identity*. Anne Bonny and Mary Read specifically are often mentioned in texts that deal with gender and eighteenth century seafaring, being the only two known female pirates from that era. They are also usually included in any text about crossdressing soldiers, sailors and/or criminals, notably *Bold in Her Breeches: Women Pirates Across the Ages* by Jo Stanley, *Women Pirates and the Politics of the Jolly Roger* by Ulrike Klausmann, Marion Meinzerin and Gabriel Kuhn, Linda Grant De Pauw's *Seafaring Women*, *She Captains: Heroines and Hellions of the Sea* by Joan Druett, *Amazons and Military Maids: Women who Dressed as Men in the Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness* by Julie Wheelwright and *The Tradition of Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* by Rudolf Dekker and Lotte Van De Pol. Additionally, most texts about eighteenth-century piracy at least mention Anne and Mary, though they rarely address them at length, books like *Under the Black Flag: the Romance and Reality of Life Among the Pirates* by David Cordingly, Gabriel Kuhn's *Life Under the Jolly Roger: Reflections on the Golden Age of Piracy*, Marcus Rediker's *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750*, *Pirates of the Atlantic: Robbery, Murder and Mayhem off the Canadian East Coast* by Dan Conlin and Angus Konstam's *Piracy: A Complete History*.

Being the only (known) eighteenth-century female pirates, none of these texts would be complete without addressing Anne and Mary. However, because of the of the minimal amount of information known about Anne and Mary (which consists almost entirely of approximately a dozen pages in the 1721 text *A General History of the Pyrates*) historians are forced to recycle much of the same information. Some of the above authors managed to develop a fresh perspective on the two women by connecting them to other, broader historical moments and trends, such as the history of crossdressing and transvestism, gender in seafaring communities and the nature of empire and colonialism. Where I believe there is the most to learn about – and through – Anne and Mary is cultural history. The history of eighteenth-century piracy is one of myth; of invention; twenty-first century historians have embraced this and in the past decade an increasing number of authors are addressing Anne and Mary in a more cultural context. This includes Neil Rennie's *Treasure Neverland: Real and Imaginary Pirates*, *Pirates in Print and Performance* by Frederick Burwick and Manushag N. Powell and *Pirates and Mutineers of the Nineteenth Century: Swashbucklers and Swindlers* edited by Grace Moore. This, I think, marks an important shift in how historians are treating female pirates, and pirate history in general. That is the shift to which I am hoping to contribute in this thesis. With so little concrete information about them it is perhaps the only way to execute a substantial academic work specifically about Anne and Mary – without reducing them to a chapter alongside other crossdressing women or other pirates.

Despite the lack of works dedicated entirely to Anne and Mary, two works in particular have had a significant impact on the study of the two women and female pirates for this thesis and in general. The first is *Women Sailors and Sailor's Women* by David Cordingly. While the text is not wholly about female pirates, it takes an innovative look at

the many largely unknown ways in which women were involved with maritime culture, both on land and at sea. Part of the reason Cordingly, like so many of the historians I have mentioned, chose to do a broad study of women at sea from a variety of perspectives is because of the lack of scholarship and the lack of primary sources. Even though there is only one chapter dedicated to Anne and Mary, along with other crossdressing women at sea, his broader examination of women in maritime communities provided useful contextual information for me to understand how, in the many texts about female pirates I studied, the women's depictions related to contemporary notions of women in seafaring cultures. Cordingly does not contribute anything to the understanding of Anne and Mary, or female pirates, specifically, but his work on women at sea expanded the understanding of the culture that the women were navigating.

The other work that was especially important for this thesis and the study of female pirates is *Amazons and Military Maids: Women who Dressed as Men in the Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness* by Julie Wheelwright. Though, again, not focusing on Anne and Mary, this book instead was a valuable study of crossdressing women in a variety of situations. Covering seafaring women like Anne, Mary and the famous Hannah Snell, as well as more modern crossdressing soldiers such as Flora Sandes from the First World War, it was an expansive study of how crossdressing women at sea and in the military have behaved and have been treated over the centuries. As this thesis also covers a large time frame, Wheelwright's extensive exploration of crossdressing women was invaluable while exploring the evolving perception of the women over the centuries. These two books represent one of the main goals of this thesis. Anne and Mary unite three disparate historiographies: women at sea, crossdressing women and criminal women. Anne and Mary, as crossdressing female pirates, are two of the very few

historical figures that merge these three well-trodden topics, which makes up for the overall lack of a female pirate historiography itself. Additionally, female pirates are unique in the way that they were outsiders three times over: as seafarers, as pirates and as women in a male-dominated industry. This is what makes them different from the three more common historiographies that are applicable to them: their criminality complicates their nature as crossdressing women, as it does their role as women at sea. It is the overlap of these three things, plus their positions as outsiders to such a significant degree, that sets them apart from other criminal women, crossdressing women, and women at sea.

The second chapter explores the eighteenth-century origins of Anne and Mary's narrative in popular culture in the Golden Age of piracy. They were first depicted in the 1721 legal pamphlet *Tryals of Captain John Rackam and Other Pirates* which recounted their trial, including witness testimony and their conviction. The next and most important source is *A General History of the Pyrates* in 1724 by Captain Charles Johnson; I have included the entirety of Anne and Mary's narratives from this text in the appendix. This is the foundational text of every subsequent representation of the two women in popular culture. In this text I will investigate the role of the heroine/harlot dichotomy and their first visual representation, as well as the relationship between morality and parenting. I also examine the nature of eighteenth-century gender and crossdressing women; though women would continue to crossdress throughout the later centuries, it is vital to understand crossdressing in this century specifically because this is the context that authors and artists afterwards will try to represent, while revealing their own

contemporary ideologies.[1] After establishing the original narrative from *A General History* I will examine a number of representations of female pirates in popular culture in the eighteenth century, including a 1725 Dutch edition of *A General History* called *Historie der Englesche Zee-Roovers* in which the image from the original edition is altered significantly and a frontispiece featuring a female pirate is added. The remaining texts in the second chapter are fictional female pirates from Jean-Regnault Segrais' novel *The Beautiful Pyrate; or, the Constant Lovers*, John Gay's opera *Polly* and finally another opera, *Blackbeard and the Captive Princess* by John Cartwright Cross. All of the sources are either from England or continental Europe, primarily France. The geographic origins of female pirate will make a notable shift in the nineteenth century.

The third chapter is about how eighteenth-century female pirates are depicted in nineteenth-century popular culture. The majority of the sources in this chapter are from the United States – specifically New England – and served an important role in the development of an American national identity after their independence. However the chapter begins with a surprising connection between *A General History* and Eugene Delacroix's *La Liberté guidant le people*. Chapter three explores two historical representations of Anne and Mary, the only ones that refer to them directly by name instead of simply using them for inspiration: *Pirates Own Book: Authentic Narratives of the Most Celebrated Sea Robbers* by Charles Ellms and P. Christian' *Histoire des pirates et corsaires de l'océan et de méditerranée depuis leur origine jusqu'a nos jours*. Both texts are descendants of *A General History* – being the only primary source available – but their differing geographic locations influenced how they depicted the two women.

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[1] I use the term 'crossdressing' to refer to women who are dressed as men, disguised or otherwise, not as any statement regarding the person's sexual or gender identity. I try to avoid imposing modern ideas about gender and/or sexuality when referring to historical crossdressing women.

The fictional sources include Maturin Murray Ballou's *Fanny Campbell, The Female Pirate Captain ; Tale of the Revolution*, *The Pirate Queen ; or, the Magician of the Sea, A Tale of the Piratical Era* by Benjamin Barker, the famous Gilbert and Sullivan opera *The Pirates of Penzance; or, the Slave of Duty* and the children's text *The Queen of Pirate Isle* by Bret Harte. The fictional texts of the nineteenth century represent a significant shift in how female pirates – and pirates in general – were depicted in popular culture. They had become comedic, romanticized figures that were topics for children as well as adults.

The process of romanticizing and defanging eighteenth-century pirates continued into the twentieth century, which is the subject of chapter four. With the introduction of mass-produced film came the cinematic pirate, cousin to the literary and historical pirate. After the Second World War especially, female pirates were popular in Hollywood, and I will discuss the films *The Spanish Main*, *Anne of the Indies*, *Against All Flags* and *Captain Kidd and the Slave Girl* from the 1940s and 50s and *Cutthroat Island* from the 90s. The mid-century movies in particular addressed the gender roles that the Second World War had blurred after so many women had enlisted and gotten high-quality jobs for the first time and many of whom resisted the idea of returning to pre-war normalcy. Another significant moment in the twentieth century was second wave feminism, which had a radical impact on the heroine/harlot dichotomy and how Anne especially was treated in works of popular culture, showing early rumblings of the feminist internet-icon Anne that I described earlier. It was also in this century that historians first began to de-romanticize pirates and to pay more attention to female pirates, as I mentioned above.

What I have attempted to create in this thesis is a web of depictions. With *A General History* at the centre, every representation of Anne and Mary in the years since have that text as their shared origin, whether they are aware of it or not. As the branches

or depictions radiated further and further outwards, with even more degrees of separation between them and *A General History*, they may differ significantly from the original source but as I will show, with enough attention to detail even that ill-informed tumblr conversation can be traced, thread by thread, back to a dozen pages in a partially fictionalized 1724 book about Golden Age pirates.

In this thesis I have chosen to refer to Anne Bonny and Mary Read by their first names instead of the traditional last name common in academic writing. This is because I have formed an emotional connection to the two women; they have, after all, been close companions of mine for a number of years. I believe that to impersonally call them by their last names would be to deny this attachment, which would be both dishonest and irresponsible. Historians should always strive for objectivity but recognise it as an impossibility. By using Anne and Mary's first names I am being honest with the reader about my subjectivity, and since nothing remains of Anne and Mary's own voices and experiences I can only study their many iterations and depictions, usually from the minds of men who judged and criticised them for their own ideological purposes. I am also hoping that it will remind the reader that Anne and Mary were real, breathing people - criminals or not.

Chapter Two
The Eighteenth Century: Heroines and Harlots

The early-eighteenth century marks the beginning of Anne Bonny and Mary

Read's legend. Their depictions in this century would come to inspire countless

representations in a wide range of media over the next four centuries; this chapter will

examine these original sources and how they established a mythology that grew and

evolved even in the years immediately following Anne and Mary's departures from the

historical record.[2] I begin with *The Tryals of Captain Jack Rackam and Other Pirates*,

which chronicles Rackam, Anne and Mary's trial in Jamaica in 1721, and move on to

Captain Charles Johnson's 1724 two-volume tome *A General History of the Pyrates*;

though *Tryals* may be the first published portrayal of Anne and Mary, it is this text that is

the centre of the web from which the consequent literature emanates. I will also discuss

some of the following editions of *A General History*, specifically the Dutch-language

Historie der Englesche Zee-Roovers published the very next year. Also in 1725 comes the

English translation of Jean-Regnault Segrais' fictional text, *The Beautiful Pyrate; Or, the*

Constant Lovers. The last three eighteenth-century sources I will be examining are all

operas: John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* in 1728, its sequel *Polly* – which was written

1728-9 but not performed until 1777 – and, finally, *Blackbeard; Or, the Captive Princess*

by John Cartwright Cross in 1798.

I will be exploring how these works depict the figure of the female pirate both

textually and, in many cases, visually. I am following them chronologically in order to

track the specific ways in which the story changes and grows. Through the different

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[2] I say "departure" instead of deaths because while we know of Mary's death, Anne's ultimate fate is more mysterious.

sources' use of the heroine/harlot dichotomy, visual depiction and mythologization I will investigate how they interact with questions of morality, gender and sexuality; as those ideas evolve over the centuries, we will see that the representation of the female pirate fluctuates with them. This means that though the questions remain the same, the answers female pirates represent do not. As I mentioned above, the sources in this chapter are both the origins and results of this mythologization process, beginning mere years after their trial.

A notable trend in the depiction of Anne and Mary, one that is prominent even within their first century, is that female pirates were consistently portrayed visually in addition to textually – be it by illustration or by thespian. Both the heroine/harlot dichotomy and the many visual depictions contribute to Anne and Mary's immediate and continuing mythologization. As I mentioned above, the sources in this chapter are both the origins and results of this mythologization process, beginning mere years after their trial.

Anne and Mary were active during what is now known as the Golden Age of piracy, when Anglo-American piracy peaked in numbers, economic damage and cultural impact. It spanned sometime between 1690 and 1730, the specific dates being highly contested among pirate historians. It is the Golden Age pirates – which also includes such legendary figures as Blackbeard, William Kidd, Henry Avery, Bartholomew Roberts, Edward England and many more – that have most effectively seized Western imagination, then and now. There have been other (by some definitions much more successful) female pirates in history, most notably Ching I Sao of nineteenth-century China and Grace O'Malley of 16th-century Ireland, but there are aspects of Anne and Mary's story that makes them the most appealing to Western audiences: the fact that they

are a duo, and will eternally remain so; contemporary writings did more to establish their mythology; and perhaps most significantly, the fact that they were active in this Golden Age.

Eighteenth-century people had a chaotic and contradictory relationship with contemporary pirates (real and fictional). But as complicated as their relationship was with male pirates it was even more so with female pirates. Though piracy was a very real and pressing threat that had a considerable impact on economic stability, it was still on the margins. Pirates were outsiders literally and figuratively. This was part of their appeal; that meant that female pirates, who were outsiders in additional ways, were even more exciting and provocative. Piracy, though a frightening crime industry that threatened social and cultural stability in addition to economic, was viewed as perhaps the most hyper-masculine community of the Anglo-American world, making female pirates even more of an anomaly.[3]

To contemporaries, male pirates were transgressors in every way imaginable. But no matter how much male pirates threatened dominant social conventions, female pirates did that and more, "[destabilizing] seeming straightforward dichotomies such as hero and heroine, man and woman".[4] Male pirates were public transgressors; their crimes, as gruesome and alarming as they were, were economic, straightforward and comprehensible. Female pirates, on the other hand, were public *and* private transgressors. They violated the law *and* convention; the threat they represented to contemporaries was much more insidious and difficult to understand. The conventions to which Anne and Mary were the most threatening were those of gender and sexuality; yet, in their visual,

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[3] Hans Turley. *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality and Masculine Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 1999) 2.
[4] Ibid., 41.

literary and theatrical representations, they actually reinforce these ideas through the genres of warrior women, passing women and criminal biography, which I will discuss later in the chapter.

The majority of sources in this chapter are of English origin; therefore, I will for focus primarily on gender and sexuality in eighteenth-century England. Ideas about gender during this time reflect Enlightenment thought, which was well-established by the time Anne and Mary arrived. Enlightenment thought, which above all else championed rationality and logic, "stressed binary oppositions [and] promoted ideas of male activity and female passivity, male strength and female frailty, male rationality and female emotionality, qualities that were defined as universal and permanently rooted in nature."[5] It is important to note that while these binaries are quite rigid, they are referring to gender markers more than a biological difference; the latter would come to represent nineteenth-century understandings, which the next chapter will explore. This relatively new emphasis on female physical limitations is potentially one of the reasons that seafaring has come to be considered a hyper-masculine endeavour in which women had zero involvement, an idea which was cemented in the nineteenth century.

Despite this common perception, there is a long tradition of crossdressing women, especially in the eighteenth century. The stringent division of gender in fact functioned in the crossdressing woman's favour; there was so little conception of overlap between the two genders that if a person dressed as a man, acted as a man and did a man's work (such as the dangerous and physically demanding seafaring or soldiering) there was little cause

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[5] Margaret S. Creighton, introduction to *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920* eds. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996), ix.

to question their manliness, for "to wear the habits is to enact the habits".[6] Here we see a precursor to modern assumptions that gender is performative and constructed, not inherent and biological as those in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would come to believe. This idea that manliness was in a sense a uniform that could be taken on and off as needed was part of what allowed women like Anne and Mary to go to sea or to war, and is visible particularly in *Tryals* and *A General History*.

In fact, female crossdressing the eighteenth century was more common than one might expect. There were a handful of relatively acceptable reasons for women to crossdress: for more safety while travelling alone or with other women, carnival celebrations and riots. There were also less acceptable but perhaps equally as common motivations: to engage in same-sex relationships, to flee the law or an abusive husband, financial desperation or thirst for freedom and adventure. Mary and Anne fall into the last two categories respectively; this difference of motivation has significant implications about class and morality on which I will elaborate further when discussing *A General History*. Another factor that allowed for crossdressing women in the eighteenth century was a growth of urbanization, meaning that women had increasing social and geographic mobility. However, at the same time they were starting to be excluded from their traditional trades, such as tailoring, inn-keeping, butchering, milling and blacksmithing.[7] Part of the reason women were more mobile was because it was necessary for them to travel to find work more than ever before.

This document is what brought Anne and Mary into the world (culturally speaking). Without it, the two women may have disappeared from the historical record

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[6] Marcus Rediker, "Liberty Beneath the Jolly Roger: The Lives of Anne Bonny and Mary Read, Pirates," in eds. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996), 44-45.
[7] Jo Stanley, *Bold in her Breeches: Women Pirates Across the Ages* (London: Pandora, 1995), 140.

entirely. *The Tryals of Captain John Rackam and Other Pirates* is a pamphlet that recounts the trial of a group of pirates, including Anne, Mary and their Captain (and Anne's lover) the titular "Calico" Jack Rackam. The trials took place in November 1720 and the pamphlet was published in 1721. Though this may be the first piece about Anne and Mary, I do not consider it the centre of the web that their myth would become; I consider it the catalyst for the web's very existence. Much of what is believed about Anne and Mary came from this document, and was very likely the main source of information and inspiration for *A General History* (which I do consider the web's centre), but is still relatively sparse in details and conflicts with some later "facts".

This source is an outlier from the others I look at for a number of reason. Firstly, it is the inaugural published representation of Anne and Mary. Secondly, it is a very different type of document than what will follow; as a legal record it is remarkably unembellished by comparison to other portrayals and while it is the source material for *A General History* it does not engage with sensationalism – something that will become a defining characteristic of female pirate fiction. Lastly, this is one of only two eighteenth-century depictions of Anne and Mary that does not include a visual representation (this may be because of its being less sensationalistic). As I mentioned before, it is more common than not for female pirates to be portrayed visually.

From their very first depiction Anne and Mary are established as the main attraction. Even though they were mere crewmembers on a small-time pirate ship, they were featured largely on the front piece of the pamphlet – something we will continue to see throughout the centuries. No matter how small their role, how peripheral their character, the female pirate is always intentionally highlighted and advertised; this will be a recurring trend. Female pirates are an immediate and almost universally recognised

oddity that will draw an audience's interest and these sources do not hesitate to capitalise on that, hence the sensationalistic nature of female pirates.

Of the different types of crossdressing women in the eighteenth century the most is known about those of the criminal variety because of recorded legal scrutinies such as this one.[8] It is possible that the reason there is a link between criminality and crossdressing is precisely because they were more likely to be exposed through the legal process than crossdressing women in other industries; however, the connection goes deeper than that. Crossdressing could serve a number of purposes for criminal women; it was an easy and effective disguise if the law was looking for a woman (again, rigid gender divisions meant people were slow to suspect crossdressing) and as much as male attire was the practical uniform of seafaring such as it was with crime. It could also allow them to develop a double identity of a male criminal and female citizen that was not only physically practical but could help avoid capture.[9] As Rudolf Dekker and Lotte Van de pol state in their examination of female crossdressers in early modern Netherlands and Britain, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*,

> A male disguise was not only a practical part of the repertoire of the female criminal; a more general relationship between cross-dressing and criminality also existed. Both forms of behaviour violate social rules and norms. For women who had already crossed one fundamental social boundary, that between men and women, it must have been relatively simple to set aside other norms. On the other hand, women who had already attempted criminal paths felt less intensely the social pressure which impelled individuals to behave in a way consistent with their sexes, and they must have found it relatively easy to make the decision to begin cross-dressing.[10]

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[8] Rudolf Dekker and Lotte Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 20.
[9] Ibid., 35-36.
[10] Ibid., 38.

Tryals consists mainly of repetitive legal jargon which is almost identical for each of the accused pirates, including Anne and Mary. Naturally they stand out as the only women – they were tried and sentenced together – as well as because of the provocative details and witness testimony in their proceedings. Interestingly, they do not seem to have been treated differently than their male counterparts to a significant degree; they were charged with the same crimes, but surprisingly there was no moralizing and they were far from being the only crewmembers to receive a guilty verdict. They were charged with seizing a total of seven fishing boats, three merchant sloops and a schooner in the months of September and October 1720, but nonetheless both plead not guilty.[11] The reality of Anne and Mary's status as small-time pirates is often overlooked due to their current fame, but there are some instances when pirates become renowned for a reason other than their piratical careers – Ned Low was notorious for his bloodthirsty nature, Stede Bonnet for being a wealthy man before going to sea, Calico Jack for being the Captain of the only two known female pirates, Anne and Mary for being said female pirates. Each of these people captured audience's' imagination for reasons beyond simply being pirates. The two women were already notorious by the time they went to trial, having been mentioned in letters and documents between officials in the British West Indies. They were named explicitly in one of Woodes Rogers' proclamations in 1720, declaring "Two women, by name, Ann Fulford alias Bonny, & Mary Read" to be "Enemies to the Crown of *Great Britain*".[12] Authorities not only know of them before their trial: they knew them to be women.

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[11] Robert Baldwin, *The Tryals of Captain John Rackam and Other Pirates* (Jamaica, 1721), 16-18.
[12] Woodes Rogers was an English privateer and pirate hunter, as well as the first governor of what is now the Bahamas; Rediker, "Liberty Beneath the Jolly Roger," 7.

The section of Anne and Mary's trial that is the most intriguing and the most relevant to this thesis is the eyewitness testimony. This is probably the closest readers and historians will ever get to Anne and Mary themselves and the "truth" of their lives as pirates, and is the source of some of the key moments of their mythology. The eyewitness testimony proves that Anne and Mary were active and willing participants in the violence as much as – maybe more than – their male cohorts. A woman named Dorothy Thomas testifies that she saw Anne on Mary on board the pirate ship dressed and behaving like men: "The Two Women...were then on Board the said Sloop, and wore Mens Jackets, and long Trouzers, and Handkerchiefs tied about their Heads; and that each of them had a Machet and Pistol in their Hands, and cursed and swore at the Men, to murther the Deponent; and that they should kill her, to prevent her coming against them."[13] Luckily they did not kill her, and historians have this lively and informative description. Evidently, if Dorothy Thomas is to be trusted, Anne and Mary were not only voluntarily participating in piracy, they were more enthusiastic and ruthless than their male counterparts. The witness continues on to say that "the Reason of her knowing and believing them to be Women then was, by the largeness of their Breasts."[14] This is an extremely significant statement with many implications on the specific nature of Anne and Mary's crossdressing. This is where it becomes important to distinguish between a disguise and a uniform: in this quote, they are not *passing for men* but are instead *wearing a pirate uniform*. The default for a pirate, as with all eighteenth-century seafarers, was male; therefore, the pirate uniform is men's clothing. This distinction will continue to

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[13] Baldwin, *Tryals,* 18; And come against them she did. One cannot help but wonder if Anne and Mary were the type to say "I told you so". Based on what Anne allegedly said to Rackam after the trials, I think it is safe to say they probably were. And who could blame them?
[14] Ibid., 18.

play a part in portrayals of Anne and Mary and reflects the performative aspects of eighteenth-century gender.

Additionally, two Frenchmen named John Begneck and Peter Cornelian testified that Anne and Mary "were very active on Board, and willing to do any Thing; That *Ann Bonny* [sic]...handed Gun-powder to the Men….they did not seem to be kept, or detain'd by Force, but of their own Free-Will and Consent."[15] They are putting forth the same image as Dorothy Thomas, one of two criminal women who were dressed as pirates but not disguised as men who were willingly – gleefully – taking part in piracy. This would have undermined any attempt at an impressment defence, which accused pirates would claim if a pirate crew had forced them to join on pain of death. The next witness, Thomas Dillon, echoes Begneck and Cornelian's assertions very closely.

But Begneck and Cornelian do not stop there. In fact, they provide one of the most compelling snippets of information regarding Anne and Mary's crossdressing, if it is indeed true, saying "That when they saw any Vessel, gave Chase, or Attacked, they wore Men's Cloaths; and, at other Times, they wore Women's Cloaths."[16] This suggests that Anne and Mary would wear the gendered clothing that matched any particular activity. This is consistent with the eighteenth-century beliefs that used behaviour more than physiology as a determinant of gender; it also indicates that the pirates had accepted not only two women, but two women who at least occasionally wore women's clothing. The belief that early modern seafarers considered women on board to be bad luck is, I think, exaggerated, but I also would not go so far so to call them welcome or commonplace. It is most curious because it seems likely that pirates and seafarers would be much more

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[15] Baldwin, *Tryals,* 18.
[16] Ibid., 18.

willing to accept a woman who wore the male uniform, even if she is not passing for one, than a woman who did not.

Anne and Mary did not have any questions or witnesses of their own, and both were convicted on all charges and sentenced to hang.[17] This is unsurprising, female pirates or not, since the witness testimony decisively squashed any potential impressment defence. However, their nature as transgressors on more levels than crime cannot be brushed aside: "Women who used cross-dressing to embark upon a path of crime received sentences which were in the first instance determined by their crimes, but the judges viewed their masquerade as an indication of the depravity of such women."[18] But in a final twist, "both the Prisoners inform'd the Court, that they were both quick with Child, and prayed that Execution of the Sentence might be stayed." The court granted the stay of execution and ordered an inspection, and that is where *Tryals* ends with Anne and Mary. However, the next source I will be exploring, *A General History of the Pyrates*, does report on their alleged final fates.[19]

A General History of the Pyrates is perhaps the most fundamental text for historians of Golden Age piracy; it is also the second published portrayal of Anne Bonny and Mary Read, and the first visual depiction. It was originally published as a series of sensationalistic newspaper columns which were so popular that in 1724 – only three years after *Tryals* was published – it was compiled into two volumes and released through Rivington & Co and its popularity only grew.[20] At least four editions were issued in the

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[17] Baldwin, *Tryals,* 19.
[18] Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 77.
[19] Baldwin, *Tryals,* 19; using pregnancy was a way to delay execution, and was called "pleading their bellies".
[20] Philip Gosse, *A Bibliography of the Works of Capt. Charles Johnson* (London, Dulau and Company ltd., 1927), ix.

eighteenth century and it was translated into Dutch, German and French.[21] It is generally

accepted in recent years that the author is a Captain Charles Johnson; however, most

physical copies credit it to Daniel Defoe. This is due to John Robert Moore, a Defoe

biographer, who in the 1930s claimed it as part of Defoe's substantial bibliography;

however P.N. Furbank and W.R. Owens firmly disproved the theory in 1994 in their book

Defoe De-Attributions: A Critique of J. R. Moore's 'Checklist'. Another misunderstanding

that often occurs with the use of *A General History* as an historical source is the fact that

it engages heavily with sensationalism and pre-existing semi-fictional genres such as the

warrior women and passing women traditions and criminal biography, which I will

discuss later. This renders *A General History* a problematic primary source and is why I

am interacting with it through the lens of cultural history.

This step from *Tryals* in 1721 to *A General History* in 1724 is an important one in

Anne and Mary's cultural depiction. As I mentioned, I view *Tryals* as the catalyst for *A

General History* to become the centre point of what will grow into a web of cultural

representations, despite *Tryals'* chronological precedence. This is because of *A General

History*'s virtual monopoly on Golden Age pirate imagery and information as well as the

notable increase in sensationalism and artistic license. *A General History* is the first stage

of Anne and Mary's mythologizing; a close reading of the two sources reveals a

considerable shift (see the appendix for Anne and Mary's chapters from *A General

History*).

While the *Tryals*, as a legal record, probably made some attempt at impartiality, *A

General History* certainly did no such thing. It falls firmly into Early Modern

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[21] Gosse, *A Bibliography of the Works of Capt. Charles Johnson*, xiii; for a more detailed study of the
publishing history of *A General History* see Philip Gosse's *A Bibliography of the Works of Capt. Charles
Johnson*.

sensationalism, meaning the author's main goal was to illicit an emotional response from

the reader – even if that meant exaggerations, alterations or even total fabrications.[22]

While what sensational literature may look like changes drastically over time, this

grasping for an emotional response remains a defining characteristic, just as

sensationalism remains a defining characteristic in depictions of female pirates.[23] In the

16th and 17th centuries sensationalistic literature focused on the victims of crime and

violence; in the eighteenth and nineteenth the spotlight is instead on the criminal

themselves, including the ever-popular gallows sermons and criminal biographies like *A

General History*. This coincided with the rise of individualism and a desire to *understand*

the criminal. The intent (usually lust, greed, envy, etc.) was just as important as the

damage done.[24] Violence, death and murder were, and are, some of the most popular

sensationalistic topics.[25]

Similarly to *Tryals*, Anne and Mary are featured prominently on the frontispiece:

"WITH The remarkable Actions and Adventures of the two Female Pyrates, *Mary Read*

and *Anne Bonny*."[26] Despite their careers paling in comparison to those of most of the

other pirates in the text, because of their femaleness they are given more publicity. They

are also the only non-captains to be included. Hans Turley, author of *Rum, Sodomy and

the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality and Masculine Identity,* suggests that the inclusion of and

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[22] Joy Wiltenburg, "The Origins of Modern Sensationalism," *The American Historical Review* 109 (2004): 1382; There is in fact at least one entirely fictional pirate in *A General History*: Captain James Misson, who founds the mythical pirate utopia Libertalia on the island of Madagascar: Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), 383-440.
[23] Wiltenburg, "The Origins of Modern Sensationalism," 1398.
[24] Ibid., 1399-1400.
[25] Ibid., 1388.
[26] Johnson, *A General History*, frontispiece.

emphasis on the women could be to "alleviate the anxiety caused by the libertine homoerotic implications of the all-male pirate world."[27]

Like many Early Modern texts, the author asserts aggressively – perhaps to a degree that might be considered suspicious – that what he has written is absolutely and undeniably true. This is despite the evident fictionalised and sensational nature of much of the text, especially on the topic of Anne and Mary. He states it in the preface in general, but re-emphasises it especially for the two women:

> Now we are to begin a History full of surprizing Turns and Adventures; I mean, that of *Mary Read* and *Anne Bonny*, alias *Bonn*, which were the true Names of these two Pyrates; the odd Incidents of their rambling Lives are such that some may be tempted to think the whole Story no better than a Novel or Romance; but since it is supported by many thousand Witnesses, I mean the People of *Jamaica*, who were present at their Tryals, and heard the Story of their Lives, upon the first discovery of their Sex; the Truth of it can be no more contested, than that there were such Men in the World, as *Roberts* and *Black-beard*, who were Pyrates.[28]

Sensational writings need to convince the reader of the story's authenticity so they would be more likely to have an emotional response.[29] While part of the reason Johnson is such a popular candidate for *A General History*'s authorship is because he did spend time in West Indies during the Golden Age, it is virtually impossible to know if he did actually speak to any witnesses of the trial or saw it himself. Regardless, a remarkable amount of information has been added to their narratives since *Tryals*, true or otherwise. From their very moment of entry into Western popular culture Anne and Mary have been fiction as much as fact; there is a conscious intent to writing about them, as anyone who chooses to write about Anne and Mary after this moment is engaging with this process of

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[27] Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*, 98.
[28] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 153
[29] Wiltenburg, "The Origins of Modern Sensationalism," 1383.

mythologization, whether they want to or not. The mere act of writing about the legendary Anne Bonny and Mary Read is to participate in and perpetuate their myth.[30]

There a number of significant differences between Anne and Mary's sections and those of male pirates. As I mentioned, they are the only non-captains; thus, they are sub-chapters under Rackam and some of the shortest sections in the text. The language Johnson uses is much more emotive and detailed (another trademark of sensationalism.)[31] But perhaps the most significant and substantial difference is the amount of time Johnson spends recounting their backstories. For the male pirates he usually offers a couple of sentences at the opening with basic information like place of birth, perhaps age and how they came to be a pirate, and not much else. In Mary's section Johnson dedicates the first three of the six-and-a-half pages to her life before she became a pirate, going as far back as to her birth. Even more strikingly, of Anne's five-and-a-half pages, approximately the first four chronicle her very conception, leaving one page for her life before becoming a pirate and a little less than a full page for her piracy.[32] This begs the question as to why the author would create this disparity. Why place such an overwhelming focus on their childhoods, the ratio almost opposite to those of male pirates? The simple answer is because female pirates are rare and people are curious to know how they wandered so far from normalcy. And while I do not disagree with that, I think it indicates something much more significant about the perception of female pirates and transgressive women more broadly. Audiences are less drawn to their identity as pirates than to their identity as crossdressing women.

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[30] This also applies, hypothetically, to anyone who would dedicate an entire MA thesis to tracking said myth.

[31] Wiltenburg, "The Origins of Modern Sensationalism," 1388.

[32] Anne's conception involves an outrageous story about a set of stolen spoons, adultery and mistaken identity that is almost certainly false but makes for a very entertaining read.

The similarities between Anne and Mary's early childhoods are remarkable, especially the fact that both were crossdressed by their parents at a very early age – for their parents' own personal gain. Mary, the illegitimate daughter of a sailor's widow, took the place of her deceased older (legitimate) brother to ensure the continued financial support of her paternal grandmother. Mary was essentially raised as a boy, not even knowing that she was biologically female until her mother explained it to her so that she could continue the charade: "she bred up her Daughter as a Boy, and when she grew up to some Sense, she thought proper to let her into the Secret of her Birth, to induce her to conceal her Sex."[33] Anne, also illegitimate, was dressed as a boy by her father because "having a great Affection for the Girl he had by his Maid, he had a Mind to take it Home, to live with him; but as all the Town knew it to be a Girl, the better to disguise the Matter from them, as well as from his Wife, he had it put into Breeches, as a Boy, pretending it was a Relation's Child he was to breed up to be his Clerk."[34] In both instances the two women's parents created a complex relationship with gender norms.

In most Early Modern European crossdressing cases (usually soldiers and sailors) women would begin crossdressing between the ages of 16 and 25 – though they would almost always claim to be considerably younger as their male counterpart due to their high voices and lack of facial hair – and not as children, like Anne and Mary.[35] It was also common for crossdressing women to move around a lot, such as Mary did, going from cavalry to Dutch regiment of foot to the merchant service.[36] However, women would

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[33] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 154.
[34] Ibid., 164.
[35] Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 13.
[36] Ibid., 13.

often begin crossdressing because of external forces, such as a friend, partner, employer, or, in Anne and Mary's cases, a parent.[37]

While I do agree that the emphasis on early lives is accommodating a fascination as to how Anne and Mary reached their unusual circumstances, I argue that it is because of the way in which childhood was conceived in the Early Modern period that the author spends so much time on their very early lives. Anne's story, especially, began with the meeting of her parents and her conception which has much more detail dedicated to it than any of her actions as a pirate.[38] The dominant school of thought regarding childhood in the eighteenth century was John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, written in 1693, mere decades before *A General History*. The text is essentially a parenting manual on how to raise a moral adult, and Locke places that burden of morality on the parents.

> I myself have been consulted of late by so many, who profess themselves at a loss how to breed their children, and the early corruption of youth is now become so general a complaint, that he cannot be thought wholly impertinent, who brings the consideration of this matter on the stage, and offers something, if it be but to excite others, or afford matter of correction: for errors in education should be less indulg'd than any. These, like faults in the first concoction, that are never mended in the second or third, carry their afterwards incorrigible taint with them thro' all the parts and stations of life.[39]

Having internalized Locke's dominant theories of morality, parenting and childhood, the author spends so much time looking at their parents and early childhoods because it was generally accepted that almost everything about a person, including their moral compass, was taught to them by their parents. In addition to treating them as key players in Anne

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[37] Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism.*, 39.

[38] Violence, specifically familial violence and how parental failure led to children murdering their parents or vice versa, was one of the most popular topics in Early Modern sensational literature: Wiltenburg, "The Origins of Modern Sensationalism," 1388.

[39] John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 79-80.

and Mary's pirate stories, despite their absence from their lives as actual pirates, it was their parents that initially dressed them as boys. Crossdressing was not shown to be an aspect of their identity: it was taught behaviour from their parents.

When outlining how parents should educate their children, Locke reiterates the importance of instilling good habits and morals at an early age lest immorality becomes ingrained and therefore irreversible. Therefore, Anne and Mary's parents instilled in them a distorted conception of gender and morality that stayed with the women for the rest of their lives. They never learned to be women in a social sense, though the author is careful to show that physically and sexually they are very much female. Anne and Mary's parents' conduct doomed them; because of them the women are incapable of making good, moral decisions. That is why the author tells their parents' stories in such detail; it is why it matters to the readers that Anne was conceived under dubious circumstances, that she was born in prison to an adulterous maid, that she was disguised as a boy by her father, that Mary's mother even convinced Mary herself that she was a boy. Locke describes vice as a contagion, something that can be passed from one person to another.[40]

A moment in the appendix of *A General History* best expresses this idea. The Governor arrests Anne and a woman they claim was her mother (the author himself suggests the woman may not have been Anne's real mother): "the Governor sent for her and one *Anne Fulworth*, who came with her from *Carolina*, and pass'd for her Mother, and was privy to all her loose Behaviour, and examining them both upon it, and finding they could not deny it, he threaten'd if they proceeded further in it, to commit them both to Prison, and order them to be whipp'd, and that *Rackam*, himself, should be their

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[40] Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, 131.

Executioner."[41] He imprisons both of them for the charges of fornication and adultery

because of Anne's abandonment of her husband for Rackam – the Governor evidently did

not take their contract to be legal. He threatens both Anne and her "mother" with a

lashing, which he claimed he would force Rackam to perform. There is absolutely no

legal precedent for such an outrageous threat, but if the author were to want to reinforce

the idea that Anne's mother was to blame for her moral deviance, this would be a way to

do so. The author had Anne's mother, real or not, arrested for Anne's own moral and

sexual crimes. And since there is no reason to believe this ever could have happened, it is

safe to infer that he was either recording an existing rumour or invented it himself for his

own literary ends. However, having poor morals imposed upon them does not necessarily

mean that they are both victims. Locke does leave space for temperament in this all-

encompassing education regime, stating that even though children are largely shaped by

their parents, they have certain traits that are "stampt" upon them by God.[42]

It is intriguing that Anne and Mary came from such similar backgrounds and

found themselves in almost identical circumstances, down to being on the same ship, yet

they are characterised very differently. This is an example of what I referred to as the

heroine/harlot dichotomy; it describes how even though Anne and Mary are both violent

pirates and criminals, they embody very different ideas of female morality and

sexuality.[43] This is a dichotomy that stays with the female pirate through the centuries;

fictional female pirates are usually an "Anne" or a "Mary", equals in their legitimacy as

pirates but with very different messages about morality, gender and sexuality.

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[41] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 624.
[42] Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, 123.
[43] The virgin/virago, saint/slut, heroine/harlot dichotomy is a well-established one in popular culture and has appeared in many forms. I must accredit David Cordingly for the specific phrasing of heroine/harlot, in particular his text *Heroines and Harlots: Women at Sea in the Age of Sail*, which also goes under the name *Women Sailors and Sailors' Women: An Untold Maritime History*, which is the edition that I use and cite.

Anne is the harlot: a red-haired Irish wildcat whose femininity is a threat to men

and a slave to her own wanton passions. Mary is the virtuous young woman who manages

to be modest, loyal and wholesome despite her piracy: our heroine. It is unlikely that it is

a coincidence that the harlot is Irish and the heroine is English, reflecting English

perceptions of their rebellious neighbours. The author is also probably drawing on the

heritage of Grace O'Malley, an iconic 16th-century Irish pirate queen and chieftain.[44]

This casting of the two women and their respective archetypes reappears consistently, but

while the traits remain the same the moral implications shift over the years, as do the

cultural preferences for one or the other.

Anne and Mary's respective motivations for going to sea (and to war in Mary's

case) mark critical differences in class and morality: Anne goes to sea out of a frivolous

rebellion against her father and social convention; Mary goes to war/sea out of financial

desperation. Anne is the middle-class daughter of a lawyer and does not have to put

herself in this difficult situation; Mary is working class, illegitimate, and has never done

anything else.[45] Though the two women seek freedom for their own reasons, for both of

them freedom is only attainable through masculinity (as it was for all early modern

crossdressing women). Patriotism was a common redeeming factor for crossdressing

women in literature; Turley notes that for the majority of Mary's chapter she is in the

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[44] Grace O'Malley has become an Irish national hero to many, and is often remembered for having negotiated with England's Queen Elizabeth I in a time when there were few powerful female monarchs. For more information on Grace O'Malley see Jo Stanley's *Bold in her Breeches*.
[45] There was also a class dynamic in the public reception of crossdressing women stories. For the most part, lower classes disliked them while the upper classes put them on a pedestal, but, regardless of class, initial contact with a real crossdressing woman (knowing that she was crossdressing) was overwhelmingly negative. Unfortunately, there is virtually no information on specifically how women responded, Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 74-5.

service of her country and is in fact not "at war against all mankind", the catchphrase of the pirate.[46]

In the literature crossdressing was often presented as the only alternative to sex work, therefore reinforcing the image of the modest crossdressing woman like Mary. In fact, there is no persuasive evidence of a link between crossdressing and sex work.[47] The idea is that the woman is so dedicated to protecting her virtue that she dresses as a man to prevent any potential sexual activity.[48] While in general crossdressing women are culturally and visually depicted as being sexually available, they could also embody the very height of chastity because of the lengths to which they would go to protect it in a situation where they were surrounded by virile men, for in the European tradition of crossdressing "taking on a male role and being accepted as a man is linked to the maintenance of virginity."[49] Though Anne crossdresses Johnson rarely discusses her disguise, implying that she was not going to the same lengths as Mary to preserve her purity, which in the eighteenth century was defined by self-control.[50]

One of the key ways in which the author of *A General History* highlights the moral difference between the two is their sexual and romantic relationships. Both of them have multiple heterosexual relationships with men, in varying degrees of disguise. When Mary fell in love with her husband-to-be in the army she became very stereotypical of a woman in love: distracted and emotional. When Mary finally reveals herself to the object of her affections – after her military work had suffered considerably – he is initially

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[46] Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*, 99.
[47] This does not include sex workers who would use crossdressing as part of the sexual services they provided, Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 54.
[48] Ibid., 26.
[49] Ibid., 34; Ibid., 45; Chastity through crossdressing was also a common trope in hagiography.
[50] John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 44.

delighted at the prospect of being the only man in the regiment to have a secret mistress all to himself but she very quickly makes it clear to him, and to the reader, that she is a modest and moral woman and that she revealed herself to him with only the purest of intentions. He is apparently so awed by her chastity that he almost immediately falls in love with and marries her. They settle into wedded bliss with the blessings of their regiment; this is an example of how the author heralds Mary as a moral being despite her circumstances. She is not dressing as a man because she wants to, because she identifies as a man, because she loves men's work; it is because it is the only way of life her mother taught her. She seeks heteronormativity and traditional gender roles. She conforms to society's ideals of womanhood as best she can and is constantly striving to meet those expectations, the author stating that she "did not want Bravery, nor indeed was she less remarkable for her Modesty, according to the Notions of Virtue".[51]

Notably, when she and her husband marry and she informs the regiment that she is a woman, Turley points out that Johnson phrases it as "the Story of two Troopers marrying each other", defining both Mary *and* her new husband as soldiers, for "In the topsy-turvy world of Mary Read, she is given a wedding present [from the regiment] *not* because she is a woman marrying a soldier, but because she is herself a fellow soldier. Johnson writes that two *soldiers* marry, not, I emphasize, that everyone recognizes that a soldier marries a woman whom he and everyone else thought was a male soldier."[52] Almost as soon as her husband dies, and she loses her moral and heteronormative compass, out of desperation she reverts so what she knows best: crossdressing.

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[51] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 156.
[52] Ibid., 155; Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*, 99.

Her next sexual encounter is, in fact, with Anne. After joining Rackam's crew, still disguised as a man, Mary is cornered and propositioned by Anne (also disguised), for, unlike the saintly Mary, she "was not altogether so reserved in Point of Chastity".[53] As sexually promiscuous and aggressive as Anne is, the instant she discovers Mary's sex any sexual or romantic activity ceases to be even conceivable to her. This story illustrates both sides of the heroine/harlot dichotomy and helps establish their characters. Anne is shown to be indiscriminately wanton, attempting to engage in sexual activity with someone she had just met, as well as unapologetically disloyal to her lover and captain, Rackam. This emphasises Anne's immoral character while still firmly reinforcing the heterosexuality of both women – there are some lines even an Irish hell-cat will not cross.

This is common in Early Modern stories of crossdressing women. Though the combinations may change (crossdressing woman pursuing another crossdressing woman, crossdressing woman pursuing heteronormative woman for appearances, heteronormative woman pursuing crossdressing woman thinking she is the pinnacle of manhood, etc.) this is a well-established trope in the literature. It illustrates how effectively the crossdressing woman passes for a man – they are often depicted as the ideal man but then rather unattractive as women – as well as reinforcing heteronormative dynamics.[54] In the eighteenth century homosexuality was understood not as an identity but as individual homosexual acts; and even this was more applicable to male homosexuality (sodomy) than to female homosexuality (tribadism).[55] Because conceptions of sex were extremely

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[53] Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*, 156.
[54] Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 16.
[55] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 49; Tribadism is a vaguely defined term that was used in the early modern period to describe women who had sex with other women. It was most often used to describe a woman who had a phallus-like appendage that she could use to penetrate women, therefore simulating phallocentric sex without having to use a dildo. This was most often applied to women who had an enlarged clitoris or intersex women who had a combination of male and female genitalia, Dekker and Van De Pol,

phallocentric it was easier to conceive of an abundance of phalluses rather than an absence of them in sexual activities.[56] This phallocentric view of sex meant there was no real conception of lesbianism as we know it today; women could not have sex because there was no phallus, therefore there was very little suspicion around female homosociality.[57] This additionally led to women who were sexually attracted to other women to struggle to understand their sexuality within this limited definition: "Practically no woman did know any examples of sexual relations between women and few...had even heard of them. Sexual desire and love was thought of as something that could only be experienced with a male. We can therefore assume that most women who fell in love with other women could not place or identify these feelings. Therefore it is logical that those women would think: if I cover a woman, I must be a man."[58] This on-the-brink homosexual experience between Anne and Mary allowed the reader to have the titillation of a scandalous homosexual event without having to deal with the social repercussions, as the moment it is revealed that they were both women any chance of a sexual encounter was eliminated, though "the trace of its potential reality still lingered."[59] In some ways, Anne and Mary are more of a couple than Anne and Rackam, or Mary and either of her unnamed lovers – this would especially be true in their cultural legacy.[60] This proposition

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The Tradition of Female Transvestism, 63; Despite being transgressors and oft compared to sodomites, homosexuality amongst pirates was never mentioned in any eighteenth-century sources, Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*, 2. This instance of Anne accidentally propositioning Mary is as close as it gets.

[56] Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 57; Julie Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids: Women Who Dressed as Men in the Pursuit of Life Liberty and Happiness* (London: Pandora, 1989), 53-55.

[57] The term lesbian was not used until the twentieth century, Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 57.

[58] Ibid., 57.

[59] Sally O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts: Criminal Woman and the Meanings of the Body," *The Eighteenth Century* 3 (2012): 365.

[60] In fact, sexuality was very rarely addressed in pirate literature in this century, and even then only as a means of demonizing or valorizing the pirates (either they rape innocent white women or they do not), Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*, 2.

story becomes a well-established piece of Anne and Mary's legend and cements them as a duo; their stories intertwined forever.

The crossdressing woman's inability to have phallic sex with a woman highlights the artificiality of their manhood, regardless of how many masculine characteristics they may embody. They may be able to take the masculine costume on and off – as the witness testimony in *Tryals* suggests Anne and Mary did – and perhaps even simulate a phallus, but it will not change their true nature.[61] This idea of the female pirate being betrayed by her own physicality will be even clearer in the depictions that follow *A General History*.

Mary's other heterosexual relationship is with a fellow pirate, which begins in a manner very similar to that with her deceased husband: with her, disguised as a man, falling in love with one of her comrades then revealing her sex to him. Again, when Mary fell in love it was blinding and all-consuming:

> [she] became so smitten with his Person and Address, that she could neither rest Night or Day ; but there is nothing more ingenious that Love, it was no hard Matter for her, who had before been practiced in these Wiles, to find a way to let him discover her Sex : She first insinuated herself into his Liking… When she found he had a Friendship for her, as a Man, she suffered the Discovery to be made, by carelessly shewing her Breasts, which were very white.[62]

The detail that her breasts were "very white" is to imply that she is modest and not revealing herself haphazardly – like Anne had just one paragraph ago done to Mary, creating even more of a dichotomy between their roles as heroine and harlot. It also "testifies to biological sex without solving the question of female sexual desire."[63] Breasts

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[61] Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 59.
[62] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 157.
[63] Manushag N. Powell and Frederick Burwick, *British Pirates in Print and Performance* (Palgrave MacMillan: US, 2015), 124.

are for the male gaze alone; this is before the breast became associated with motherhood and domesticity, which would take root in the second half of the eighteenth century and mature in the nineteenth.[64] However, it was in the eighteenth century that breasts were politicized for the first time. As a symbol they had been sacred in the Middle Ages and transitioned to erotic in the Renaissance.[65] The revealing of her breasts automatically altered her relationship with the man in both instances from friendship to erotic desire. The opposite was true with Anne.

Much like her relationship with her husband, Mary manages to establish something similar to a "normal" relationship in distinctly abnormal circumstances, again depicting their love as passionate yet wholesome, especially as they bonded over having both been upstanding people pressed into piracy: "Now begins the Scene of Love ; as he had a Liking and Esteem for her, under her supposed Character, it was not turn'd into Fondness and Desire ; her Passion was no less violent than his, and perhaps she express'd it, by one of the generous Actions that ever Love inspired."[66] Being pressed is an important distinction pirates for, as I said, it could mean the difference between life and death if they went to trial. For Mary specifically it contributes to her heroine role in opposition to Anne's willing harlot piracy participation. Though as much as the author asserts Mary's impressment, the witness testimony from *Tryals* and some points in *A General History* itself casts doubt on it.

There is one generous action of Mary's that is one of the most intriguing moments in her story. One of the other pirates challenges her lover to a duel and Mary knows that

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[64] O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts," 360.
[65] Marilyn Yalom, *A History of the Breast* (New York, Ballantine Books, 1997), 50.
[66] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 157.

he cannot win.[67] She also knows she cannot ask him to withdraw lest he be branded a coward but she cannot bear the thought of his death. Instead, she picks her own fight with the pirate and schedules her own duel for an hour earlier, takes his place and kills the other pirate. This story reinforces her moral heroine character because not only is she a heroine through her physical prowess but also through her generosity, loving nature and her willingness to sacrifice herself for her lover – an act that impresses even the author despite having probably have concocted it himself. Further, in *A General History* Mary claims not guilty to not only the charges of piracy but also fornication and adultery (charges that are not listed in *Tryals*), arguing that she considered her pirate lover to be her husband, adding that "he was an honest Man, and no Inclination to such Practices [piracy], and that they had both resolved to leave the Pyrates, the first Opportunity, and apply themselves to some honest Livelihood".[68] This is consistent with the author's desire to cast Mary as being a moral figure and an unwilling pirate, but is at odds with other key moments in the text, such as her frenzied resistance against capture: "none kept the Deck except Mary Read and Anne Bonny...upon which she, Mary Read, called to those under Deck, to come up and fight like Men, and finding they did not stir, fired her Arms down the Hold amongst them, killing one, and wounding others", as well as her decision to return to piracy after accepting Governor Woodes Rogers' pardon and promising to quit.[69] In *A General History* Rackam testifies that he, when he had still thought her a man, had asked her "what Pleasure she could have in being concerned in such Enterprizes, where her Life was continually in Danger, by Fire or Sword; and not only so, but she

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[67] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 212.
[68] Ibid., 158.
[69] Ibid., 156.

must be sure of dying an ignominious Death, if she should be taken alive?"[70] Her

response was that

> as to hanging, she thought it no great Hardship, for, were it not for that, every cowardly Fellow would turn Pyrate, and so infest the Seas, that Men of Courage must starve:— That if it was put to the Choice of the Pyrates, they would not have the punishment less than Death, the Fear of which, kept some dastardly Rogues honest; that many of those who are now cheating the Widows and Orphans, and oppressing their poor Neighbours, who have no Money to obtain Justice, would then rob at Sea, and the Ocean would be crowded with Rogues, like the Land, and no Merchant would venture out; so that the Trade, in a little Time, would not be worth following.[71]

It is not hard to comprehend why Mary would neglect to mention these events in her legal

defence, but what is odd is the author's apparent indecisiveness as to which one to

emphasize. Is she a pressed pirate, a pure and moral woman who is simply trying to be

the best she can despite her poor moral education and circumstances, or is she a dashing

and exciting pirate heroine who excels in her vocation? The inconsistencies seem to

indicate the author wanted her to be both. He has to reconcile how a woman can

believably be a crossdresser and a criminal (and an engaging one at that) while still

maintaining her morality. It is also interesting to note that Johnson gave Mary Read, one

of only two female pirates in the massive text, "the most articulate voice to justify

piracy...the ways that early-eighteenth-century writers represented piracy are very

complex: a dialectic of admiration and disgust for their transgressive homosocial world

and economic criminality."[72] Mary transcends her status as a criminal, a pirate and a

crossdresser through her unfailing moral fortitude and dedication to heteronormativity.

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[70] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 158.
[71] Ibid., 158-9.
[72] Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*, 100.

This language of courage is vital to Anne and Mary justifying their presence amongst the pirates and informs their crossdressing. In the eighteenth century courage was a distinctly masculine trait; however, since in the first half of the eighteenth century gender was performative, the courage that Anne and Mary not only show but *insist* is an integral aspect of their piratical masculinity. They go in and out of crossdressing, but what is important is asserting their masculinity more so than a biological manhood. Courage is one way to do so; not only was it a means of earning respect from the other pirates, it was part of the "uniform", whether or not they were passing.[73] This is illustrated when Anne and Mary refer to themselves and their actions using masculine pronouns, even when they weren't disguised; they were aligning themselves with masculine virtues. There is an instance when Mary demands that the other pirates "come up and fight like Men"[74] because despite their being women fighting was a masculine endeavour. As Dianne Dugaw states in *Female Sailors Bold* in *Iron Men Wooden Women*, "Behaving heroically and being an active protagonist in stories of any kind require "manliness" as a starting point".[75] But even more compelling, there are moments in which Johnson refers to Anne and Mary as "it". When Mary's mother first starts dressing her as a boy "she ventured to dress *it* up as a Boy, brought *it* to Town, and presented *it* to her Mother in Law, as her Husband's Son; the old Woman would have taken *it*, to have bred *it* up, but the Mother pretended it would break her Heart, to part with *it*; so it was agreed betwixt them, that the Child should live with the Mother, and the supposed Grandmother should

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[73] Rediker, "Liberty Beneath the Jolly Roger," 8.
[74] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 156.
[75] Dianne Dugaw, "Female Sailors Bold: Transvestite Heroines and the Markers of Gender and Class," in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920* eds. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996), 41.

allow a Crown a Week for *it's* Maintainance [italics mine]."[76] The author gives Anne the

same treatment: "he had a Mind to take *it* Home, to live with him; but as all the Town

knew *it* to be a Girl, the better to disguise the Matter from them, as well as from his Wife,

he had *it* put into Breeches, as a Boy, pretending *it* was a Relation's Child he was to breed

up to be his Clerk [italics mine]." It seems to be at the moment when they are both first

disguised as boys that cause the pronoun confusion, signalling a shift, an ambiguity, a

'costume change' of sorts.

While Anne is also aggressively heterosexual, she certainly does not meet the

same moral standard as Mary, nor does she strive for the same kind of traditional gender

roles. Anne's characterization as being wild, violent and deviant is established very early

in her life. The author describes her as having "a fierce and couragious Temper" and lists

off some examples of that temper, such as the alleged murder of a servant maid with a

case-knife (which the author claims to have debunked) and that she was so "robust" that

she once beat a man furiously for attempting to rape her.[77] This is a significant moment;

this establishes that Anne is only sexually active when she choose to be, confirming that

all of her subsequent sexual activity is a direct result of her own sinful desires.[78] She then

married a poor sailor with the last name Bonny (or Bonney, or Bonn), against her well-to-

do lawyer father's wishes. The two of them relocated to Providence (now the Bahamas),

which is where Anne met and ran away with Rackam. It is also where the Governor

threatened her and her mother with imprisonment as was discussed above. After

establishing Anne as wild and violent, in opposition to Mary, the author moves on to

weaponize her sexuality. Johnson goes into considerable detail in the appendix

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[76] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 154.
[77] Ibid., 164.
[78] O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts," 361.

distinguishing Anne as a wicked temptress who poses a threat to men. In Providence, despite her husband being "a likely young Fellow, and of a sober Life, considering he had been a Pyrate", Anne soon "turned a Libertine upon his Hands, so that he once surpriz'd her lying in a Hammock with another Man".[79] It is unclear whether this other man was Rackam or a third victim; regardless, the author's depiction of Anne's love life is very different from that of Mary's. Anne flits from man to man, with no real loyalties – not even to Rackam, as the reader was shown in the main text when she propositioned Mary and when her last words to Rackam before he was hanged were "*that she was sorry to see him there, but if he had fought like a Man, he need not have been hang'd like a Dog*".[80] *A General History*'s Anne does not fall in love; she experiences only lust. Rackam is portrayed as a sucker: falling into Anne's trap just as her husband did, making "his Addresses to her till his Money was all spent" and forcing him to return to piracy to secure more funds with which to woo her.[81] Rackam "had nothing but Anne Bonny in his Head…[and] lived in all Manner of Luxury, spending his Money liberally upon Anne Bonny, who was so taken with his Generosity, that she had the Assurance to propose to her Husband to quit him, in order to cohabit with John Rackam ; and that Rackam should give him a Sum of Money, in Consideration he should resign her to the said Rackam by a Writing in Form, and she even spoke to some Persons to witness the said Writing".[82] Anne brokered her own sale from her husband to her lover; it does not get much more cold and calculating than that. Anne jumps from one man to the next based on whichever is the most exciting or has the most to offer her, physically and financially. This story is

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[79] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 623.
[80] Ibid., 165.
[81] Ibid., 623.
[82] Ibid., 623.

perhaps the most poignant description of Anne's moral decrepitude, and is dripping with judgement of her "libertine" attitude towards sex and relationships. Anne also allegedly gave birth to Rackam's child in Cuba then promptly abandoned it to return to her carousing life as a pirate; she rejects her womanly role as a mother to her child, perhaps another consequence of lacking a proper moral education and role model from her own mother, who seemed to have set the tone for Anne's life when she gave birth to her illegitimately and in prison.

However, it is unclear when and for how long Anne and Mary actually disguised themselves as men. In *Tryals* witnesses state that they recognised them by the "largeness of their breasts" and that they would dress as women when not in battle. In *A General History* they are captured openly as women. But the story with Anne and Mary's first meeting has them both disguised as men and keeping their secrets from all except Rackam (Anne only told him about Mary because he became so wildly jealous of their closeness that he threatened to kill "him").[83] Anne initially went to sea disguised as a man when she ran away with Rackam and when Mary took her lover's place in a duel she was disguised as a man. What there does not seem to be is a 'big reveal'. It is questionable if Mary and Anne were ever disguised as men or simply wearing men's clothing without the intent of passing and Johnson altered that plotline in order to tap into existing tropes about crossdressing women in ballads, literature and opera. But whether or not it really happened, *A General History* immortalized it as part of Anne and Mary's legend and it has become the basis for much of what followed.

In *A General History* Johnson elaborates on their final fates. Mary, "Being found quick with Child, as has been observed, her Execution was respited, and it is possible she

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[83] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 157.

would have found Favour, but she was seiz'd with a violent Fever, soon after her Tryal, of which she died in Prison."[84] Anne's fate is more mysterious: "She was continued in Prison, to the Time of her lying in, and afterwards reprieved from Time to Time; but what is become of her since, we cannot tell; only this we know, that she was not executed."[85] What happened to Anne is still unknown; it has been theorized that her father or one of his colleagues spirited her away, and more elaborate stories have been fabricated over the years. However, it is telling that neither woman was executed. "[Johnson] refuses to reward [Anne and Mary] in the typical union, leaving Mary to die of "violent fever" in prison, and Anne to merely disappear from the record. This, too, seems problematic, for just as [Johnson] wants to glorify the pirate as a counter-heroic role, so, too, does he need to have Mary and Anne die as counter-heroes, rewarded only in their resemblance to the heroic ideal and in their sensationalist, corrective function."[86] Anne and Mary escape punishment from the authorities (Anne very literally so) yet they are not rewarded for their actions. They are betrayed by their own bodies; though pleading their bellies may have saved their lives from execution, it undermines their identity as pirates. It forces them not only to acknowledge their womanhood but to embrace it to save themselves.[87] But even in spite of that they still either die or disappear, rather anti-climactic endings for two such remarkable women. Johnson seems to be making a point that pirates, and crossdressers, though their stories are exciting to read, are doomed to a bad end and deserve punishment.

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[84] Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 159.
[85] Ibid., 165.
[86] Rob Canfield, "Something's Mizzen: Anne Bonny, Mary Read, "Polly", and Female Counter-Roles on the Imperialist Stage," *South Atlantic Review* (66 (2001): 51.
[87] O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts," 376.

Anne and Mary, as I have mentioned, share some characteristics with an extremely popular genre in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England: the warrior women tradition. Dianne Dugaw, the premier scholar on the topic, has assembled over 1000 variations of 115 songs in this genre.[88] Dugaw describes it as "a conventionalized heroine who, pulled from her beloved by "war's alarms" or a cruel father, goes off disguised as a man to sea or to war. The ballads are success stories. Their transvestite heroine, a model of beauty and pluck, is deserving in romance, able in war, and rewarded in both...this heroine is exemplary, a model of womanhood."[89] Though Dugaw discusses it almost exclusively in ballad form, it is applicable to other media such as literature and theatre.

This is a truly intriguing tradition, not only for its content but for its seeming contradictory notions of gender, for it depicts "a world which is simultaneously predictable and provocatively upside down." The core of the tradition is a heterosexual couple separated and reunited, but that very heteronormative plot is filled with inversion and reversal of expectations.[90] It is perhaps this very tension that provides the appeal. Anne and Mary certainly have some overlap with the warrior woman genre, the latter perhaps more so than the former. The idea of Anne and Mary as part of this tradition is necessarily complicated by their being pirates; it undermines the very essence of the warrior woman. I argue that while there are undeniable connections to this genre, especially in Mary's narrative, the two women have one foot in the old warrior women tradition and one foot in the newly developing genre of the criminal biography. Anne and

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[88] Dugaw, "Female Sailors Bold," 23-4.
[89] Ibid., 37.
[90] Dianne Dugaw, "Structural Analysis of the Female Warrior Ballad: The Landscape of a World Turned Upside Down," *Journal of Folklore Research* 1 (1986): 24.

Mary fall enough into the warrior women genre to create a sense of familiarity in the reader, but their being pirates necessarily problematizes it in new and interesting ways.

The existence of these ballads also proves the continuing presence of real 'warrior women' (crossdressing female soldiers and sailors). It is a self-fulfilling prophecy; the ballads and literature disseminated knowledge of these crossdressing women, which legitimized it to an extent, created a heritage and a manual for would-be warrior women, which in turn created more subjects for future stories.[91] A famous Dutch female soldier, Maria Van Antwerpen, was born in raised in Breda, the same town in which Mary ran her inn with her husband. It is possible, perhaps even likely, that she had encountered Mary's story and it inspired her to crossdress and go to war.[92] This also raises the question of if and how much Johnson could have altered Anne and Mary's stories to fit it into a pre-existing, guaranteed to be popular genre.

However, Anne and Mary switching back and forth between passing as men, crossdressing as men and openly being women sets them apart from the warrior woman. The warrior woman only crossdress for a specific goal (to rescue or find their husband/lover usually) then stop when they have accomplished it.[93] Anne and Mary switching between them implies a complexity of gender and morality that is not as easy to digest. Again, their piratical careers immediately muddles the warrior woman trope, which, while at first glance may seem to undermine ideas of heteronormativity and gender roles, reinforces them.

Mary's chastity is also typical of the warrior woman, for "The female warrior's acceptance was often based on denial of her sexuality and great emphasis was placed on

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[91] Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism*, 40.
[92] Ibid., 40.
[93] Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids,* 68.

her virginity or sexlessness in popular representations."[94] While Mary was neither a virgin nor sexless (Anne was most certainly neither) her modesty, which was especially out of character for a female criminal, serves the same ends. This emphasis on purity assumed that any woman who was at the front were sexually available.[95] If a woman could maintain her virtue even when surrounded on all sides by virile men, she must then be the very pinnacle of virginal purity. When Mary fell in love with her first husband we see this idea in action; he assumes that she will become his mistress precisely because she was there with the army, and it is only when she insists on modesty that he accepts otherwise.

This genre addresses the question of why were readers (and listeners) so fascinated with something that seems to defy their world view and all their conceptions of gender. As I have mentioned, these stories actually reinforce gender roles by highlighting their presence even in abnormal circumstances, such as Mary's ability to find heteronormativity even while disguised as a man on a pirate ship. Anne's harlot serves as a foil to Mary's heroine precisely in order to emphasize her heteronormativity and virtue.

The genre of passing women, while similar to that of the warrior women and also applicable to *A General History*, has some key differences from the warrior woman tradition. Theresa Braunschneider identifies the main difference as it being a more complex depiction of gender and crossdressing. This is accomplished through making the crossdressing woman's motivation not simply a story of two heteronormative lovers being reunited which immediately ends the need to crossdress. Instead, the genre describes "the woman's cross-dressing outside of any relation to a husband or male

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[94] Dekker and Van De Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism,* 12.
[95] This idea was reinforced by camp followers, women who would follow armies and often perform sexual services.

lover… [or] grows to relish manly adventures for their own sake. Moreover, these narratives tend to be structured episodically...they demonstrate far more interest in following their hero/ine through a series of adventures than in pursuing any kind of narrative coherence or closure."[96] Additionally, female homosexual relationships are present in the passing women narratives but absent from warrior women.[97] Though I continue to assert that Anne and Mary, though to varying degrees, are a part of the warrior women tradition, they also represent some of the defining characteristics of this passing women genre that Braunschneider describes.

Ironically, it is Anne, who morally speaking does not fit with the warrior woman genre as well as Mary, who follows a lover to sea as per the tradition. And still within that tradition Anne and Mary both engage exclusively heterosexual relationships, though like the passing women, they are not defined by those relationships and pursuits. However, the proposition incident between the two of them suggests a link to the passing woman genre as well. Additionally, the episodic format of their chapters in *A General History* is more similar to passing women than to the highly structured and consistent warrior women genre. These passing women explore more complex conceptions of gender and sexuality than the warrior women, and this complexity is certainly present in Anne and Mary's narrative, if only by nature of their piracy.

A General History is the first source to include a visual depiction of Anne and Mary (figure 2.1), another reason that I identify it as the centre point of their representational web. Visual depiction was another characteristic of Early Modern sensational literature, and as we will see, female pirates are almost always depicted

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[96] Theresa Braunschneider, "Acting the Lover: Gender and Desire in Narratives of Passing Women," *The Eighteenth Century* 45 (2002): 212.
[97] Ibid., 212.

visually.[98] The image itself is quite simple and probably relatively accurate, given that there was very little physical description given in either *Tryals* or *A General History*. It does seem that the artist used Dorothy Thomas' description of them from her testimony in *Tryals*: "wore Mens Jackets, and long Trouzers, and Handkerchiefs tied about their Heads; and that each of them had a Machet and Pistol in their Hands"[99] The image in *A General History* is in fact quite close this description, down to the handkerchiefs on their heads.

In this image it is de-emphasized that they are women; their long hair is the only potential giveaway but even then long hair was not uncommon amongst men at that time period. They are both heavily armed but quite static; there is no strong sense of movement or urgency even with the weapons, which are held loosely. They are dressed in traditional eighteenth-century seafaring garb and it is unclear whether or not they were meant to be disguised or just wearing men's clothing, but the caption negates any question of gender presented in the image. This reassures the reader that they were captured and are no longer a real threat, leaving the image to be observed from a position of safety.[100]

They are not the only pirates to be visually portrayed in *A General History*. They are accompanied by Bartholomew Roberts and Blackbeard, whose images are both more dramatic and stylized – but then again, they were Captains and much more prolific pirates. Nonetheless, the fact that Anne and Mary are famous and fascinating enough that they would be depicted alongside two of the Golden Age's most legendary pirates says something about their appeal. Their womanhood is what makes Anne and Mary exceptional as pirates and is inherently visual and physical; this, perhaps, is why there is

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[98] Wiltenburg, "The Origins of Modern Sensationalism," 1389.
[99] Baldwin, *Tryals,* 18.
[100] O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts," 359.

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such an emphasis on visual portrayals. It is also important to note that in the eighteenth century, and right up until the end of the twentieth century, there is virtually no female authorship. All depictions of Anne and Mary, visual and otherwise, are subject of both the male gaze and male artists.

A General History of the Pyrates was so popular that only a year later, in 1725, a Dutch-language second edition was published in Amsterdam, featuring an updated image of Anne and Mary (figure 2.2) and a new image of an allegorical female pirate as the frontispiece (figure 2.3).[101] This edition's quick succession after the original is an indication of *A General History*'s extreme popularity and illustrates the mythologization process the most clearly. Even only looking at the two relevant images, the changes are remarkably drastic and rapid.

In figure 2.2, the updated version of figure 2.1 from *A General History*, there is a clear line of influence. The differences are ornamental rather than foundational, but the differences are striking. They are both still heavily armed, as per Dorothy Thomas' description, but now they appear much more dynamic. There is smoke erupting from Anne's pistol and Mary looks coiled to strike with her cutlass. Instead of looking relaxed and holding their weapons loosely, the two female pirates look like they are in the midst of a battle. Their long hair is flowing in the wind and they are poised for action. It looks like they have been frozen in mid-battle whilst the 1724 image looks posed and stiff by comparison.[102]

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[101] Due to the edition being in Dutch, I will be looking solely at these two images.
[102] Interestingly, Blackbeard's image received a similar update; in fact, in *Zee-Roovers* Blackbeard's stance and position is identical to Anne's: Charles Johnson, *Historie der Englesche Zee-Roovers*, trans. Hermanus Uytwerf (1725), 136.

Their clothing is essentially the same, but more fitted in places and more open in others; this image has abandoned any sense of ambiguity about the genders of the two subjects. Their breasts are bared openly and are the focal point of the image, reminiscent of Dorothy Thomas' testimony of recognising them "by the largeness of their breasts".[103] While the shape of their breasts are revealed without a doubt, they are not entirely exposed. Their breasts are not solely visible for the purposes of the male gaze and sexualisation – though of course that cannot be understated – but because it is their womanhood that makes them captivating. Without their breasts they are just pirates, not crossdressing women, which is at the heart of their appeal. While in *A General History* the tension is between the image and the caption, perception vs reality, in *Zee-Roovers* the shock is between the female body and the pirate clothing, which as O'Driscoll correctly points out, results in it looking more like an "erotic party costume than real clothes".[104] The visual history of the female breast is really the history of the male perception and uses of the female breast; it was not until the end of the twentieth century that women as a group had any agency over their own breasts legally, culturally and socially.

In only one year, from the first edition of *A General History* to the second, there were huge steps in their mythologization, visible in the two images. After *A General History's* immense popularity, it seems that the aspects of Anne and Mary that appealed to audiences the most were placed front and centre (literally) and emphasized to the extreme: they are pirates, they are violent, and they are women. Even the ships in the background became bigger and more dramatic. Despite the realism of the 1724 image, to

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[103] Baldwin, *Tryals,* 18; In the seventeenth century Holland became (in)famous for their women's breasts, due to women having more freedom around the idea of acceptable public behaviour and because of their immense wealth, which created images of abundance both materially and physically. This perception carried on at least to the eighteenth century: Yalom, *A History of the Breast*, 103-4.
[104] O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts," 359.

a twenty-first-century viewer the 1725 image probably resonates more because of how deeply ingrained their story has become in our culture; and it is that dramatic, stylized story that has survived. That is the image that can be found on coffee cups and magnets in souvenir shops; that second image has come to be the default image of Anne and Mary.

As I mentioned, Anne and Mary's breasts have an important role in their narrative and the subsequent mythology and their portrayal in *Zee-Roovers* only heightens that. It is always their breasts that reveal them. That is common with crossdressing women narratives, but notably in Anne and Mary's stories they always have the agency of choosing to expose their breasts in order to pursue a heterosexual relationship. In this image that agency is taken away from them and instead their breasts, and identities, are visible for public consumption. This depiction of Anne and Mary embodies shifting perceptions of the female body and its social meaning in the eighteenth century.[105] Unlike *A General History*, this image forces the reader to see that the women are not normal and that they have strayed from what is proper while simultaneously offering titillation to the (male) viewer.[106]

Adding the tension between the female body and the pirate clothing asserts that the truth of their body cannot be contained by their piratical costume, both literally and figuratively. Instead of being a release from a constraint it is reminding us of their constraint of physical womanhood. Just as their breasts and pregnancies betray their true nature in the text, so it is in this and many later images.[107] In the second half of the eighteenth century, not long after this image was published, the meaning of the breast began to shift critically in western culture. It started to be associated with motherhood,

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[105] O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts," 360.
[106] Ibid., 360.
[107] Ibid., 360.

domesticity, middle class values and patriotism; this will become more evident in chapter two.[108] Therefore, how a woman used her breasts said something about her moral character.[109] This is also suggests the commodification of the female body for the male gaze, and at this time female criminals in particular were being increasingly sexualized as a reaction to the sanitization of middle and upper class women in literature: "Being criminal...makes these women public; being public makes them sexualized".[110]

There was an entirely new image added to this edition that is of interest to this thesis. The frontispiece (figure 2.3) depicts a bedraggled and grotesque bare-chested woman charging over a pile of bodies, Jolly Roger and cutlass in hand, with a fire ship and a row of hanged pirates in the background.[111] It is puzzling that a female figure was chosen as the symbolic representation of piracy when there were only two known female pirates at the time. But then, it was common for female figures to be used as allegories representing elevated concepts. She is a distortion of that long tradition of the female allegorical figure, the obvious examples being Lady Britannia, Lady Justice, the Statue of/Lady Liberty and Marianne, which Marina Warner defines as "the female form as an act of expression of designata and virtues".[112] There are similarities in their representations, including the classical imagery of togas and helmets. There is also what looks like a classical god of wind, perhaps Aoelus, and one of the corpses is clutching the scales of justice.[113] She (piracy) tramples justice both literally and figuratively. Placing

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[108] O'Driscoll, "The Pirate's Breasts," 360.
[109] Tribades did not factor into this discussion because their deviance is defined by their clitoris, which is the centre of *female* desire and pleasure, while the breast provides male desire; Ibid., 370.
[110] Ibid., 372-3.
[111] Rediker, "Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger," 18.
[112] Maria Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: the Allegory of the Female Form*, (London: Vintage, 1996), xix.
[113] Rediker, "Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger," 18.

the allegorical female pirate in this canon makes it into a hideous and satirical inversion of the noble ideals that are usually the subjects of such allegories.

The woman herself is grotesque to look at; her breasts are misshapen, her muscles pronounced to the point of emaciation. She, like piracy, is an abomination to all the world; a perversion, a scourge on society. She is supposed to repulse the viewer and remind them of the inversion of "normalcy" that is piracy. She is not only defying expectations of morality by being a criminal, she is the rejection of gender roles; she is the opposite of everything a woman should be. Even compared to Anne and Mary, who look attractive and striking, the pirate woman violently strikes the sensibilities of any decent person who may read this text. She is there to remind the reader not to overlook the crimes of the pirates, social and cultural as well as legal. She is lean and grim and violent, like piracy itself. She is not the exciting, dashing kind of piracy that Anne and Mary represent. She is the real, gruesome crime. She is a distortion of womanhood as piracy is a distortion of justice.

It is noteworthy to compare the image of Anne and Mary with the frontispiece; though they are all female pirates, the contrast is striking, most notably in their nudity. All three figures' breasts are visible, though with very different purposes. In the Medieval and Early Modern periods nudity was often used in visual art to communicate messages about morality. Medieval theologians identified four types of nudity, which Marina Warner describes in *Monuments and Maidens* as:

> *nuditas criminalis*, or the nakedness of the sinner, a sign of vice; *nuditas naturalis*, the human condition of animal nakedness, which should inspire humility since man alone among the animals has no covering…; *nuditas temporalis*, the figurative shedding of all world goods and wealth and status, voluntary or involuntary; and

nuditas virtualis, symbolizing innocence, the raiment of the soul cleansed by confession, the blessed company of the redeemed in heaven and of Truth herself.[114]

While all of these definitions have more explicit religious implications that most of the works that contain female pirates which I will be examining, I still think it is a useful framework for understanding the way the female pirate body is portrayed throughout the centuries and how its meaning is continuously evolving.

It was very intentional that Anne and Mary's breasts, though certainly relevant, are not entirely revealed, while the allegorical female pirate is completely bare-chested, for "Nudity is very rarely circumstantial, more frequently symbolic."[115] Anne and Mary suggest lust. Not only are they meant to be erotically pleasing to the viewer, but the fact that their breasts are only partially revealed is titillating, teasing. There is no *nuditas* of the *naturalis, temporalis* or *virtualis* variety here, but I argue that it still falls short of complete *nuditas criminalis*, which we do see in the frontispiece. Often it is the clothed woman who represents lust. She who has something to be ashamed of, who has something that can be removed: Eve after the Fall. And because, unlike the allegorical female pirate, Anne and Mary are physically alluring instead of repulsive, they represent a real threat to masculine virtue.

Nuditas criminalis applies to the allegorical female pirate in a very literal fashion – in many ways piracy was seen as the zenith of crime – but also because of her freakish appearance. In Christian beliefs, a corrupt soul results in a corrupt.[116] The human body is the inspiration for the "lexicon of sin – corruption, putrefaction, stain, filthy, decay..."[117] The hideous crone figure has a long history in Western visual culture as a means of

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[114] Warner, *Monuments and Maidens,* 295.
[115] Ibid.*,* 295.
[116] Ibid.*,* 296.
[117] Ibid., 296.

grappling with ideas like mortality, evil, sin and hell. Envy in particular was often depicted with pendulous breasts.[118]

Figure 2.1: Anne Bonny and Mary Read in *A General History of the Pyrates*, pg.160.

Figure 2.2: Anne Bonny and Mary Read in *Historie der Englesche Zee-Roovers*

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[118] Warner, *Monuments and Maidens,* 299.

Figure 2.3: Frontispiece in *Historie der Englesche Zee-Roovers*

The Beautiful Pyrate; Or, the Constant Lovers was originally written in French by Jean-Regnault Segrais in 1656. This technically falls outside of the scope of female pirates at which I am looking, but I am including this text because it was translated into English and re-issued in 1725.[119] Because the timing makes it almost certain that it was *A General History*'s popularity in Britain that led to the translation and republication and because translations always raises issues of alterations, as we already saw with *Zee-Roovers*, I have chosen to include it. This document is notable because it is one of the only two sources for this chapter that did not have a visual component, the other being

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[119] Powell and Burwick, *British Pirates in Print and Performance*, 131.

Tryals as was already discussed. It is also the first wholly fictional source I will be looking at - fictional female pirates are interspersed among the named depictions of Anne and Mary. *The Beautiful Pyrate* was re-issued in the same year as *Zee-Roovers*; Anne and Mary had by this point already cornered the market for female pirate characters, even pre-existing ones such as this. They seized western culture's collective imagination as soon as they burst onto the scene, and there are many parallels to draw between *A General History* and *The Beautiful Pyrate*.

Adelayda is a beautiful princess who is left in the care of a neighbouring Queen when her parents die. Prince Carloman, and Adelayda immediately fell in love, much to the Queen's dismay, who had designs for Carloman to marry her own daughter. The Queen plotted to send Adelayda away to marry a wealthy old Duke, convincing her that Carloman had betrayed and abandoned her. As Adelayda sailed away, she begged the man the Queen had employed to transport her, along with his wife and daughter, to tell her where she was going, who revealed to her the Queen's plan. Adelayda convinces the Queen's man to send his daughter in her place to reap the benefits of the marriage so Adelayda could seek revenge on Carloman. They went through with the plan, and Adelayda secured a ship, disguised as a boy, that pirates soon attacked and captured. She and the crew were enslaved on board the ship, but Adelayda (still disguised) incited a rebellion and seized control of the ship as the new Captain. In the meantime, Carloman had snuck into the Duke's home in order to rescue Adelayda (who was really the daughter in her place) only to get chased out by the Duke and fall into the ocean before he could see her. Adelayda's ship picked up Carloman, whom Adelayda still believed betrayed her, and he does not immediately recognise her. After some comedic confusions, the truth

comes out and they confess their love for each other and return home to find the Queen has gone away with her daughter.

Adelayda employs her crossdressing in a manner that is similar to Anne and Mary: not out of a sense of identity but the need to accomplish a goal that requires a male uniform. Adelayda falls much more decisively into the category of warrior woman than either Anne or Mary since, even though she does briefly turn pirate, there are extenuating circumstances. She crossdresses to get revenge against her lover whom she believes betrayed her – a common motivation for the warrior woman. She also stops crossdressing as soon as she is reunited with her true love, which as Braunschneider described above, separates her from the passing woman genre.

Adelayda is almost immediately cast as the Mary/heroine character. When Barbary Corsairs capture her ship she is already dressed as a man and is forced to join as a slave – just as British pirates captured and pressed Mary, and unlike Anne who intentionally became a pirate. There is a distinct feeling of unwillingness from both Mary and Adelayda towards their participation in piracy (though there are some contradictions in *A General History* and *Tryals* as to Mary's willingness), a key aspect in establishing them as the heroine figure.

Like Mary, modesty and purity are some of Adelayda's key traits. Her relationship with Carloman is also reminiscent of Mary's with her unnamed pirate lover. They are both passionate yet wholesome, loving and modest. Both have the women playing the more assertive and violent role; Adelayda on her way to hunt Carloman down for breaking her heart then rescuing him, just as Mary took her lover's place in the duel. They have the same aura of dominance and autonomy and it is implicitly acknowledged that both Mary and Adelayda are smarter, braver and tougher than their men. It is also implied

that Adelayda preserved her modesty through her crossdressing: "To find her still true to him, not violated in another's Arms, but struggling with Courage, thro' Dangers, dreadful even in thought, to any one of her Sex and tender Education, to preserve herself for him."[120] However, there is no clear counterpart for Anne in *The Beautiful Pyrate*.

Adelayda's heterosexual relationship is central to her plot, as was Mary's. But, unlike Mary, whose crossdressing is tangential to her relationships, Adelayda crossdresses and stops crossdressing for her man. For the entirety of her time as a pirate, all that is on her mind is Carloman. Granted, it is because she wants to exact her revenge upon him, but it is a distinctly heterosexual revenge: "she concluded, that either thro Inconstancy or Ambition of aggrandizing himself...he had sacrificed her. Fir'd with these Thoughts, she wish'd for her Liberty, only to go and revenge herself on him for his Inconstancy".[121] Her heartbreak is placed in the forefront of her character, especially as a pirate, to counteract any suspiciousness about her crossdressing. For Mary and Adelayda, love and marriage trumps piracy. But it is only for Adelayda that it is a means to an end, and that end is heteronormativity.

Adelayda, unlike both Mary and Anne, was never taught to crossdress as a child, but she did come from a broken home. She lost both parents at a young age and was raised by what was shown to be a terrible woman. She was not fated to crime and piracy as Mary and Anne were, but it perhaps was why she was good at it, and like Mary because God "stampt" goodness upon her she maintained her morality. Like both Anne and Mary, Adelayda was not only a good pirate, she surpassed the men. It is consistently

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[120] Jean-Regnault Segrais, *The Beautiful Pyrate* in *Five novels: translated from the French of M. Segrais, author of Zayde, and the Princess of Cleves. Viz. I. The beautiful pyrate; ... II. Eugenia; ... III. Bajazet; ... IV. Montrose; ... V. Mistaken jealousy; or, the disguis'd lovers.*, (London: D. Browne, 1725), 49-50.
[121] Ibid., 22.

not enough for women to be good enough as pirates: they must be exceptional. They are not nearly as endearing otherwise. It makes Adelayda's and Mary's distaste for piracy even more poignant; they are skilled because of factors outside their control, but they do not desire it as Anne does. That element of choice and desire is key to establishing the moral character of a female pirate.

Adelayda exhibited ideal feminine qualities such as modesty, pity and chastity even as a pirate, as did Mary. Adelayda only became a pirate in order to bravely lead a slave revolt and rescue the other captives. Adelayda and Mary are redeemable while Anne basks in her sin and piratical activities. Adelayda, however, does have an internal struggle between her male and female identities that Anne and Mary lack. She has a fascinating inner debate about revenge versus forgiveness, her masculine qualities battling her feminine ones.

> Shall I save a Villain [Carloman], whom I ought rather to wish swallow'd up by the Sea?...Who can express the different Sentiments of a distracted Soul?- Revenge, and the Miseries she had undergone, fill'd her with nought but cruel and dreadful Resolutions - Love, and the wretched Condition in which she saw *Carloman*, with Tenderness and Compassion...At length Pride, Jealousy, Revenge, and all other Passions, yielded to generous Love...If he has betray'd me, what greater Punishment can I inflict on him, than the Remorse he must feel at having thus barbarously treated one who so little derserv'd it?[122]

For the Mary/heroine type, love and womanhood will always be victorious over violence and piracy. Ultimately Adelayda's feminine side is triumphant and she chooses to release Carloman even though she believes he betrayed her. She shows him mercy and forgiveness, proving her moral strength – very different than Anne's frosty last words to her lover.

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[122] Segrais, *The Beautiful Pyrate,* 38-9.

While there is not visual depiction of her provided to the reader, there is a portrait of her in the story that is crucial to the resolution of the romance plot. Adelayda, disguised as a male pirate, rescues Carloman, who does not recognize her. It is then that she has the inner turmoil quoted above, for she is still under the false impression that he betrayed her. Both her identity and the truth of his love for her are revealed when she (still disguised) demands to see the portrait of his true love he wears around his neck, expecting to see the face of the woman for whom he betrayed her, but finding instead an image of her. She realizes the misunderstanding and reveals her identity to him, they are reunited and she stops crossdressing and pirating.[123]

So while the reader is not provided with the image itself, the idea of the female pirate being defined by her appearance remains. It is partly because of how their physical appearance (as women) is critical to what makes them unique as pirates. The fact they are women crossdressing as men adds another visual component that makes them interesting. That is why the ratio of visual depictions of female pirates is higher than that of male pirates. Even in a text which does not provide a visual portrayal of its female pirate, within the plot it is vital that there be one in order to explain and reveal her oddity as a woman and a pirate. It is a recurring trope that the female pirate is beautiful in spite of her crossdressing. Sometimes it is a pure beauty, like Adelayda (Mary's physical appeal is mentioned little but it seems likely that she would fall into this category) or Anne's carnal and deadly seductiveness.

The Beggar's Opera, written by John Gay in 1728, was one of the most popular plays in eighteenth-century England. Its controversial sequel, *Polly*, was censored and not permitted to be performed because of its questioning of imperialism and comparison of

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[123] Segrais, *The Beautiful Pyrate,* 48-49.

British politicians to pirates.[124] Before writing the two plays Gay had lost all of his money in a failed South Seas scheme, which caused his disillusionment with capitalism and colonialism in the Americas.[125] It was written in 1728-1729 but was not performed until 1777. However, *Polly*'s repression only increased its popular appeal even before it was performed.[126] I will be looking primarily at *Polly* because there are no pirates in *The Beggar's Opera*, but I will be using it for contextual information.

Polly is the first theatrical work I will be examining in this thesis but it is far from the last. There is a long tradition of pirates in theatre and opera with crossdressing as an established comedic trope. While to someone reading the script, as I did, there is no visual component, by its very nature theatre is visual and performative. Female pirates, defined by the visuality, are perfect subjects for theatre and will continue to reappear in this form through the centuries. *Polly* does not contain Anne or Mary by name, but contains two fictional female pirate characters that clearly take inspiration from the two women. However, the name Polly is derived from Mary (Mary-Molly-Polly).[127] This is the first example of something that will recur many times; Anne and Mary do not feature as named characters, but serve as clear inspiration for fictional female pirate characters. This leaves lots of room for interpretation in that the creator can choose whichever traits and stories they will use to best achieve their purpose. This often results in a distorted and piecemeal depiction. It is interesting to note which parts of the stories are plucked and to what ends; it also says something about the heroine/harlot dichotomy in whether both

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[124] Robert G. Dryden, "John Gay's *Polly*: Unmasking Pirates and Fortune Hunters in the West Indies," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4 (2001): 539.
[125] Ibid., 542.
[126] Rediker, "Liberty Beneath the Jolly Roger," 17.
[127] Powell and Burwick, *British Pirates in Print and Performance*, 132.

women are included, just one, or some kind of hybrid of the two, and what kind of moral message they are communicating.

In *The Beggar's Opera* Polly, the virtuous daughter of criminals, falls in love with Macheath, a polygamous criminal sentenced to hang but escapes. In the sequel, *Polly*, Polly pursues her degenerate husband to the British West-Indies where he has become a pirate known as Morano, disguised as a former slave. Polly is tricked and sold to a wealthy local landowner who tries to seduce her when pirates attack and Polly flees, disguised as a man. She meets some pirates and joins them in order to find Macheath, where she instead meets Cawwawkee, an Indigenous prince at war with the pirates and the colonists. Polly and Cawwawkee trick the pirates and escape while Macheath is killed in battle, and Polly at last can be free of him.

In *Polly*, the Mary/heroine character is the titular Polly Peachum and the Anne/harlot character is Jenny Diver. There are too many similarities between them, and so soon after *A General History*, for it to be a coincidence. From the very beginning of the opera female sexuality is cast as dangerous and threatening to men.[128] Another dimension is added to this dichotomy because Jenny is black. She is not only the dangerously bewitching and promiscuous Anne/harlot character; her sexuality has the addition of a savage eroticism that was the perception of black female sexuality during the time period. She is such a siren than even the womanizing cad Macheath cannot resist her primal charms, and goes to great lengths to please her – not unlike Rackam's blind devotion to Anne when he first meets her in Providence. Macheath's affection for her is so great that it causes his crew to doubt his strength and masculinity.

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[128] John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera and Polly* ed. Hal Gladfelder (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 27

Polly, on the other hand, is so loyal to the man she loves (despite being painfully

aware of his many faults) that she follows him to the West-Indies. She is more devoted to

her duties as a wife than she is to the man himself, hence why she appears largely

unaffected by his death; it frees her from her feminine responsibilities in the marriage.

Those are responsibilities Polly took very seriously; through all of her wild misadventures

her role as a wife was her primary concern, no matter what Macheath did to her. Fixing

her marriage was at the forefront of her mind.[129] This serves two purposes: it cements

Polly as the heroine and as heterosexual despite any necessary crossdressing. Like Mary

and Adelayda before her, Polly dresses as a man out of necessity and is forced into

becoming a pirate after having done so. However, Gay challenges the virtuous

women/heroine trope by having Polly fail to redeem the abominable Macheath, ultimately

calling her very virtue into question, since "a heroine's ability to influence a pirate's

moral compass is a strong marker of her honor".[130] Again, as we saw with Anne and

Mary, the element of piracy complicates the genre.

Jenny, like Anne before her, is in a sexual relationship with a pirate captain and

propositioning men she has just met (though unsuccessfully), showing her moral decay,

and the degree to which she crossdresses is unclear.[131] She is portrayed as manipulative,

superficial, disloyal and promiscuous. Both Polly's casting as the heroine and Jenny's as

the harlot is accentuated by the other through comparison. It would seem that there can be

a Mary on her own (as in *The Beggar's Opera* and *The Beautiful Pyrate*), but there cannot

be an Anne without a Mary against which to be juxtaposed. Mary by herself can be a

good and moral figure, but cannot risk someone mistaking Anne for being the protagonist

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[129] Gay, *The Beggar's Opera and Polly*, 179.
[130] Powell and Burwick, *British Pirates in Print and Performance*, 105-6.
[131] Gay, *The Beggar's Opera and Polly*, 141.

without a Mary to show the reader why Anne is debase. The heroines are defined by their wholesome heterosexual love and the harlots by their carnal and deviant love; Anne was an adulteress and Jenny was in an interracial relationship. Anne and Jenny's beauty makes the dangerous, which is why they are crossdressing less often, while Adelayda, Mary and Polly's beauty puts them in danger, which is why they crossdress more often.[132]

Polly, like Mary and Adelayda, is defined by her modesty. When she first reaches the West-Indies she is almost immediately sold to a local wealthy man without her knowledge, thinking it was a maidservant position. Once there the wealthy man offers Polly power and position if she agrees to become his mistress. Polly is appalled and refuses; even before the reader meet Jenny they learn that Polly is having none of this carnal impropriety. One can only assume that Jenny would have accepted such an offer, since she sees sex as a tool to achieve her goals and enjoys it for its own sake.[133]

But the most striking similarity between Anne/Mary and Jenny/Polly is a certain comical anecdote that both pairs share; the scene when the harlot makes sexual advances towards the heroine, not realizing that she is a woman disguised as a man. In *Polly* this serves the same purposes it does in *A General History*, but since it is also a direct reference to *A General History* it places *Polly* firmly in the Anne and Mary canon.[134] However, unlike Mary, Polly does not reveal her identity to Jenny, who is an antagonist to her in a way that Anne was not to Mary. But, if she had, there is little doubt that the result would have been the same: an immediate dissolution of any sexual attraction. Additionally, Polly echoes the implications about gender in *A General History* by indicating that she believes in certain traits being masculine (courage and resolution) and

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[132] Gay, *The Beggar's Opera and Polly*, 123; 136.
[133] Ibid., 130.
[134] Ibid., 147-151.

others being feminine, and so she does not see herself as a woman exhibiting masculine traits but posing as one in order to use those traits. To use male traits, she must become a man: "I must put on the courage and resolution of a man".[135]

I have discussed the genre of warrior women and passing women at length and they are generally applicable to female pirate fiction. However, Robert Canfield argues that *Polly* is more of a satire of *A General History* and the romance/warrior woman genre. Gay does not glorify pirates the way Johnson and other writers of the period do; while pirates are most often depicted as outsiders and 'freedom fighters' of a sort, in *Polly* they are as much agents of imperialism and capitalism as the West Indies colonists. Gay's choice to villainize *both* the pirates and the colonists, thereby equating the two, while heroizing Polly and Cawwawkee and his "savage" native people turns the standard narrative on its head – it is little surprise that it was so censored and so popular. Unlike in *The Beggar's Opera*, in which no one was punished or rewarded, *Polly* ends with a definitive moral statement: Macheath is killed in battle, the colonizers are defeated by the Natives and Polly, though having failed in her goal to reclaim and redeem Macheath, is finally free from her enforced role as a romantic heroine.

Polly's journey to reclaim her husband, while on the surface seems noble and virtuous, ultimately turns out to be a burden of the Western romance tradition. It forced her to blindly pursue a cruel and thoughtless polygamist criminal and to act against her own well-being in the interest of conforming to the expectations for a romance heroine. She can only successfully do this once Macheath is dead and she is free to ally herself with the Native Prince Cawwawkee.[136] Through *Polly* Gay intentionally engages with

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[135] Gay, *The Beggar's Opera and Polly*, 138.
[136] Canfield, "Something's Mizzen," 56.

traditionally lower class genres, such as those of crossdressing women that I described in relation to *A General History*. This is in itself a manifestation of Gay's protest against capitalism, imperialism and colonialism with which he engages in the text. He uses the setting of the West Indies and the characters of pirates as a way to consider ideas of class, a common theme in pirate fiction.[137]

On a similar note, Jochen Petzold argues that one of the most subversive and underappreciated aspects of Gay's satire is that Polly is not nearly as virtuous as she seems at first glance. Petzold goes so far as to call her Machiavellian, specifically embodying the thinker's famous statement that "it is much better always to seem virtuous than always to be virtuous".[138] Gay spends the entirety of *The Beggar's Opera* establishing Polly as a sympathetic and virtuous character, only to intentionally challenge that foundational aspect of Polly's character in the sequel.[139] Crossdressing, ironically, is not one of the things that calls Polly's character into question. She pledges allegiance to the pirates not out of desperate self-preservation but to further her own goals. She uses flattery, manipulation and deceit to ensure her passage among the pirates – but only once she finds out that Macheath is among them. This raises the question of whether them being criminals justifies this behaviour; Petzold insists that it does not. The more layers of deceit she dons, the more emphatic are her declarations of honesty and faithfulness. She even corrupts the 'noble savage' Cawwawkee.[140] Gay disputes the worth of Polly's allegedly noble mission to recover Macheath and her own nobility. Petzold also points out that even Polly's love for Macheath is flawed, that she is "addicted to Macheath's

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[137] Canfield, "Something's Mizzen," 47-49.
[138] Jochen Petzold, "Polly Peachum, 'a Model of Virtue'? Questions of Morality in John Gay's *Polly,*" *Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies* 35 (2011): 345.
[139] Ibid., 346.
[140] Ibid., 348-9.

'person' – a term that obviously does not include the mind – and in modern terminology their marriage could be described as a relationship of sexual dependency. This dependency is stronger than her self-professed love of virtue".[141] This hypocrisy is reminiscent of Mary giving her rousing pro-piracy speech while still claiming to have been forced to turn pirate against her will; however, in *A General History* I suspect the hypocrisy is Johnson's inconsistency while Gay wrote Polly's hypocrisy very intentionally.

Like *Polly*, John Cartwright Cross' *Blackbeard and the Captive Princess* was one of the most popular plays in eighteenth-century Britain. It was first staged at the Royal Circus Theatre in 1798 London, and bears considerable resemblance to *Polly* both in subject matter and in genre. Even within the eighteenth century Anne and Mary have become favourites in the theatre industry because of the fascinating tension between their physicality and behaviour. Blackbeard and his jolly crew capture a Mogul ship carrying the princess and her betrothed. Blackbeard kidnaps the princess and brings her back to his hideout in Madagascar, where his wife Orra grows angry and jealous. Blackbeard orders two of his crewmembers, one of which is Nancy, a woman in disguise, and the other her lover William, to kill the princess' betrothed. However, William and Nancy help the betrothed escape whilst Orra tries to kill the princess. Blackbeard interrupts and kills Orra instead. He attempts to seduce the princess, but is haunted by his wife's angry spirit. The British Captain Maynard attacks Blackbeard's ship, and Blackbeard orders that the princess be put in the powder magazine and blown up should they lose the battle. The betrothed prevents Blackbeard from setting fire to the powder magazine and Captain

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[141] Petzold, "Polly Peachum, 'a Model of Virtue'?" 354.

Maynard kills him. The princess and her betrothed are reunited and the British are victorious.

There are three female characters in this play, and the most minor of them is Nancy, the female pirate. In true warrior woman fashion, she follows her lover to sea and, like Mary, is extremely protective of him. Also like Mary, she and her lover were both pressed into piracy. This is a key aspect of the female pirate heroine figure; it is acceptable for her to be good at piracy as long as she did not join willingly, even if that results in contradictions. There is also an Anne character: Orra, Blackbeard's wife (one of many, if *A General History* is to be believed). As a harlot, she is violent, sexual, cunning and in a manipulative relationship with a pirate captain. It is also similar to *Polly* in how even though there are clear lines of inspiration back to Anne and Mary – or back to Polly and Jenny, unaware of Anne and Mary, hence the web concept– Cross does not name either the heroine or the harlot directly after Anne and Mary. The two female pirates will not start becoming subjects of historical fiction as the modern readers know it until the twentieth century. Nonetheless, whether Cross looked to *Polly* or *A General History* for inspiration, the centre point of the web remains the same; the representations are merely getting further away in both time and subject.

The eighteenth century witnessed the birth of the myth of the female pirate. There were female pirates before and after Anne and Mary but none that have rivalled them in the degree to which they have infiltrated western popular culture. Chapter two the only primary documents that interacted directly with the two women, *The Tryals of Captain Jack Rackam and Other Pirates*, which paved the way for them to be immortalized in *A General History of the Pyrates* and its many editions and translations. That suddenly catapulted them into the public consciousness and in the over three centuries that

followed they have never truly left it. Even in the decades after their deaths (or at least disappearance) they lived on through works of popular culture including *The Beautiful Pyrate; Or, the Constant Lovers*, *The Beggar's Opera, Polly* and *Blackbeard and the Captive Princess*..

Female pirates in the eighteenth century engaged with complex ideas of gender, sexuality, morality and criminality. They may have appeared to be "topsy-turvy" as Hans Turley put it, but when one looks closely they actually reinforce dominant ideas of the period through long cultural traditions. Female crossdressing was, while perhaps not an everyday occurrence, an aspect of European culture that had long been widely disseminated through ballads, literature and theatre in the warrior women, passing women and criminal biography genres, and by the women themselves. Oftentimes, the reason a woman began to crossdress decided their moral character. Some acceptable reasons for crossdressing included rescuing a male lover, patriotism, financial need (Mary) or fleeing an abusive lover. Less sympathetic reasons were thirst for freedom (Anne) and homosexuality. Because gender was conceived as being performative to a degree, this made it easier for women to dress or disguise themselves as men. Additionally, stories of crossdressing women would show women attempting to maintain heteronormative dynamics, whether that meant dressing themselves as men in order to pursue women or, like Anne and Mary, being heterosexual despite crossdressing. Anne and Mary are exceptional among the tradition of crossdressing women in literature because of their criminality, just as they are exception among pirates for being women. Being at this unique intersection is very likely a cause for their popularity.

The sources in this chapter established the stories and tropes that would become myth. I will track the ways conceptions of eighteenth century crossdressing criminal

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women shift and evolve to reflect the time period in which they were written as much as they time period they represent. Female pirate fiction will continue to explore the intersections of gender, morality and sexuality through the recurring heroine/harlot dichotomy, consistent visual representations and the unending process of mythologization. In the next chapter I will branch out further in their web of representations to look at depictions of the female pirate in the nineteenth century and how that relates to evolving ideas in Europe and America about gender, nationality, revolution and the perception of Golden Age pirates.

Chapter Three

The Nineteenth Century: Romanticism and American Identity

If the eighteenth century is when Anne and Mary's story was born, the nineteenth century is when it came to maturity. The nineteenth century was the Golden Age of the fictional pirate, home of some of the most iconic fictional pirate characters, including Robert Louis Stevenson's Long John Silver (and the rest of the *Treasure Island* pirates) and Lord Byron's Conrad from *The Corsair*. This chapter examines the historical and cultural evolution of eighteenth-century Golden Age pirates and their mythology as they became progressively further away in both time and distance from the centre of the web discussed in chapter one. It begins with what is probably the most illustrious source, Eugène Delacroix's 1830 painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple*, followed by the *Pirates Own Book: Authentic Narratives of the Most Celebrated Sea Robbers* by Charles Ellms in 1837. It then considers the massively popular 1844 *Fanny Campbell, The Female Pirate Captain ; Tale of the Revolution* by Maturin Murray Ballou, then jumps overseas to France in 1846 to P. Christian' *Histoire des pirates et corsaires de l'océan et de méditerranée depuis leur origine jusqu'a nos jours*. Next is the 1847 dime novel by Benjamin Barker, *The Pirate Queen ; or, the Magician of the Sea, A Tale of the Piratical Era* followed by the famous Gilbert and Sullivan opera *The Pirates of Penzance; or, the Slave of Duty* in 1879 and finishing with the children's text *The Queen of Pirate Isle* by Bret Harte in 1886.

Two of the above texts are historical in the sense that they retell the stories of Anne and Mary (*Pirates Own Book* and *Histories des pirates*) and the rest feature fictional female pirates that either take direct inspiration from Anne and Mary's

mythology or unwittingly participate in their cultural legacy that had by that point

saturated perceptions of female pirates. The heroine/harlot dichotomy so often present in

female pirate stories continued into the nineteenth century, but with shifting conceptions

of gender, morality and sexuality – particularly due to the gender spheres of the time –

this resulted in a very different depiction of female pirates as a whole. There was still a

preference for Mary, but female pirates, and criminals in general, were viewed in morally

black-and-white terms more than ever before. This was due in part to the drastic decline

and eventual elimination of Atlantic piracy in this century, which had a considerable

impact on the relationship between pirates and society and the role of pirates in popular

culture. This also led to the mythologization of pirates to take a more romantic turn, and

the relationship between pirate fiction and the developing field of pirate history magnified

the already growing romanticism of eighteenth-century pirate stories. Additionally, in the

nineteenth century the largest producer by far of (female) pirate fiction was the United

States, overtaking Britain, which had dominated the eighteenth-century market. American

authors used pirate fiction as a means of engaging with and creating a national identity

that was grounded in maritime culture.

There was a steady decline of piracy after the Golden Age ended in 1722 but it did

not disappear entirely. It was characterized by smaller, isolated incidents instead of a

widespread scourge.[142] However, there was a slight resurgence in the early 1800s. It was

a time of peace following the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812, which put tens of

thousands sailors and privateers suddenly out of work – a perfect storm for pirates.[143] By

the 1820s Caribbean piracy had been stamped out entirely, at least partially due to the

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[142] Angus Konstam, *Piracy: The Complete History* (Oxord: Osprey, 2008), 272.
[143] Ibid., 273.

growing American navy, but continued on a relatively large scale in Latin America.[144] It

was precisely because of this drastic decrease in piratical activity and its presence as a

day-to-day threat (as it was in the eighteenth century) that allowed for a more

romanticised image of pirates to develop. In 1823 American newspapers reported 3000

acts of piracy since 1815, mostly in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean; so while

piracy was rarer than it ever had been, it meant that when it did occur it was much more

alarming – which led to a mixture of fear and romanticism in the nineteenth century.[145]

  While piracy declined in the first half of the nineteenth century, print culture

boomed.[146] The idea of what a book is was changing radically. Literature was in the

process of being democratized and becoming, in the words of Isabelle Lehuu, "cheap,

sensational, ephemeral, miscellaneous, illustrated and serialized."[147] But instead of being

an egalitarian force it drew even stricter lines along social divisions of class, race and

gender. With this came the distinction between "highbrow" and "lowbrow" culture, the

latter of which includes the vast majority of pirate fiction.[148] Pirate fiction was a well-

established genre by the nineteenth century and some of the best-known works on the

topic are from this century. I cannot overstate the influence these texts had on the

perception of piracy as a whole. They essentially came to define pirate fiction, and are as

much causes of pirate romanticism as they are symptoms. And as I have discussed, the

fictionalized stories people tell about pirates tell us more about the time in which they

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[144] Grace Moore, introduction to *Pirates and Mutineers of the Eighteenth Century: Swashbucklers and Swindlers*, ed. Grace Moore (England: Ashgate, 2011), 7. Some notable early-nineteenth-century pirates were Benito de Soto, David Porter, Jean Lafitte and Pedro Gibert, who in 1835 was the last pirate executed in America: Konstam, *Piracy*, 284. Piracy continued to rage in other parts of the world, including the rise of Mistress Ching I Sao in China, the most successful pirate of all time.
[145] Ibid., 279.
[146] Isabelle Lehuu, *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 3.
[147] Ibid., 7.
[148] Ibid., 10-11.

were written than what is being written about. In her article, "Hemispheric regionalism: romance and the geography of genre", Gretchen Woertendyke states: "[the] separation of history and truth from fiction and romance highlights romance as the truest form of history, one in which the writer and reader pull away from the minute, date-driven focus of history, into a broader perspective capable of representing the truth of modern existence."[149] Many of the works of pirate fiction engage with complex historical ideas in this manner.

It is no coincidence that it was also during this time that the first modern historians and historical methodology began to emerge. By 1900 American universities had created more than 200 historians, with even those at the end of the century asserting the low quality of their predecessors, many of whom were writing "histories" of piracy that were more fiction than fact; one of the first reputable pirate histories was *The Barbary Corsairs* by Stanley Lane-Poole in 1890.[150] Writers were beginning to develop a sense of historical accuracy while eschewing it at the same time, and by the end of the century pirates were firmly in the realm of myths and legends. Writers, journalists and historians alike were engaging with the idea of romanticism while simultaneously romanticising.[151] In "Pirate Chic: Tracing the Aesthetics of Literary Piracy" Mel Campbell describes nineteenth-century pirate fiction as being "1% crime and 99% swashbuckling."[152] Popular and easily identifiable Golden Age pirate imagery that was established in the eighteenth century, such as the Jolly Roger, would become ingrained

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[149] Gretchen J. Woertendyke, "Geography, Genre and Hemispheric Regionalism," *Atlantic Studies* 10:2 (2013): 217.
[150] Janice Hume, "The Buccaneer as Cultural Metaphor: Pirate Coverage in Nineteenth-Century American Periodicals," *American Journalism* 19:1 (2002): 73; C.R. Pennell, "Who Needs Pirate Heroes?" *Northern Mariner* 2 (1998): 63.
[151] Hume, "The Buccaneer as Cultural Metaphor," 65-67.
[152] Mel Campbell, "Pirate Chic: Tracing the Aesthetics of Literary Piracy" in *Pirates and Mutineers of the Eighteenth Century: Swashbucklers and Swindlers*, ed. Grace Moore (England: Ashgate, 2011), 11.

and exaggerated in the nineteenth century. It is these dashing, anti-hero pirates who would inspire twentieth- and twenty-first-century action film pirates in particular.[153]

The nineteenth century was a century of change and upheaval; in addition to the field of history, exploding print culture and declining piracy, ideas about gender and sexuality were shifting as well. It was not perceived as performative or flexible as it was in the eighteenth century, but instead biological and 'natural'. With the rise of first wave feminism women had a changing relationship with the state; there were more working women earning their own money – especially in the lower classes – and they had more legal power regarding property and inheritance.[154] Gender relations in the nineteenth century are most commonly described using the spheres metaphor; women inhabited the domestic sphere and men the public. But we must be careful when using the spheres metaphor to understand the nineteenth century because of its tendency to oversimplify. The nineteenth century's desire to cling to the spheres perhaps implies that their assertion of its dominance actually was a reaction to its weakness.[155] For example, people only started using the phrase 'a woman's place is in the home' in earnest when lower class women started leaving the home en masse.[156]

Women were seen as the gatekeepers of virtue. In America especially women were burdened with the moral well-being of the nation, meaning it was even more vital that they themselves be the pinnacle of virtue; this idea was manifested in the concept of

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[153] Campbell, "Pirate Chic," 12.
[154] Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *The Journal of American History* 1 (1998): 22-24; First Wave feminists would sometimes use crossdressing heroines as an argument in favour in women's legal rights and suffrage. One of the main arguments for not giving women the vote was because they did not contribute to the defence of the nation - these crossdressing women were evidence that when the opportunity arose, women would gladly take up arms, Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 119.
[155] Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place," 22.
[156] Ibid., 12.

Republican Motherhood. Female passion and sexuality were seen with fear and suspicion and became symbolic of all corrupting influences on society that needed to be restrained.[157] Nineteenth-century women were put on a moral pedestal, meaning they had further to go if they fell. Virtue, like gender, was thought to be innate and natural, not behaviour-based as in the eighteenth century; this conception venerated white middle class women while viewing lower class women and women of colour as debased.[158] It was in this time period that the now-ingrained virgin/virago (heroine/harlot) trope took root on a large scale. The fallen woman trope is ancient, but now instead of a story of redemption it became a story of a fallen woman staying fallen.[159] Between the 1880s and the First World War the spheres began to dissolve, with more and more women joining the workforce and entering the public sphere.[160] It was during this time that sexuality became an aspect of identity, similar to today.[161] But as Linda Kerber and other historians have pointed out, this metaphor can be reductive and an over-simplification of decades of complex gender relations in many different nations and communities. So while it can be a useful tool for articulating and understanding nineteenth-century gender, one must be careful not to blindly assume that it is objectively true in every instance.

Along with gender, ideas of sexuality were revolutionized as well. The spheres often reinforced divisions by gender, which resulted in closer homosocial friendships – which could become homosexual – but they lost their innocence at the end of the century with the rise of gay rights movements and the growth of the first homosexual subcultures and communities in urban centres. By this point it was more of a legal infraction than a

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[157] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 44-45.
[158] Ibid., 45-6.
[159] Ibid., 70.
[160] Ibid., 172.
[161] Ibid., 225-6.

religious one, which it had been earlier.[162] As in the eighteenth century, male

homosexuals were seen as more threatening than lesbians (and more common).[163] It was

also during this time period, at the end of the 1800s, that sex and sexuality became a

biological and scientific matter for doctors and scientists to manage.[164] This also

contributed to the perceived infallibility of the spheres framework. Female homosexuality

was still understood within a heterosexual framework, though to a lesser degree than in

the eighteenth century.

The idea of what 'female strength' looked like changed along with conceptions of

gender. Crossdressing women were not celebrated the way they were in the eighteenth

century, and were less common in both fiction and real life. The spheres widened the gulf

between women and seafaring, which was in the public sphere, making women who

transgressed the spheres less widely appealing. However, there were surges in

crossdressing narratives' popularity during times of war, functioning as pro-American

patriotic propaganda.[165] Menie Murie Dowie in her 1893 book *Women Adventurers*

argued that by the end of the nineteenth century it was no longer necessary for women to

disguise themselves as men in order to gain freedom.[166] She believed, as many did in the

nineteenth century, that the fact that women no longer had to imitate masculinity in order

to be heroines made their non-crossdressing heroines superior to their crossdressing

counterparts in the previous century, revealing a sense of historical superiority.

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[162] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 130, 123.
[163] Ibid., 121.
[164] Ibid., 146.
[165] Robin Miskolcze, *Women & Children First: Nineteenth-Century Sea Narratives & American Identity*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 133.
[166] Dugaw, "Female Sailors Bold," 47.

Crossdressing women in the 1800s were an 'other', and not normalized the way they were earlier. They were neither wholly male nor female.[167] Robin Miskolcze discusses how the appeal of patriotic women, crossdressing or not, betrayed American anxieties about the "appearance of loyalty" since they were "no longer tied to Britain and its social class system" and were "concerned that the markers of identity, class, and character had become unmoored. Loyalties could no longer be determined through appearance alone."[168] But this did not prevent them from being a popular topic for fiction, and as the eighteenth-century women warriors turned the world upside down but always righted it in the end, so did nineteenth-century sea heroines. As growing numbers of women were challenging the spheres, these narratives revealed insecurities about women's roles in society, something that we will see again following the World Wars in the twentieth century. In Holly Kent's words, "authors [wrote] narratives designed to at once confront and dismiss emerging ideas about women's public power."[169] Crossdressing women became especially popular in the second half of the nineteenth century in America, but had very few European and British counterparts, where the heyday of crossdressing women had already passed.[170]

The most famous work I will be looking at in this thesis is *La Liberté guidant le peuple* by Eugène Delacroix in 1830 (figure 3.1), which depicts the French July Revolution in that same year. It is also arguably the only work of "highbrow" culture that I will be examining, and has had immeasurable cultural influence. Pirate fiction,

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[167] Dugaw, "Female Sailors Bold," 52.
[168] Miskolcze, *Women & Children First*, 134-5.
[169] Holly M. Kent, "'Our Good Angel': Women, More Influence, and the Nation in Antebellum American Pirate Novels," *Limina* 14 (2008): 51.
[170] Katherine Anderson, "Female Pirates and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Popular American Fiction," in *Pirates and Mutineers of the Eighteenth Century: Swashbucklers and Swindlers*, ed. Grace Moore (England: Ashgate, 2011), 95-96.

regardless of its popularity and influence, is almost always among "low culture", but clearly this piece is not an overt depiction of piracy. But what we do have is potentially one of the most poignant and surprising moments of female pirate mythologization. Marcus Rediker in "Life beneath the Jolly Roger: The Lives of Anne Bonny and Mary Read, Pirates" in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920* argues that it takes inspiration directly from the 1725 frontispiece of *Zee-Roovers* (figure 2.3) from the previous chapter.

Rediker's evidence is circumstantial but compelling. It is known that Delacroix would take inspiration for his paintings from real people and historical sources, and said himself that he would study old woodcuts.[171] By the time Delacroix started this painting there were at least 20 editions of *A General History*, including six in French, some of which included the 1725 frontispiece.[172] Delacroix was also a fan of Lord Byron, whose 1814 romantic pirate work *The Corsair* was one of the definitive works of pirate fiction and helped to shape the more romantic notion of piracy on which Delacroix might be drawing.[173]

The paintings share classical imagery: the armed bare-chested woman carries a flag while charging over a heap of bodies, looking back to those she is leading. Only instead of looking back to a line of gibbeted pirates, Liberty looks back at her revolutionaries, urging them on. Even the placement of figures and objects, as well as the positioning and garb of the women, seem too similar to be coincidental. Instead of pirates, Liberty is surrounded by gamins (street urchins) with pistols, students, Garde Nationale, labourers, artisans and workers at her feet – essentially everyone involved in the July

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[171] Rediker, "Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger," 19-20.
[172] Ibid., 21.
[173] Ibid., 22.

Revolution.[174] They are both wearing a Phrygian cap, which Roman slaves who had been

released from bondage wore, hence its association with freedom and change.[175] Like the

allegorical female pirate, Liberty is no waif. She is muscular, strong and robust (though

healthier looking than the female pirate). They both embody ideas about freedom, but in

very different ways. As I discussed, the pirate is grotesque, a distortion of both justice and

womanhood, a play on the tradition of female allegories for abstract concepts. Delacroix's

Liberty, however, embodies the noblest ideal. There are many different interpretations of

this painting and the exact meaning of Liberty. There are some controversial elements

about Delacroix's Liberty – scandalously, she has underarm hair and was accused by

critics of looking like a common prostitute.[176]

A notable similarity between the two allegorical women are their visible breasts.

Maria Warner argues that Liberty's exposed breasts are an additional symbol of freedom:

"a primary exotic zone is liberated from eroticism as eroticism is a condition of the

depicted female body, a semi-naked figure, who is no longer constrained by it becomes

free."[177] She is not intentionally revealing her breasts; they are revealed because she is

passionately preoccupied with more important things and not thinking of herself and her

own modesty.[178] This is very different from Anne and Mary's *nuditas criminalis* in *Zee-*

Roovers (figure 2.2); Liberty is *nuditas naturalis* and therefore sending a very different

message. For although she takes a female pirate as her visual inspiration, Liberty is not a

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[174] Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 271.
[175] Ibid., 273.
[176] Ibid., 272.
[177] Ibid., 277.
[178] Ibid., 278.

criminal. She is, however, more violent than most of her predecessors, perhaps suggesting more of an alignment with the female pirate.[179]

It is perhaps understandable why a female pirate could represent freedom, since pirates have long been associated with liberty, but it is more curious as to why, historically, women have been used to represent elevated concepts such as Liberty and revolutionary politics. This raises the question: why use someone who is unfree to represent freedom? The answer lies within the question itself. Seizing freedom is more meaningful if someone who did not have their freedom to begin with is the one who seizes it; it "depends on the unlikelihood of women practising what they represent".[180]

Without the real threat of piracy in day-to-day life, it was much easier to idealize them. Pirates have always been romantic figures, as far back as classical times, but when they are not a real threat anymore they are without a doubt more susceptible to romanticism. They went from being bogeymen to fairy tales and anti-heroes. It is remarkable that an image that has all but faded from our cultural memory – *Zee-Roovers* – was the inspiration for one of the most famous works of art in Western history; that what represented a hideous perversion of justice became a celebration of righteous revolution. Yet the inspiration is not so far-fetched: who better to serve as a representation of freedom from tyranny than the nomadic pirates of the Golden Age, who were the "enemy of all" and refused to be shackled by the laws of an unjust government? At least, it is this romantic vision of the Golden Age pirate that came to be in the nineteenth century, the age of Romanticism and the romanticised.

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[179] Marcia R. Pointon, *Naked Authority: The Body in Western Painting 1830-1908*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 73.
[180] Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, xx.

Charles Ellms' 1837 *Pirates Own Book* is similar in format and style to *A General History*, with many overlaps, as well as some more recent additions. It is the first of this thesis's female pirate works to originate in the United States. In the nineteenth century the majority of Americans still lived close to the Atlantic Ocean and relied on it in many ways: the United States had started building its navy, whaling was booming and so was trade. The ocean was present in almost every aspect of nineteenth-century Americans' lives and formed many facets of their identity.[181] Within this seafaring culture maritime literature was extremely popular and widespread and often had nationalistic goals communicated through historical stories. Janice Hume notes this in her article "The Buccaneer as Cultural Metaphor: Pirate Coverage in Nineteenth-Century American Periodicals", stating that "Public memory serves the needs of the present, and these romantic stories about the sea could have met era cultural and even nationalist needs."[182] Pirates were a powerful cultural symbol, though there were fewer female pirates than in the previous century. Hume has tracked references to pirates in American nineteenth-century periodicals, finding a steady increase up until a drop during the American Civil War, then constant growth afterwards.[183] Through examining these periodicals, Hume argues that in the nineteenth century pirates "became more brave, successful, cruel and organized, and their stories filled with more atrocities and adventures" whilst they had used to be "crooks, cowards and petty thugs."[184]

Women at sea in particular had an important role to play in the maritime-based American culture. Robin Miskolcze in her book *Women and Children First: Nineteenth-*

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[181] Even the War of 1812 began because of the American desire for freedom at sea, Miskolcze, *Women & Children First*, xiii-iv.
[182] Hume, "The Buccaneer as Cultural Metaphor," 63.
[183] Ibid., 65.
[184] Ibid., 67.

Century Sea Narratives and American Identity describes how as the young nation came of age in the nineteenth century the idea of survival, masculinity and the frontier (both in the west and the sea) came to define America's identity, particularly the idea of American exceptionalism. This was oftentimes centred on men protecting their women and children, hence the development at this time of the iconic phrase "women and children first".[185] There were many stories of women at sea, some crossdressed, "who [reveal] national anxieties about God's influence on America's progress, the moral risks inherent in masculine individualism, Anglo-American notions of racial difference, the moral implications of slavery, and male and female gender roles."[186] With this emphasis on virtue and religion, female pirates were not a suitable topic despite the overwhelming popularity of sea narratives featuring women.

Little is known of the New England-based printer Charles Ellms. The *Pirates Own Book*, published in 1837, was by far his most successful and best known book. It continues *A General History*'s legacy of retelling pirate stories in short chapters. There are many pirates who appear in both texts, including of course Anne Bonny and Mary Read, as well as more recent additions such as China's Mistress Ching I Sao, the most powerful pirate of all time. Being more than a full century away from the actual lives and deaths of Anne and Mary and the Golden Age leads to a more romantic view of them and their pirate cohorts as a whole in popular culture. Additionally, it also adds greatly to the process of mythologization. In fact, one could say that Anne and Mary have officially become history at this point. There is no living memory of them or the time period,

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[185] Miskolcze, *Women & Children First*, x.
[186] Ibid., xi.

meaning we are now in the realm of inherited information – be it written, verbal or visual – and that itself minimal.

This is where the long-term evolution of their stories from *A General History* becomes evident, as well as the differences between the eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century depictions of the two women. Ellms clearly took inspiration from *A General History* not only in format but in content – there are entire sections of Rackam, Anne and Mary's stories that are taken almost verbatim. The language is altered slightly into the nineteenth-century style, but the content is there. All three sections are notably shorter than their *A General History* counterparts, which automatically raises questions of priority. Telling the same story with fewer words reveals which parts of the stories the author prioritized, which would necessarily alter the narrative itself. What was chosen to be kept and what was not affected the content of the myth and what was kept in the cultural consciousness. *A General History* had become the standard. People continued doing the same thing not because they necessarily held the same views or had the same ideas, but because that was how it was done. But perhaps *Pirates Own Book* is not mimicking *A General History* so much as it has no other option, since *A General History* was the only concrete source to work from at the time. Therefore it was either repeat it or make it up – and *Pirates Own Book* seems to have done a little bit of both.

Like *A General History*, Anne and Mary are not discussed in Rackam's chapter. But even the hint at the end of the *A General History* chapter about pirates pleading their bellies was dropped; perhaps by the 1840s Anne and Mary were so well known there was no need or point in sensationalizing them. Even the order is the same: Mary, with the longer and more detailed story, then Anne with considerably less. A notable difference, however, is that Anne and Mary, instead of being sub-sections in Rackam's chapter, have

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their own chapters. Their mythos has grown to the point that they are placed in the annals of pirate history alongside the "great men" of piracy. Their stories have stood the test of time, and that places them amongst pirates like Black Bart and Blackbeard. Ellms also changed Anne's story so that Rackam visits her before he is executed, not the other way around.[187] Is this to make her seem more callous and disloyal and him more pitiful and victimised? Ellms notably kept the notorious dog quote, which seems to be becoming Anne's catchphrase.[188] This is a good example of how one small thing can become a central part of the story, and how changing its use and context can alter the narrative.

Pirates Own Book addresses the nature of Anne and Mary's crossdressing with even less detail and clarity than *A General History*. It does not explicitly state that Anne disguised herself as a man (as it does in *A General History*), only that she "went to sea in men's clothes".[189] It is unclear whether or not she was passing for a man, for how long, or when she stopped. The crossdressing timeline remains vague. It also does not reveal when Mary exposed herself as a woman, for in the image and for the majority of the narrative she is disguised as a man, yet is openly a woman when they are captured.

As in *A General History*, *Pirates Own Book* places more emphasis on the early lives of Anne and Mary than those of the male pirates, but to a lesser degree. It may be a result of diligently copying *A General History* and its eighteenth-century implications more than any conscious acquiescence. This pattern remained despite the noticeable shortening of their chapters, which impacted Anne the most; her chapter did not even fill two pages. But, as in *A General History*, most of it was spent on her pre-pirate life.

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[187] Charles Ellms, *Pirates Own Book: Authentic Narratives of the Most Celebrated Sea Robbers* (New York: Dover Publications, 1993), 417.
[188] Ibid., 417.
[189] Ibid., 416.

However, her parentage received considerably less attention than it had in her first depiction, though Ellms made a point of noting that both Anne and Mary were illegitimate and that Anne's parents eloped together (something that Anne would later do herself).[190] Ellms does condemn the parents, not only for setting a bad example but for being "deaf to the feelings of a parent" when he throws Anne out after she married her sailor.[191] However, Ellms does not state that it was Anne's father who dressed her as a man, raising the question of whether this was an oversight or an intentional decision to try to make Anne seem even more debased, since in the nineteenth century sin was viewed as being natural and innate instead of individual acts. Making Anne's crossdressing her own choice emphasised her sinful nature.

This very much changes the narrative; instead of Anne being bad due to bad teachings and bad examples, *Pirates Own Book* implies that Anne is bad because of *who she is*. Ellms does not mention her wild nature before she runs away with Rackam; it does not mention that she allegedly killed a maid with a case-knife or beat a man half to death for trying to rape her. *Pirates Own Book* is not necessarily *adding* to the mythos, but by leaving certain things out and emphasizing others, the story changes even though it dealt with the same information as *A General History*. Ellms abandoned the spoons conception story, as well as the claim that she was born in prison, which eliminated the eighteenth-century theory of maternal impression that placed the onus of criminality on her parents. Her sin was innate, it was not learned, and she could not be redeemed.

Mary's childhood story is largely the same as in *A General History* and much closer to the original than Anne's. Mary's mother as a character is very different in

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[190] Ellms, *Pirates Own Book*, 416-418.
[191] Ibid., 416.

Pirates Own Book than in *A General History*. In the latter she is a rather tragic figure who does not have much agency in the story, but in *Pirates Own Book* she actively and maliciously scams her mother-in-law instead of pathetically acting out of desperation. Ellms does emphasize that Mary's mother dressed her as a boy for her own personal gains – which is curious, since that corresponding point in Anne's story was removed – which changed Mary's moral narrative to make Mary appear to be more of a victim, since she did not choose to crossdress as Anne did. Mary was merely obeying her mother, which creates a wider moral gulf between Anne and Mary, with Mary being taught her sinful ways and Anne having them in her very nature. This creates a more polarized distinction between Anne's harlot and Mary's heroine: they each occupied moral spheres of their own. In the world of American exceptionalism and idealized female virtue, readers did not want any moral complexity that could make them question the heroine/harlot dichotomy. Playing up Mary's tragic childhood and lack of choice and Anne's sinful agency makes the heroine/harlot dichotomy more concrete and contrasted.

Pirates Own Book openly acknowledges the tension between Anne and Mary defying accepted cultural norms and that being the source of their appeal: "The attention of our readers is now to be directed to the history of two female pirates, – a history which is chiefly remarkable from the extraordinary circumstances of the softer sex assuming a character peculiarly distinguished for every vice that can disgrace humanity, and at the same time for the exertion of the most daring, though brutal, courage."[192] As I have discussed, their appeal is not as pirates but as *female* pirates, which are even more shocking in the gender-polarized nineteenth century where crossdressing women (at sea and otherwise) were less common. Ellms, however, unlike *A General History*, does not

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[192] Ellms, *Pirates Own Book*, 418.

make any grandiose claims at authenticity. Does this suggest that Anne and Mary are by this point so well known that their stories are blindly accepted as truth, as written histories so often are? Their stories had become historical fact and the fictionalized aspects of their stories had blended the rest so seamlessly that readers required no convincing.

The chapter titles "The Life and Exploits of Anne Bonney" and "The Adventures and Heroism of Mary Read" offer a conspicuous example of the heroine/harlot dynamic. Mary's chapter literally has the word 'heroism' in it, and while 'exploit' is not necessarily an inherently moralized term, in this context, accompanying Anne's story and compared to 'heroism' and 'adventures', it certainly has an dubious quality to it. Before the reader has even reached the main text Ellms has made an overt moral statement about each woman that colours the reader's perception of their stories. Ellms openly denounced Anne for "Acting a part very different from that of Mary Read" (that is, not being loyal and chaste); over the years the heroine/harlot dichotomy (assisted by the gender spheres) had become increasingly contrasted.[193] Though the trope was pre-existing, it was only becoming more ingrained with time – and even openly stated – as the stories got further and further away from the centre of the web with growing degrees of separation.

I have discussed how there are elements of Anne and Mary's stories that remain constant over the centuries despite the many changes in both content and meaning. One of those is Anne's proposition of Mary while they were both disguised as men.[194] It is almost always the exact same story, remaining remarkably consistent over the years and has become a pillar of their mythos, as well as reinforcing the thriving heroine/harlot dichotomy. The other persistent story is that of Mary's duel, which also is almost

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[193] Ellms, *Pirates Own Book*, 416.
[194] Ibid., 421.

identical to *A General History*. It emphasizes her role as heroine and an embodiment of female virtue, and allows her to form a domestic sphere of sorts within the public sphere of seafaring/piracy. Here is an example of how Mary contains both spheres within her very nature:

> Mary Read was of a strong and robust constitution, capable of enduring much exertion and fatigue. She was vain and bold in her disposition, but susceptible of the tenderest emotions, and of the most melting affections. Her conduct was generally directed by virtuous principles, while at the same time, she was violent in her attachments. Though she was inadvertently drawn into that dishonorable mode of life which has stained her character, and given her a place among the criminals noticed in this work, yet she possessed a rectitude of principle and of conduct, far superior to many who have not been exposed to such temptations to swerve from the path of female virtue and honor.[195]

The tensions between her virtuous female self and her pirate self are starkly contrasted, harbouring a domestic/public, feminine/masculine sphere system within her very being. The fact that she has been able to maintain these elements of female virtue while living as a man in a man's world is praiseworthy. It is reminiscent of Adelayda's internal debate between her feminine and masculine instincts in *The Beautiful Pyrate* from chapter two. Clearly something about these stories, and their tensions, continued to resonate with writers and readers alike.

With the booming print culture and advancing technology that permitted more illustrations, it is unsurprising that *Pirates Own Book* is significantly more visual than *A General History*, with over seventy illustrations of varying size and complexity, with at least one per chapter and often more. This massive surge in visual representations of pirates is one of the reasons it is this century's visual perception of pirates has become so foundational to their depiction in popular culture, the aesthetic of which Mel Campbell

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[195] Ellms, *Pirates Own Book*, 422-3.

refers to as "pirate chic", arguing that "what twenty-first-century audiences understand as 'pirate chic' was more decisively shaped by a Romantic literary tradition in the early nineteenth century." [196] Campbell does not address the role of nineteenth-century print culture in this, but as I have stated above it was a *combination* of temporal distance which allowed for a romanticism of the pirate figure and a drastic increase in consumption of print culture by more people (with more available illustrations) that made this century's aesthetic the standard for 'pirate chic'.

There is one image for Anne and Mary in *Pirates Own Book*, as there was in *A General History*. This image (figure 3.2), however, is a complete departure from that original 1724 image, not a close copy like in *Zee-Roovers*. It depicts Mary running her opponent through in her duel, and, intriguingly, it is one of the only images in which the female pirate can actually pass for a man. Granted, this might be because the image is depicting a scene in which the other person is not aware that she is a woman in disguise, but that kind of logic has not stopped anyone in the past. Almost always there is some sort of hint, even if it is some sort of dramatic irony of which only the viewer is aware, at the female pirate's gender. Mary is very masculine-presenting in this image; she has short hair, thick, powerful legs, no significant hint at a feminine figure, rough facial features and no exposed breasts (the standard giveaway for female pirates). Mary has always been depicted as the more masculine of the two women, and more often disguised as a man, but she is rarely depicted passing as one.

In the eighteenth century Anne was seen as the more threatening of the two because of the danger she posed to masculine virtue – and that certainly carried over to the nineteenth century – but in later years Mary became more menacing as well. It is

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[196] Campbell, "Pirate Chic," 11.

because of how well she passes for a man; it would not have been incomprehensible for a woman to pass for a man in the previous century because of the view of gender as performative, but in the nineteenth century when ideas of gender as innate and biological were taking root, Mary's ability to switch between the two could challenge that idea.[197] This image is also very different from the previous two depictions of Anne and Mary because it portrays a specific moment from the narrative instead of a generic portrait, a moment which I have already established is a defining feature of Anne and Mary's mythos. The choice to depict that moment in particular shows its popularity and its relevance.[198] The image confirms Mary's role as heroine while also underlining her frighteningly accurate masculine impression, embodying both the reasons she was a positive and a negative figure, similar to the above quote that illustrated the tensions within Mary's character.

Maturin Murray Ballou's *Fanny Campbell, The Female Pirate Captain ; Tale of the Revolution* was a hugely popular romance novel published in 1844 in Massachusetts, selling over 80 000 copies.[199] Ballou was a prolific romance writer and founded *The Flag of the Union* which published some of the most influential romance fiction in the United States in that era, and he had his hand in many prominent periodicals.[200] *Fanny Campbell* was written in 1844 but takes place in the early days of the American Revolution and recounts a young New England woman, the titular Fanny, whose childhood sweetheart and betrothed, a sailor named William Lovell, is captured by the British ship the *Constance* on the eve of the Revolution. He is taken in chains to Cuba. Fanny decides to

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[197] Powell and Burwick, *British Pirates in Print and Performance*, 134.
[198] Anne's famous story, the proposition, was equally foundational but probably less appropriate for illustration.
[199] Woertendyke, "Geography, Genre and Hemispheric Regionalism," 219.
[200] Ibid., 218.

disguise herself as a man under the name Channing and signs onto the *Constance*, incites

a mutiny and takes command of the ship. She rescues William and captures two British

sloops along the way, which Ballou claims to be the first naval engagements of the war

and the essential founding of the American Navy, for which Katherine Anderson in

"Female Pirates and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century American Popular Fiction" calls

her the navy's "formidable foremother".[201] They return to Massachusetts and get married;

William spends the remainder of the war as an American privateer while Fanny stays at

home raising their children.

Ballou makes claims about his text's authenticity in a manner similar to *A General*

History, since both texts recount events that have happened within living memory at the

time of writing, unlike *Pirates Own Book* which is over a century away from its

recounting of Anne and Mary.[202] But even then, the text falls within the nineteenth-

century romance genre, and even Ballou himself acknowledges that "its history abounds

with matter more akin to romance than fact."[203] However true or untrue *Fanny Campbell*

may be, it had concrete impacts on the real world. The character of Fanny Campbell

inspired at least one woman, Emma Edmonds, to go to sea dressed as a man to fight in the

American Civil War not long after the text's publication.[204]

Fanny as a character is very different from Anne and Mary despite their shared

profession, including their childhoods, which have proven to be very significant. Fanny's

parents did not at any point dress her as a boy, but they did treat her as a son in many

ways, such as teaching her to sail, fish and fight, which is what allows her to masquerade

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[201] Anderson, "Female Pirates and Nationalism," 97.
[202] Maturin Murray Ballou, *Fanny Campbell, the Female Pirate Captain: A Tale of the Revolution*, (Boston: F. Gleason, 1845), 3.
[203] Ibid.*,* 5.
[204] Rediker, "Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger," 14.

so successfully.[205] But Ballou does argue that people's childhood experiences deeply

shape who they are:

> The peculiarities of one's birth-place have much influence upon formation of the character and disposition. The associations that hang about us in childhood, have double weight upon our tender and susceptible minds at that time, to those of after days, when the character is more formed and matured, and the mind has become more stern and inflexible. It behoves us then to speak thus particularly of the birth-place and the associations of those who are to enact the principal characters in the drama which we relate.[206]

Ballou went out of his way to explain and justify Fanny's development as a person. Even

though she is a deeply moral character, she is still very much out of the ordinary, for he

also establishes gender norms within the community, stating that "the occupation of the

male portion of the hamlet was that of fishermen, while the time of the females was

occupied in drying and preserving the fish and such other domestic labor as fell to their

lot."[207]

    Fanny Campbell is another instance of an artist (such as Delacroix) using the

figure of the female pirate as an allegory, in this case for America's quest for

independence. In 1844 the Revolution was relatively recent and in living memory, and

was (and is) a defining moment in American history and identity. It is central to the

construction of nineteenth-century cultural and historical identity, especially for seafaring

New England. At the moment Ballou was writing *Fanny Campbell* America was in the

midst of manifest destiny and zeroing in on Cuba as their next acquisition.[208] There was

considerable fervour in the United States, since annexing Cuba seemed like the logical

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[205] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 9.
[206] Ibid.*,* 6-7.
[207] Ibid., 7.
[208] Manifest destiny refers to the nineteenth-century idea that American expansion was divined from God.

next step in their plan, and many works of literature in this period engage with the possibility/inevitability of a US-Cuban alliance, along with Spanish imperialism and maritime culture. Over 200 Cuban travel narratives were published in the United States between 1820 and 1900, including *Fanny Campbell*.[209] Woertendyke argues that *Fanny Campbell* and texts like it engaged with these new and complex ideas of American imperialism, identity, nationalism and expansionism, and that *Fanny Campbell* in particular used the American Revolution to discuss contemporary US-Cuban politics: "Ballou's romantic form depends upon the pirate figure and the sea in order to yoke the history of the Old World to an unfolding drama in the New World."[210] Anderson in "Female Pirates and Nationalism" describes William as the American people, being helplessly buffeted around while Fanny is the embodiment of manifest destiny coming to rescue him and put him on his ordained path, and that "*Fanny Campbell* allowed readers to envision a proto-national past in service of contemporary expansionist, or imperialist, ideology."[211] Pirates, as economic criminals, have a long history of being used to communicate criticisms and/or support of imperialism, as John Gay used the pirates in *Polly* to villainize British colonial and imperial powers.

The American Revolution was a defining moment in America's short history, and thus was itself the subject of considerable mythologization and scrutiny as they tried to establish their place in the world, as Woertendyke notes, "romance for US writers became a form of history, a way of negotiating the relative recentness of its national consciousness against its vastness both temporally and geographically."[212] Robin

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[209] Woertendyke, "Geography, Genre and Hemispheric Regionalism," 214.
[210] Ibid., 215; 221
[211] Anderson, "Female Pirates and Nationalism," 107.
[212] Woertendyke, "Geography, Genre and Hemispheric Regionalism," 217.

Miskolcze also points out that nineteenth-century American literature actively sought to align itself with England and, in particular, proper English ladies, who were often the heroines of sea narratives.[213] Anne and Mary could hardly be called 'proper' (or even English, in Anne's case) and 'ladies' is perhaps debatable. But they have still been adopted as an aspect of American history, despite both of them hailing from Britain and living before the modern American Republic existed.

Within the text itself, Fanny Campbell (and her pirate crew) represent America. Previous texts have shown how Anne and Mary's being criminals necessarily complicates their moral existence, but Fanny's role as a pirate is unique. When the United States contracted privateers with letters of marque during the American Revolution, England refused to acknowledge the validity of those letters of marque and treated the American privateers as criminals and pirates – not as the considerably more civilly treated prisoners of war they would be as privateers. For England to recognise America's letters of marque would be implicitly accepting their authority as an independent sovereign nation, since they are the only ones who can legally issue letters of marque. So while in a legal sense Fanny is a pirate, culturally and historically she is a privateer and a soldier, something Ballou's readers would very likely understand. When Fanny seizes the British ships it a symbolic shift of power, the Americans steering the metaphorical ship instead of the British, and she changes the British authoritarian approach to something more democratic.[214] Fanny represents American ideals repeatedly as Captain Channing, such as when she chooses officers from the crew and when she gives such a moving speech

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[213] Miskolcze, *Women & Children First*, 102.

[214] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 35. The "pirates as democratic" factoid is one of the reasons they are so culturally suited to represent class revolution and freedom, especially in post-revolution America.

that she converts British sailors to her cause.[215] Anderson also adds that "as a *female*

pirate, Fanny represents a threatened victim merely seeking to defend, or fulfil, her

natural, inherent rights. Cross-dressed as Captain Channing, Fanny symbolizes a

vulnerable yet victorious soft conqueror, at once a colonized victim and (absent) imperial

perpetrator."[216] Fanny, who is in a sense both masculine and feminine, active and passive,

in the public and the private spheres, embodies the imperial manifest destiny desires of

nineteenth-century America as well as their sense of victimization, exemplified here by

her behaviour when faced with a British mutineer:

> It was a scene of strange and peculiar interest. There stood that huge Hercules of a
> man before that gentle hearted girl to be adjudged to death. Her deep soul seemed to
> be reading the prisoner's inmost thoughts through the blue of her beautiful eye. Her
> voice did not tremble, her hand was firm, and she was a man at heart. The woman
> feeling which was so lately called into action in her breast, was banished, and
> nothing save stern justice might be expected to come from out those lips.[217]

Ballou is writing a story of David and Goliath, and how else to make David's victory

even more compelling and impressive than to make him even more of an underdog as a

woman in a man's world?

Fanny Campbell is without a doubt a heroine, both in the plot and symbolically.

But even though she falls into the same category as Mary, because Fanny is a pirate

without being a criminal, Fanny does not have the same moral grey area and is a heroine

in the more traditional sense. As a Captain (and later wife and mother), Fanny fulfills a

maternal role within the nineteenth-century American concept of republican motherhood,

which is the belief that women have a national duty to raise virtuous sons to protect

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[215] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 35; 67-68.
[216] Anderson, "Female Pirates and Nationalism," 105.
[217] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 65-66.

America's future. This is similar to the spheres concept in the sense that it is allocating considerable amounts of power and responsibility to women but is extremely restrictive as to how that power manifests. Fanny throughout the text proves herself to be charismatic, tough and highly skilled, but is content with her womanly duties and roles.[218] The masculine skills that she harbours were all received from male authority figures: hunting and fishing from her father (patriarch), sailing and navigation from her pastor (religion). This is partaking in anxieties in nineteenth-century America that women have to take on masculine roles in the rough world of the frontier; but even as Fanny approaches the Cuban frontier she manages to maintain her feminine virtue.[219] Fanny combines the traditions of female love *and* male glory, even though her exploits are "incidental effects of her romantic motives".[220]

Even dressed as a man Fanny is the pinnacle of feminine virtue; her purity, modesty and piousness are all emphasised throughout her time as Captain Channing, for as Ballou states, she is "bold and independent, and yet perfectly tempered by a spirit of modesty".[221] It is permissible to be bold and independent as long as it is balanced by ideal feminine qualities (the harlot is only bold and independent, entirely untempered). Even her ship's name is the Constance, for she is constant in her love for William and for her country. As a captain she is democratic, kind and merciful, even choosing not to hang a mutinous British prisoner and astounding everyone by converting him. She is responsible for the moral well-being of her crew as she would be for her children, for as Holly Kent notes in her article, "'Our Good Angel': Women, Moral Influence, and the Nation in

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[218] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell*, 8.
[219] Miskolcze, *Women & Children First*, 156.
[220] Rediker, "Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger," 25, Anderson, "Female Pirates and Nationalism," 99.
[221] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 12.

Antebellum American Pirate Novels", "in Fanny Campbell Ballou indicates that his

heroine is happiest serving her country, not through military service, but rather by

shaping the characters, and guiding the moral principles of men within the domestic

sphere".[222] Repeatedly throughout the text Fanny is the guiding light of virtue and

redemption for the men around her even as she defies gender norms. Kent acknowledges

this tension, arguing that

> despite these authors' obvious desire to prove to their readers that woman's true place was in the home, these novels nonetheless possess the potential to subvert traditional gender roles. By telling appealing tales of female adventure and enterprise, and consistently emphasizing their heroine's daring and bravery, the pirate novelists partially undermine their own intentions to demonstrate that woman is most contented by, and best suited for, familial duties and domestic pursuits.[223]

It is reminiscent of the warrior women genre from chapter two, and Fanny in fact meets

the criteria of the warrior woman most fully of any character in this thesis. Dianne Dugaw

lists the standard narrative steps of a warrior woman story, which do vary slightly in order

and frequency:

1. Fall in love but are separated
2. The woman disguises herself as a man
3. The crossdressing woman has a series of adventures
4. The crossdressing woman tests her man's love for her
5. Happy ending[224]

While Mary hits 1 through 3 – no happy endings for pirates – Fanny is one of the only

female pirates who meets all of these plot points *without* any moral complexities of

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[222] Kent, "'Our Good Angel'," 53.
[223] Ibid., 56.
[224] Dugaw, "Structural Analysis of the Female Warrior Ballad," 25.

criminality.[225] As I have discussed, she is a pirate in a very specific way that releases her from the normal moral complexities that criminals experience when they are represented as anti-heroes.

Fanny also hits the classic signs of a heroine; she is crossdressing for a specific goal and once she succeeded she returned to her life as a woman. It is temporary: a blip. It is not a lifestyle. Ballou himself acknowledges the difficulties in creating a crossdressing female character in the nineteenth century who can play with the tension I mentioned above while remaining an endearing character: "We have endeavored in Fanny Campbell to portray a heroine who should not be like every other the fancy has created ; we have strove to make her such an one as should elicit the reader's interest, and have yet endeavored in the picture not to overstep the modest bounds of nature."[226] One of the ways Ballou ensures that he does not 'overstep the modest bounds of nature' is to end the text with a marriage. It is typical in historical romance to signify the resolution of the plot with a marriage, which can also represent submission to imperialism, nationalism and society.[227]

Another standard trait of the heroine figure is an unwillingness to turn pirate. Fanny's lover, William, was pressed into piracy, something that will continue to occur over and over again. It is an easy way to advance the plot and make the protagonist a pirate without compromising their morals. Fanny was not technically pressed into piracy, but she was not really a pirate and she only acted to rescue her lover from the enemy. It is similar in spirit to Mary's duel in its sentiment, which had been described and visually

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[225] Adelayda from *The Beautiful Pyrate* also meets them, but her story was written and translated at the peak popularity of the warrior woman genre.
[226] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 120.
[227] Anderson, "Female Pirates and Nationalism," 110.

depicted less than a decade earlier. The nineteenth century continues the eighteenth

century's overall moral preference for Mary, as well as the trend of having a heroine *and*

a harlot or a heroine on her own, but never a harlot by herself. There is no harlot character

in *Fanny Campbell*, her virtue is evident enough on its own.

It is interesting to note that Fanny's crossdressing plan is not immediately

revealed to the reader; her male alter ego shows up without indicating that 'Captain

Charles Channing' is actually Fanny in disguise. It does not take long for the reader to

figure it out, but it is certainly a departure from past stories. William himself does not

recognize her, as Carloman did not recognize Adelayda. This is the ideal moment for the

warrior women to do step 4, testing her man's love for her, which Adelayda and Fanny

both do.[228] Woertendyke notes that at numerous points in the text Fanny is compared to a

man, and when she is revealed to William he prefers "Fanny-as-captain to Fanny-as-

herself, [and] not only accepts his subordinate position, but also insists upon it while they

remain onboard the ship," even when she tries to relinquish her authority to him.[229]

Despite this, Fanny does revert to more feminine behaviour in William's presence,

beginning to tremble and the like.[230]

There is a frontispiece included that depicts Captain Channing herself (figure 3.3).

It is not very accurate for the story – she flies the early American flag, never a jolly roger

– but it is calling on the now century-old imagery of privacy regardless of accuracy. It is

the expected image of a female pirate more than it is an image of Fanny Campbell. She is

visibly female; she is very ladylike, with a narrow waist, delicate facial features and a

prim stance. She is both feminine and masculine at the same time; her masculine garb

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[228] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 54.
[229] Woertendyke, "Geography, Genre and Hemispheric Regionalism," 220.
[230] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 49.

cannot suppress her pure female virtue, for she was a "gentle-hearted girl" but also "a man at heart".[231] This is not the same as Anne and Mary's female bodies betraying them, this is a positive assertion of Fanny's feminine fortitude triumphing over her costume.

The French 1846 *Histoire des pirates et corsaires de l'océan et de méditerranée depuis leur origine jusqu'à nos jours* by P. Christian is, again, a collection of historical pirate stories similar in content and format to *A General History*, its subsequent editions and *Pirates Own Book*, and is my second French source.[232] There are some slight informational discrepancies between *Histoire des pirates* and its precedents. *Histoire des pirates* states that Mary was born in London, while *A General History* says England and *Pirates Own Book* says somewhere unknown in England.[233] This is an example of the story evolving as the web grows and raises the question of where this new information came from: additional research? Word of mouth or oral history? Imagination? It may seem like an insignificant detail, and in many ways it is, but this exemplifies how over time these stories change and unfold. Anyone could read this text and assume it as fact, then continue perpetuating it until it became ingrained as part of the mythos, regardless of its accuracy. The information about Mary's parents is the same, but like *Pirates Own Book* is much more critical and judgemental of Mary's mother and emphasizes her deceit.[234] In this same strain, *Histoire des pirates* depicts Mary's mother as actively malicious instead of a tragic, desperate figure. These similarities perhaps suggest that Christian was basing his information on *Pirates Own Book* – which had been published only a decade earlier – and less on *A General History*, though because *A General History*

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[231] Ballou, *Fanny Campbell,* 65.
[232] The text is missing pages 300-301 from Mary's section.
[233] P. Christian, *Histoire des pirates et corsaires de l'océan et de la méditerranée depuis leurs origine jusqu'a nos jours*, (Paris: D. Cavailles, 1847), 294.
[234] Ibid., 295.

is the inspiration for *Pirates Own Book* its (diffused) influence remains. There is also a slight change in that Christian altered the age at which Mary realised she was a woman, jumping to fifteen from nine years old, which is a considerable difference, and rather implausible. Strikingly, Mary's mother overtly tells her to continue dressing as a man because it will give her more freedom: "lui conseillant de le tenir caché pour vivre avec plus de liberté", which is a fascinating acknowledgement of the restrictions placed on the 'fairer sex' as well one of the most common motivations for female crossdressing.[235] The story about Mary being a footboy then joining the military is the same as it has always been, almost an exact translation from *Pirates Own Book* (and *A General History* before that).

The – considerably fewer – details of Anne's story are mostly consistent with earlier depictions, making her the illegitimate daughter of an Irish lawyer and even including the ridiculous spoon conception story. That element of Anne's story had at this point only been included in *A General History* and its editions, so Christian must have encountered it at some point. The story about Anne's elopement is also the same. Over the years, despite Anne and Mary's respective depictions being very different, the longer their mythos extends the closer to each other they become, even to the point that Christian states that "Enfant d'amour, comme Marie, elle devailt avoir la même destinée".[236] Christian is also suggesting that their illegitimate births are causes of their later criminal behaviour, something that authors have done consistently since 1724.[237]

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[235] "She advised her to keep it secret to live with more liberty": Christian, *Histoire des pirates*, 295.
[236] "A Love Child, like Mary, she would have the same destiny": Ibid., 299.
[237] The famous capture story is not included in *Histoire des pirates*, or it is in the two missing pages. As such an incredibly popular and consistent piece of their mythos, the latter seems more likely.

Mary's heroine in *Histoire des pirates* is less heroic than she has been in past

representations. She still fulfills the heroine role within the heroine/harlot dichotomy that

I have established, but to a lesser degree than we have seen before. Christian emphasizes

her "simple désertion" from the navy, while other authors have almost universally

downplayed that aspect of Mary's narrative.[238] He also suggests that she was *not* pressed

into piracy, which until now has been a defining – and, most importantly, redeeming –

trait for Mary. The author states instead that the pirates 'enchanted' her, which radically

alters her moral character.[239] For although she has been shown to be an active and skilled

pirate, the question of motivation was a key heroine characteristic in not only Mary but

the fictional female pirates she inspired. It also was one of the main ways she was

juxtaposed with Anne. Christian also accredits both Anne and Mary with being "l'âme de

ce complot" to return to piracy after having taken Woodes Rogers' pardon.[240] Despite the

damages to Mary's heroic character (at least compared to *A General History* and *Pirates*

Own Book) her sexual modesty remains in *Histoire des pirates* one of her key

characteristics.[241] This is underlined by the foundational proposition story which naturally

could never be left out, and remains for the most part unchanged, meaning the

heroine/harlot dichotomy stills stands strong.[242]

The most notable difference, however, is Mary's duel. In every source so far the

story has been essentially the same: Mary duels and kills a pirate to defend her fellow

pressed pirate lover. It was depicted visually in *Pirates Own Book*, indicating its narrative

and cultural importance, and is also illustrated visually in *Histoire des pirates* but with

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[238] Christian, *Histoire des pirates*, 297.
[239] Ibid., 297.
[240] "The soul of the plot": Ibid., 298.
[241] Ibid., 295.
[242] Ibid., 298.

some key differences. In the text, instead of dueling to defend her lover she does so because a pirate found out she was a woman and tried to make advances on her but when she refused him he struck her in the face. She demands that they duel and they do so; just before she kills him she bares her chest to him and declares:

> Marie alors, maîtresse des jours de son brutal adversaire, écarte d'une main sa veste, et découvrant son sein éclatante blancheur: -Misérable, lui dit-elle, tu me croyais femme, et tu as osé me frapper à la joue! Eh bien, c'est cette femme qui te tue aujourd'hui pour donner un exemple à quiconque s'aviserait de l'insulter demain!... En achevant ces mots, elle lui fît sauter la cervelle. Ce trait d'un mâle courage lui concilia le respect de tous ses compagnons d'aventures…[243]

This new version of the story certainly challenges Mary's traditional position as a heroine. The change in motivation for the duel casts her in a very different light. Instead of fighting for a noble, feminine cause – love – she is fighting for herself and for revenge. As I mentioned earlier, in some ways Mary in the nineteenth century was more threatening because of her ability to pass for a man, and in this instance Mary is behaving in a manner much more masculine than feminine. She is taking on the perceived role of men to defend women by defending herself. But as Mary's significance evolves, Anne seems to be staying very much the same, still the same wild and carnal Irish hell cat she ever was, French translation of her famous dog quote included: "Si tu avais, lui dit-elle, su combattre et mourir comme un homme de coeur, tu ne serais pas réduit aujourd'hui à être étranglé comme un chien!"[244]

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[243] "So Mary, mistress of her brutal adversary's days, with one hand pulled away her jacket, and revealed her brilliantly white breast: -Cretin, she told him, you believe me to be a woman, and you dared smack my cheek! Well, it is this woman who kills you today to give an example to whomever would think to insult me tomorrow!...In saying this, she blew his brains out. This trait of male courage earned her the respect of all of her companions on this adventure": Christian, *Histoire des pirates*, 299.

[244] "If you had, she told him, fought and died like a man, you would not be reduced today to being strangled like a dog": Ibid., 302.

The (first colourized) image of Mary in *Histoire des pirates* shows the same scene as the *Pirates Own Book* only nine years earlier, with a number of very significant alterations (figure 3.4). Once one is aware of the changes within the text of *Histoire des pirates* the differences in the image make more sense. The most notable change is that, as we have read, Mary bares her breasts to her opponent while she stands defiantly over him, aggressively ripping open her shirt as he lies, terrified (and perhaps equal parts shocked), before her. It is a much more dramatic re-telling and re-illustrating of what Ellms showed in *Pirates Own Book*, and is in fact a very similar evolution to the 1724 *A General History* and 1725 *Zee-Roovers* images. Mary's reveals are almost always done using her breasts, but never in a manner such as this; it is a complete departure from what 1724 Mary did. As we get further away from the centre of the web, with more and more degrees of separation in between, we see how significantly things change and other things stay the same for many different reasons.[245]

One of the things that had changed radically is the meaning of the female breast. In the eighteenth century the idea of a maternal breast and an erotic breast were separate; in the nineteenth century those images fused, becoming what Marilyn Yalom in *A History of the Breast* calls "the maternal breast with erotic overtones".[246] Nineteenth-century American culture celebrated only the maternal breast in public, and the erotic breast only appeared to foreshadow catastrophe, which Mary's breasts certainly do for her opponent.[247] Mary's breasts here are less eroticized than they have been in the past, but the context still makes it *nuditas criminalis*. Unlike Delacroix's Liberty, whose breasts

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[245] It sounds more like something Anne would do, not wholesome Mary.
[246] Yalom, *A History of the Breast*, 120.
[247] Ibid., 123; the French have historically been freer with the use of breast imagery: Ibid., 123.

are visible because she is preoccupied with other things, Mary is brazenly revealing them as an act of aggression, not as a means of modest seduction as she had up to this point.

Of the texts that address Anne and Mary from a historical perspective to this point, *Histoire des pirates* has some of the most obvious deviations from the original stories. It is such a radical plot and character change it seems like it must have been very intentional. *Pirates Own Book*'s alterations were a result of exclusion rather than an addition or changing of information, but the stories in this text were blatantly different, and those differences were concentrated in Mary's story. Part of the reason is probably because *Histoire des pirates* had more sources upon which to base their information (both *A General History* and its descendant *Pirates Own Book*, which contained changes of its own). Another reason may be because of its geographical origin in France. In 1814, after the Bourbon restoration in France, waves of English people were going to Paris and many of the French people saw England as an occupying power, adding to a deep-rooted sense of animosity between the two nations.[248] The well-to-dos got along, but many voices against any alliance were raised and the two nations repeatedly displayed xenophobia towards each other throughout the mid-nineteenth century. These tensions were increased through rivalries over various colonial holdings, and in 1846 – the year of *Histoire des pirates*' publication – there were calls to increase national security on both sides of the channel.[249] There was an added level of rivalry when both nations competed to create an alliance through marriage with Spain's Queen Isabella, with France eventually

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[248] Robert Gibson, *Best of Enemies: Anglo-French Relations Since the Norman Conquest* (Exter: Impress Books, 2005), 179-180.
[249] Ibid., 194-7.

victorious.[250] Mary, being both the heroine figure and English, could have been a victim of anti-English propaganda in this turbulent period of a long-standing feud.[251]

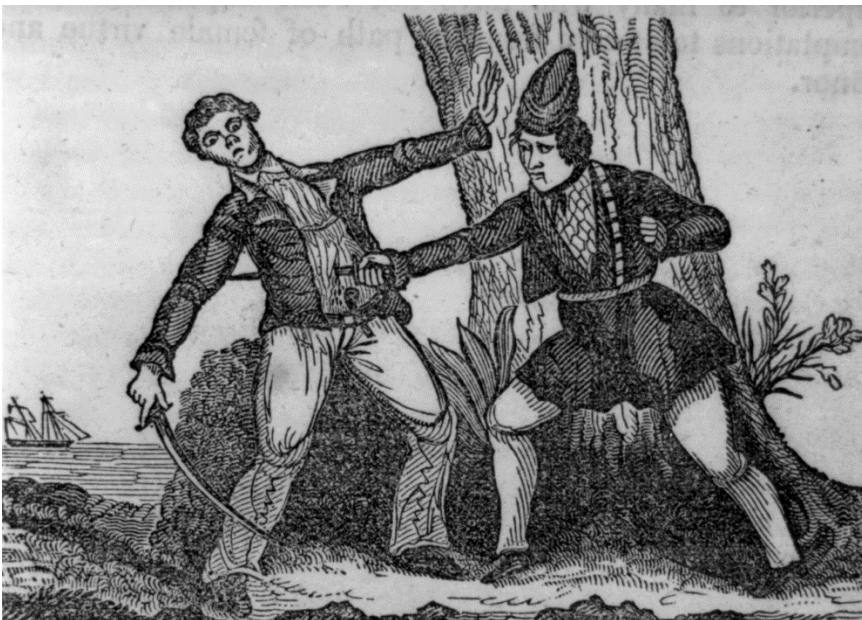**Figure 3.1:** *Liberté guidant le peuple* **by Eugène Delacroix, 1830.**

Figure 3.2: "Mary Kills her Antagonist" in *Pirates Own Book* **by Charles Ellms, 1837.**

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[250] Gibson, *Best of Enemies*, 197.
[251] Anne was already bad enough; she did not need any help.

Figure 3.3: *Fanny Campbell, the Female Pirate Captain ; A Tale of the Revolution* **by Murray Maturin Ballou, 1844.**

Figure 3.4: *Historie des pirates et corsaires de l'océan et de méditerranée depuis leur origine jusqu'a nos jours* **by P. Christian, 1846.**

Figure 3.5: "Ella Brayton, the Pirate Queen" in *The Pirate Queen ; or, the Magician of the Sea, A Tale of the Piratical Era* by Benjamin Barker, 1847.

The Pirate Queen ; or, the Magician of the Sea, A Tale of the Piratical Era was written in 1847 by Benjamin Barker, a dime-novel author whose many works were often sea-themed. Like *Fanny Campbell*, even though *The Pirate Queen* was written in the nineteenth century it takes place in 1726, the tail end of the Golden Age. Additionally, the text was published in Boston and engages with the ideas around American identity, masculinity and the sea that I discussed with *Pirates Own Book* and *Fanny Campbell.* *The Pirate Queen* begins with Ella Brayton, the titular Pirate Queen, who is waiting with a message for Clara Courtland, who was travelling with her siblings Anna and Charles, from the pirate Clifford. Meanwhile, Clifford captures the wealthy Rosamund Harcourt and decides to take her for his wife. Clara reveals to Anna that she has developed a secret

romance with Clifford, who she did not know was a pirate and was using her for her money, and flees with Ella to reunite with him in Cuba, pursued by Charles and Anna. On their travels Ella finds her former pirate lover, Burlingham (the Magician of the Sea) and kills him before being detained. Rosamund meets a creole woman who is a slave on Clifford's ship and who tried (and fails) to kill Clifford. Charles, on a British war ship, pursues Clifford and captures him, and he, Anne, Clara, Rosamund and their other companions are reunited. Clifford commits suicide in prison and Ella disappears; Clara lives on and never marries, always being careful to warn other women about the dangers of wilfulness.

The heroine/harlot dichotomy in *The Pirate Queen* is a little more complex than most of the other nineteenth-century sources. Not including the *Pirates Own Book* and *Histoire des pirates*, which are the only sources in this section that recount Anne and Mary's story by name, all of the other sources included a heroine but no harlot. That ratio is inversed in *The Pirate Queen* with two heroines (Clara and Rosamund) and one harlot, the latter of which who is, naturally, the Pirate Queen herself, Ella Brayton (figure 3.5). Ella is one of the few (fictional) outright criminal female pirates that I have looked at in the nineteenth century, as the others tend to have some sort of loophole to ensure that while they may be a female pirate they are not criminals, technically.

One of the central methods Barker uses to clearly label Ella as a harlot and a criminal is her physical appearance. In the nineteenth century, at the peak of the Romantic Movement, it was thought that outer appearances reflected inner temperament and morality.[252] Ella is described as "a figure considerably above the medium height, [with] features that had once been very beautiful, but were now wrinkled and furrowed by the

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[252] This concept has remained pervasive to the modern day, but is slightly less concrete.

rank and corrosive influences which the evil passions of a bad heart had been suffered to exert over their unfortunate possessor" ; she begins as beautiful but as her soul is corrupted so is her appearance.[253] Barker details her hideousness in extremely hyperbolic terms, saying she has a "repulsive...wrinkled visage" and so on even though she was only 38 years old.[254] This physical deterioration, the shock of which is heightened by her young age, is symbolic of her fall into debauchery and piracy. She is described as being specifically dangerous to men in a violent, cunning and underhanded way – very similar to Anne's man-eating harlot character. But unlike the other harlot characters this thesis has examined, a central theme in the story is Ella's revenge. At the very beginning there is a sense that she is aware of her fall and it troubles her.[255] Ella, as well as an enslaved pirate woman, both turn on the men that corrupted them and try to kill them – with varying degrees of success. The heroines did not fall to begin with so they do not have to concern themselves with revenge, and by making Ella the one to kill the pirate the plot is resolved without the heroines being corrupted. The Romantic movement rears its head in additional ways; there is a meta-moment where one of the pirates consciously acknowledges the romanticism of pirates and uses it to his advantage to manipulate people, trying to trick Clara into marrying him, saying that "her mind is so highly tinctured by wild romance, that she can easily be made to imagine a pirate to be the most immaculate of heroes."[256] As with Delacroix, by this point in the nineteenth century the romantic figure of the pirate (largely established by Byron's *The Corsair*) had taken root as a trope in pirate fiction, and Barker both engages with it and turns it on its head when

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[253] Benjamin Barker, *The Pirate Queen, Or, The Magician of the Sea: A Tale of the Piratical Era*, (Boston: Flag of Our Union Office, 1847), 7.
[254] Ibid., 8.
[255] Ibid., 31.
[256] Ibid., 34.

he villainizes the pirate even further by having him exploit this romantic image to his own nefarious ends, as any real pirate would.

As we have seen and will continue to see, female characters' (specifically female pirate characters') morality is defined by their sexuality. The heroine is chaste and therefore moral despite her other faults; the harlot is loose and therefore depraved. It is only once Ella kills the man who lured her into her sexual depravity that she is redeemed, for she acknowledges her sin and what she did wrong, saying she "richly deserve[s] to die a thousand deaths."[257] This is very different from Anne, who revelled unapologetically in her passions. But something Ella did share with Anne was that they both abandoned a husband and a child in order to go to sea with a pirate captain, embodying the rejection of the maternal role as well as their family. In fact, aside from the revenge, Ella's story echoes Anne's in many ways. A married well-to-do woman runs away with a pirate captain and abandons a child, and becomes an active, willing pirate herself. She is described as being violent, tough and brave, and both women eventually reject their pirate captain lover: Anne because Rackam was weak, Ella because Harcourt was cruel.[258] It makes one wonder how Anne's story would have ended had her pirate career not been prematurely cut short. Ella was the only woman in the text to dress as a man, and her description is reminiscent of Anne: "in all the numerous bloody and bold expeditions of her paramour, she kept constantly by his side, and performed many deeds of courage and dressed in male attire, she often acted in the capacity of his lieutenant".[259] Every woman in the text has at least one heterosexual relationship of varying degrees of positivity and willingness. Clara, on the other hand, is one of the heroines, and represents what Ella

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[257] Barker, *The Pirate Queen*, 62.
[258] Ibid., 51.
[259] Ibid., 51-52.

could have been. She is very nearly lured by a male pirate captain (just as Ella was) but she resists and maintains her chastity and moral fibre. She is tempted but does not fall, and in fact assists Ella in her repentance and revenge.

Something that happens often in the fictionalised texts is that piracy or the female pirate herself is peripheral to the main plot. In *The Beautiful Pyrate* Adelayda was not a pirate willingly or for very long; in *Polly* she disguised herself as a male pirate very briefly but then did not actually engage in any piracy; Fanny only committed piracy on a technicality in *Fanny Campbell*; and here Ella is not present as often as one would expect given that she is the titular character. In *A General History*, *Zee-Roovers*, *Pirates Own Book* and *Histoire des pirates* Anne and Mary are advertised as one of the main attractions of the text, but take up very little of the word count. Consistently female pirates are used as draw then largely ignored in the text itself. The harlot figure is also never the main character; so even though Ella was the titular female pirate, it was the heroines, Clara and Rosamund, who were the real main characters.

There is an illustration of Ella included in *The Pirate Queen* (figure 3.5) despite not being the main character by any means, very much like how *A General History* and its descendants consistently illustrate Anne and Mary even though they have the least amount of information associated with them. This is done for the same reason as authors would place them in the title or on the frontispiece: appeal. It is also because in this era pirates were becoming defined by visuals, and female pirates even more so. She is unlike most other depictions for two main reasons: she is dressed as a woman and does not portray any standard pirate imagery. Fanny Campbell, for example, was obviously a woman (though dressed as a man) and carrying a jolly roger (which did not actually make any sense with the plot, it was simply shorthand for pirate). It would be logical that Ella

would not be disguised as a man because her character was a retired pirate and spends most of her time on land. If it were not for the caption, there would be no evidence that she was a pirate, former or otherwise. She does appear to wear some sort of turban, and throughout the text other pirates are said to be wearing them as well, which is perhaps a reference to the Barbary Wars, which were two brief wars in the first 20 years of the nineteenth century in which America went to war against North African pirates known as Barbary Corsairs.

W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan's most famous opera is *The Pirates of Penzance; or, the Slave of Duty* which was first performed in New York City in 1879.[260] It tells the story of Frederick, who as a child had been adopted by jolly pirates and upon turning 21 is officially released from his 'apprenticeship'. Having lived his whole on board the pirate ship with the pirates and their servant Ruth, Frederick has never seen any other woman but her. He leaves the crew and upon returning to land he met and fell in love with Mabel, one of the Major-General's daughters. However, the pirates realize that because Frederick was born on a leap day he had not yet reached his 21st birthday and had 63 more years to spend with them, so they storm the Major-General's home to reclaim him. Duty bound, Frederick asks Mabel to wait for him and returns to piracy. But Ruth reveals that the pirates were all exiled aristocrats who remain loyal to Queen Victoria, which impresses the Major-General enough to allow his daughters to marry the pirates, including Frederick and Mabel.

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[260] *Pirates of Penzance* was first performed in American instead of British, the home country of both Gilbert and Sullivan, because of differences between British and American copyright laws. The duo's previous play, *HMS Pinafore*, had been pirated by Americans ruthlessly and so Gilbert and Sullivan premiered *Pirates of Penzance* in America, where they had more popularity, to prevent this: Monica F. Cohen, "Noblemen Gone Wrong: Novel-Reading Pirates and the Victorian Stage in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 51:3 (2009): 350.

The Pirates of Penzance is typical of late-nineteenth-century pirate theatre. It was uncommon in this time to see pirate characters at sea actually committing piratical acts, and in *The Pirates of Penzance* while the first few scenes occur on the pirate ship (though with no piracy), the vast majority is on land.[261] There are also some interesting changes in the type of crossdressing that is employed. There were two main types of theatrical crossdressing in the Victorian period: a young woman playing boys and young men (never hyper masculine men's men) and male comedians playing middle aged women.[262] The latter would never play these female characters seriously, and they were often hideous. One of the reasons these two types of crossdressing in particular arose are because it would not challenge delicate Victorian sensibilities regarding gender if it were men depicting unvirtuous women instead of actual women. This is a fascinating inversion of the nature of crossdressing in Early Modern theatre, when young men would be the main crossdressing actors. However, crossdressing as a plot device (specifically women disguising themselves as men), though still present, was considerably less common in this period than the eighteenth century: "these characters were less frequent in Victorian than in Elizabethan drama, obviously because they were not played by boy actors, but also perhaps because a serious heroine's turning to male dress would suggest a certain indelicacy to audiences who associated ladylikeness with virtue."[263] As a result, these characters were more like grotesque parodies of the eighteenth century warrior woman trope.[264]

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[261] Powell and Burwick, *British Pirates in Print and Performance*, 117.

[262] Jane W. Stedman, "From Dame to Woman: W.S. Gilbert and Theatrical Transvestism," *Victorian Studies* 14:1 (1970): 27.

[263] Ibid., 28.

[264] Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 89.

The closest thing to a female pirate in *The Pirates of Penzance* is Ruth,

Frederick's long-time nursery-maid and the "piratical maid-of-all-work".[265] She is a

mother figure to Frederic and the other pirates and falls firmly in the latter of the two

types of theatrical Victorian crossdressing that I outlined above. She does not have quite

enough characterization to be deemed either heroine or harlot, but she does fall into the

category of pirate-mother, which is a new category that enters the scene in the late

nineteenth century. She is a symptom of the more lighthearted depictions of pirates that

arose during this time period, and she is generally a woman who is tasked with taking

care of a group of childish and immature male pirates, and as a moral compass to guide

them to virtue, which is also symptomatic of the perceptions of female virtue in the

nineteenth century. The most famous pirate-mother character is without a doubt Wendy

Darling from J.M. Barrie's series of books and plays about Peter Pan in the first few years

of the 1900s, made famous by the 1953 Disney film.[266] The pirate-mother is not the only

way in which *The Pirates of Penzance* is standard of nineteenth-century pirate fiction;

their comedic opera was still a low-brow genre, even though Gilbert and Sullivan had a

role in changing theatre to being slightly more respectable.[267] As I have shown, pirate

fiction has consistently lived in genres targeted towards the lower classes, often with

economic themes. Gilbert and Sullivan's pirates are Marxist and egalitarian – satirically

so – and are critical of imperialism.[268]

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[265] W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, *The Pirates of Penzance, or, The Slave of Duty: An Entirely Original Comedic Opera in Two Acts* (London: Chappell, 1879), 2.
[266] I will not be discussing *Peter Pan* or any other versions of it since it does not feature any female pirates. I class Wendy as a pirate-mother because Captain Hook's pirate crew asks Wendy to fill for them the maternal role she has with the Lost Boys, which she rejects (and is therefore never a pirate).
[267] Shani D'Cruze, "Dainty Little Fairies: Women, Gender and the Savoy Operas," *Women's History Review* 9:2 (2000): 347.
[268] Cohen, "Noblemen Gone Wrong," 342.

Bret Harte's 1886 book, *The Queen of Pirate Isle,* is the first – but certainly not the last – example of pirates as a topic for children's literature. Pirates emerged in the nineteenth century as a popular topic for children's literature, usually in the form of novels and periodicals.[269] In this period all children's literature was highly moralizing, but what morals were asserted differed based on the gender of the target audience. Boys' literature was about being brave and patriotic, while little girls' stories feature "decorous heroines in domestic crises", which is why there are so few female pirates in nineteenth-century children's literature, and indeed literature in general.[270] Female characters were *actively* left out of boys' literature, unless they were a femme fatale or a passive victim who only existed to accentuate the hero's virtue. In boys' literature (such as *Treasure Island*) pirates were not fun, romantic and endearing; there were villainous and cowardly.[271] Polly is an imaginative nine-year-old girl who often plays make-believe with her cousin Hickory and the Chinese page Wan Lee. One day they were playing pirates with Polly as their Queen, they go along a nearby ridge to continue playing, but they slid off the edge of the cliff and down the muddy slope. They safely came to stop on a ledge where they found a cave filled with real pirates who also name her their pirate queen. Polly grows frightened and tries to abdicate, so the pirates bring them back to their home, where it is revealed that the men were local miners who were playing make-believe with the children (to Polly's disbelief).

There is no real harlot/heroine dichotomy since the text is for and starring children, but there are still some important ideas about gender roles. The clear division of topics for boys and girls is one of the reasons *The Queen of Pirate Isle* is so striking; it

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[269] Kevin Carpenter, *Desert Islands and Pirate Isles* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1984), 11.
[270] Ibid., 11.
[271] Anderson, "Female Pirates and Nationalism," 165.

somehow manages to breach the two spheres without breaking any rules. Authors in the nineteenth century seem less interested in the dynamic between harlot and heroine characters than in the eighteenth century when there was almost always a harlot character against whom the heroine could be positively compared. Fiction writers in this century appear to go to great lengths to ensure that heroines in female pirate stories (who may or may not be a pirate themselves) have some sort of loophole to ensure that they are not actually a criminal, such as Fanny Campbell's American privateer/pirate legal grey area and Polly's make-believe pirates.

Polly herself is a perfect example of the pirate-mother. Polly (probably a coincidence to the titular female pirate character from John Gay's 1777 opera *Polly*), throughout her adventures as the Queen of Pirate Isle, exhibits very strong maternal behaviour towards her friends/co-pirates: "The royal duties, which seemed to be purely maternal, consisted in putting the Pirates to bed after a day of rapine and bloodshed, and in feeding them with liquorice water through a quill in a small bottle."[272] The author openly calls her authority "confusingly maternal."[273] Childhood aside that is very much at odds with the eighteenth-century Anne and Mary that have become standard. They actively abandon their children and their role as a mother, while Polly is defined by her (potential) motherhood. She is a creation of the nineteenth-century concept of social spheres; even as a pirate, it is her job to care for the men, handling food and shelter and comfort. She remains in her sphere, even as a pirate, while Anne and Mary switch to the male sphere or create a domestic sphere within the public sphere. All of Polly's fantasies, regardless of the actual plot, revolve around motherhood and domesticity. Even though

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[272] Bret Harte, *The Queen of Pirate Isle* (London: Frederick Warne, 1886), 14.
[273] Ibid., 17.

the story is about pirates (who turn out to be men play-acting for the children), it is still ultimately a 'domestic crisis' of Polly trying to take care of the boys. Her ultimate pirate adventure was to have a family. Overall, it is a fascinating hybrid of a masculine topic (pirates) with at the same time clear feminine messaging (domesticity). It is very much reminiscent of what will be the much better known relationship between Wendy and the Lost Boys.

It is in the nineteenth century that we begin to see the rumblings of what will become the modern view of pirates: as fairy tales and fun topics for children's play. Pirates were the subject of current events and sensational crime literature in the eighteenth century, but in nineteenth century they are the objects of romance, comedy and fantastical children's stories, though some of the fear from the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth century remained. The female pirate entered the world of the Romantic through the brush of Eugène Delacroix in his legendary painting, *La Liberté guidant le peuple*, then there was yet another evolution of *A General History* in Charles Ellms' *Pirate's Own Book*, followed by the romantic and patriotic American *Fanny Campbell, the Female Pirate Captain* and a (critical) French interpretation of Anne and Mary's mythos in *Histoire des pirates*. Benjamin Barker's *The Pirate Queen* is a perfect example of the popular pirate pulp novel, and Gilbert and Sullivan introduce the comedic and the maternal in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and the century closes with the 'domestic crises' of *The Queen of Pirate Isle.*

Female pirates have continued to interact with dominant ideas about gender, sexuality and morality, which in the nineteenth century are very much interconnected. With the perceived supremacy of the "spheres" system of gender came a very different depiction of the heroine/harlot dichotomy than in the eighteenth century. Ideas about

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morality and gender were much more polarized, meaning there were fewer pirate heroes than the previous century. There were fewer crossdressing women in real life and there were fewer in popular culture. Women were seen as being the guiding light of virtue, especially in America, and responsible for the virtuous well-being of the nation. Therefore it was paramount for heroines to meet this ideal, meaning that their roles were often enmeshed with ideas about motherhood. This led to the development of a new female pirate trope alongside the heroine and harlot: the pirate-mother. The female pirates in *Fanny Campbell*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Queen of Pirate Isle* all fulfilled a maternal role to a group of pirates, and this trope will live on through J.M. Barrie's subsequent work. These intertwining conceptions of morality and gender also played a part in the burgeoning American identity at this time. Being a seafaring nation in its infancy, popular culture was a vital way for it to come to terms with its own identity and (brief) sovereign history. The vast majority of female pirate literature in this century springs from this desire for America to understand itself, and the works say more about nineteenth-century America than they do about eighteenth century pirates. Janice Hume describes nineteenth-century American pirate narratives as "a type of metaphor for the age".[274]

With this distance from any real pirate threat came an explosion of romanticism in pirate fiction. From Delacroix's noble Liberty to Ballou's republican mother Fanny Campbell and the comedic pirate maid Ruth (played by a man) and to the imaginative mother-in-training Polly, by the end of the century pirates were firmly in the realm of comedy, romance and children's stories. Almost 200 years after Anne and Mary were first portrayed in *Tryals* and the more influential *A General History*, echoes of those early

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[274] Hume, "The Buccaneer as Cultural Metaphor," 74.

stories are still very visible. But as each work of fiction is created it reflects something new and something entirely unique to its own time, but remains deeply and inseparably connected to those original sources on which they are based. We are now moving even further outwards on Anne and Mary's web of representations. While we are still able to follow direct lines back to the eighteenth century sources, the messages these texts are trying to communicate through the heroine/harlot (and pirate-mother) dichotomy, visual representations and mythologization are specific to how they conceive of gender and sexuality during this historical moment in which they were written. The next chapter explores how the heroine/harlot dynamic begins to dissolve in the further reaches of the web, the anxieties that dissolution causes, the impact of the World Wars and second wave feminism and how female pirates transition to the silver screen of Classic Hollywood.

<div align="center">**Chapter Four**

The Twentieth Century: Hollywood and Feminism</div>

With the introduction of mass-produced film culture in the twentieth century came the crystallization of the modern pirate figure that is recognisable to most modern audiences. In the eighteenth century the Golden Age pirate, specifically Anne Bonny and Mary Read, captured the West's cultural imagination; their popularity carried over to the nineteenth century – localized in America instead of Europe – where their stories, by that point historical, blossomed into tales of adventure and excitement instead of sensationalistic current events. In the twentieth century pirates became stars of screen as well as stage and print, but those cinematic pirates were based on the fictional pirates of the nineteenth century more than the historical ones of the eighteenth, moving to the even further reaches of the cultural web of Anne and Mary's depictions in popular culture. The first strand in this web I will be examining is *Mary Read, the Pirate Wench*, Frank Shay's 1934 work of historical fiction. I will also be studying four of the major Hollywood films featuring female pirates on the 1940s and 50s: *The Spanish Main* (1945), *Anne of the Indies* (1951), *Against All Flags* (1952) and *Captain Kidd and the Slave Girl* (1954). I will then look at the books *Mistress of the Seas* by John Carlova in 1962 and Pamela Jekel's 1983 *Sea Star: The Private Life of Anne Bonny, Pirate Queen*. Lastly, I will discuss the 1995 box office flop *Cutthroat Island*, the final of the female pirate films in the twentieth century.

Throughout this thesis I have explored the ways in which Anne and Mary are depicted in popular culture, and how those depictions reflect contemporary perceptions of gender, sexuality and morality. Those depictions have changed radically over the

centuries, but it is in the twentieth centuries that the most drastic of those changes occur. One of the primary influences on representations of female pirates – and, indeed, just about everything in popular culture – were the First and Second World Wars; I will be focusing more so on the latter due to the concentration of post-war pirate films. Female pirates in these movies reflect anxieties and confusion about the quickly shifting role of women in society after the Second World War. The other key moment in the evolution of female pirates in popular culture in the twentieth century is second wave feminism, the impact of which is visible in the books and films in the 1960s and later; the heroine/harlot dichotomy began to merge and dissolve largely due to this movement.

Piracy had declined drastically in the nineteenth century, and before the First World War it was essentially non-existent, being very likely the most piracy-free time period in human history. However, after the Second World War there was an uptick in piratical activity due to smaller (and more specialized) navies.[275] Twentieth-century piracy may share a definition with Golden Age and early modern piracy but it is extremely different and in the modern day is rarely conceived as being the same thing. As in all of piracy's long history, pirates continued to target nations with smaller, weaker navies and high-traffic shipping routes, especially the Malacca Strait. The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) began tracking pirate attacks in 1985; there were 50 in that year and there has been a steady increase every year since, concentrated in the African and Asian regions, especially around the high-traffic Malacca Strait.[276]

The twentieth century also marked the beginning of serious modern pirate scholarship, as well as the first time historians began questioning the heretofore perceived

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[275] Konstam, *Piracy*, 304.
[276] Ibid., 305.

infallibility of *A General History* and attempting in the process to 'de-romanticize' Golden Age piracy.[277] However, for most of the twentieth century historians were more concerned with the 'big name' male pirates and their relationship with military and political history. It was not until the 1980s that historians, most notably Marcus Rediker with his controversial text *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750,* began to examine piracy within a social, cultural and economic context. Despite this more accurate approach to pirate scholarship, pirate fiction continued on the romantic trajectory set in the nineteenth century, with pirates still being depicted as romantic, adventure and children's stories.

Another holdover from the nineteenth century were the gender spheres. They held tight until the 1930s; the First World War started the decline and the Second World War clinched it. American women seized the vote in 1920 but for decades afterwards were still second-class citizens in many ways, and had more legal restrictions than their male counterparts; in the 1940s and 50s many of those restrictions would be challenged or overturned entirely.[278] The situation was even more dire for women of colour who were often neglected from early women's rights movement as well as civil rights. In 1946 a number of women's groups in America tried to pass the Equal Rights Act (ERA), riding on positive public opinion towards women after their contributions to the war effort. Women were entering the public sphere like never before, largely through societies, clubs and organizations.[279] It was in the 1950s that the very first lesbian organizations were

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[277] B.R. Burg and Larry Schweikart, "Stand By to Repel Historians: Modern Scholarship and Caribbean Pirates, 1650 to 1725," *The Historian* 46:2 (1984): 220-1.

[278] Susan M. Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s* (Michigan: Twayne Publishing, 1998), 127.

[279] Kathleen A. Laughlin and Jacqueline L. Castledine, *Breaking the Wave: Women, their Organizations and Feminism, 1945-1985* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 11.

formed, and a public identity and consciousness soon followed.[280] For the first time birth control and abortion were available legally and in the mainstream after 1978 Roe v Wade legalized abortions.[281] Instead of using pre-existing gender norms as a framework to prove women deserved certain rights, as many of the nineteenth-century early feminists did, second wave feminists argued on a basis of humanity as reason enough.

Since women had more opportunities to participate in the war effort than ever before, there were fewer examples of crossdressing women soldiers in the twentieth century. When women were permitted to officially enlist in the Second World War oftentimes their motivations echoed the ones early modern crossdressing women offered: patriotism, freedom, adventure. However, some very notable examples stand out, such as the British Flora Sandes, who after she served in the Serbian army in the First World War became an international celebrity, generating discussion around the possibility of women as combatants.[282] It was more common for women to wear male uniforms but not as a disguise, such as the Russian Women's Death Battalion. While in the eighteenth century there was a matter-of-factness around Anne and Mary being accepted as men, in later depictions – particularly in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries – their stories were instead used to illustrate women's struggles for equality and respect in male-dominated industries. There was a new focus on them having to 'prove' themselves as women *and* as seafarers in ways that were not necessary in the 1700s. Anne and Mary's femaleness remained their defining feature more so than their criminality but for a different purpose. The two women have been, and always will be, defined by their gender more so than their criminality, the feature by which male pirates have been defined. Although there was a

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[280] Laughlin and Castledine, *Breaking the Wave*, 50.
[281] Ibid., 136.
[282] Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 14-5.

decrease in female crossdressing soldiers, it was only during the twentieth century that

crossdressing became automatically associated with homosexuality.[283]

      Mary Read, the Pirate Wench was a pulp historical fiction novel Frank Shay

released in 1934, the year after the lowest point of the Depression. Maureen Honey offers

two reasons for the popularity of strong female characters in American fiction during the

Depression in her book *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender and Propaganda*

During World War II. The first is that

> the proliferation of strong, assertive heroines during the prewar years may lie in the
> demoralization of men thrown out of work by the Depression or threatened by loss
> of their jobs. It is possible that male characters' reliance on a strong woman
> reflected male feelings of vulnerability and inadequacy. Stories in which men
> depended on women may have reflected men's loss of confidence in their ability to
> be masters of their fate. Feeling that self-actualization was problematic for them,
> perhaps men found it easier to accept an adventurous, competent woman and indeed
> needed such a figure on which to rely for support.[284]

Honey's second reason is "that female independence was acceptable and even attractive

to men, but only as a prelude to marriage. While men in these stories were taken by her

intelligence and self-sufficiency, they insisted that the ambitious heroine give up her

career for love".[285] Novels such as this served both as reassurance and escapism. After the

First World War, a woman in pants was seen as a symbol of female rebellion and did not

become common until after the Second World War.[286] There were more variant women in

literature after the First World War, influenced largely by the new influx of translated

European texts to America that dealt with the topic.[287] In the 1920s and 30s America was

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[283] Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 152.
[284] Maureen Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender and Propaganda during World War II*
(Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1985), 69.
[285] Ibid., 69.
[286] Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 6.
[287] Jeannette H. Foster, *Sex Variant Women in Literature* (Tallahassee: Naiad Press, 1985), 240-1.

confronting ideas about working wives. In the 1920s the overall conclusion was that it

was acceptable as long as her domestic duties did not suffer, but in the 1930s any wife

and mother who also worked was perceived as selfish, neglectful and greedy for taking

male breadwinner jobs during the Depression – and there is perhaps no manlier job than

pirate, so it is intriguing to see that while a woman like Mary would have been derided in

real life, as a book character she was a reassurance.[288]

Like so many of the authors before him, Shay asserts the complete accuracy of his

tale, despite it being the most fictionalized of any retelling yet, declaring in the

dedications:

> The heroine of this book of adventure on the Western Seas is Mary Read, who lived
> and died in the manner pictured here. Serving first as an officer under many famous
> buccaneers, she later commanded her own vessel, and led her men in boarding fat
> Spanish galleons and in the rape of New Orleans. Death came to her in a manner
> befitting her career. So much as is known of her life is embodied in this tale of her
> scouring the seas.[289]

It is difficult to know if Shay truly believed the story or whether he was taking a page out

of the early modern period and using the claims of authenticity as an intentional tool.

Additionally, Shay cites an historian named E. Irvine Haines who was active in the early

twentieth century but had no significant contributions to the field of Golden Age pirate

history. Despite these false assertions of fact, *Pirate Wench* was one of the first examples

of Anne and Mary being in a work of historical fiction. Up to this point Anne and Mary

inspired works of historical fiction starring female pirates but did not represent them

directly and when they were depicted by name it was in texts that were retelling their

histories, such as the *Pirates Own Book* and *Histoire des Pirates* (despite their semi-

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[288] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 17.
[289] Frank Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench* (London: Hurst & Blackett, ltd, 1934), 4.

fictional natures). It is not until the 1980s that the ambiguity of Anne and Mary's story was openly acknowledged in a work of historical fiction. Shay took many artistic liberties with Mary's story but even throughout the text continues to declare historical accuracy with statements such as something (fictional) being "considered unimportant by historians".[290] This does not mean, however, that Shay did no research at all; he lifts an entire pro-piracy monologue from Captain Samuel Bellamy in *A General History*.[291] If it were not for the claims at authenticity it would be a strong work of historical fiction.

There are many divergences from anything resembling the original story or its subsequent iterations. Shay adds that Mary went by the name 'Buttons' and that her mother owned a tavern frequented by piratical types; the basics are correct, but with significant embellishments. Yet the pillars of the story that have turned up time and time again remain: the proposition, the duel, the capture and Anne's dog quote. Instead of both women pleading their bellies, Anne does so and flees while Mary is tortured and dies of illness in prison.[292] One alteration in particular is something that will become typical of twentieth-century depictions of female pirates: assigning Anne and Mary more authority than they had historically. I suspect it may be to justify their continued presence as the two women take on more symbolic importance of contemporary women's issues; an attempt to make them 'worthy' of their cultural importance. It would seem that in order for them to have such a huge cultural impact it is insufficient for them to simply be pirates. They must be captains and pirate queens (they were neither). Mary essentially commandeers Rackam's crew, then eventually establishes her own, then becomes a pirate queen when she founds a Libertalia-esque pirate paradise.

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[290] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 123.
[291] Ibid., 55; Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 587.
[292] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 125.

Some aspects of the text were consistent with earlier ones: Mary was still the favourite. She was not only the titular character but Anne appeared only as a supporting character halfway through the text.[293] As Anne was a chapter in Mary's story in *A General History*, she continued to play second fiddle to Mary. Another consistent point was Mary's immoral mother figure; she coerced and encouraged young Mary into a life of crime, who was slightly more willing than in earlier depictions.

Interestingly, *Pirate Wench* was one of the first sources to openly acknowledge one of the inherent risks of being a female pirate: the threat of sexual violence.[294] As soon as Mary begins it is one of her primary concerns, and while the author does not use explicit language, the implications are clear. When Mary's ship is captured by pirates she only offers to join them because anyone who did not was being stripped and their clothes stolen: "A blush crept to her cheeks and her heart sickened with a great fear as she began unbuttoning her jerkin."[295] So not only does this suggest the danger of sexual assault, Shay proffers it as a morally-justifiable reason for Mary to turn pirate. It is surprising how little this is addressed before *Pirate Wench* – with the exception of Anne attacking a would-be rapist, but that is used to highlight *her* faults and is breezed over. Sexual violence, or the threat of it, occurs multiple times throughout the text. Mary's own pirate husband tries to force himself on her and she defends herself; this emphasizes Mary's fortitude as well as her modesty.[296] *Pirate Wench* romanticized Anne and Mary in a manner that will become standard of both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; as freedom fighters and economic rebels who reject an unfair system and create a better one

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[293] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 67.
[294] Ibid., 22.
[295] Ibid., 23.
[296] Ibid., 32.

for themselves. For example, in one scene Rackam frees a group of prisoners for the sake of it (not for his personal gain).[297]

In the twentieth century a dissolution of the previous strict heroine/harlot dichotomy began, which is no coincidence in light of the impact of the World Wars and second wave feminism. The heroine and harlot figures started to be blended together and sometimes entirely abandoned. Though there was still a preference for Mary for the first half of the twentieth century, this was beginning to break down. In *Pirate Wench*, however, the dichotomy is still going strong. As per her usual story, Mary falls in love with a soldier and attains domestic bliss. But even as she does this, she continued to wear men's clothing, for "a woman's garments would have been her undoing."[298] Mary is still shown to be looking for heterosexual love, only joining the cavalry because she "liked the look of the sergeant".[299] Even as she is crossdressing and doing men's work, seeking heteronormativity and domesticity is still her main motivation. Mary continued to use her classic method of revealing herself to the object of her affections, by revealing her breasts to him 'by accident', saying that "She did not want to be strong, she wanted to be weak, a woman dependent on a man" – implying that all a woman really wants is a man so she can be a real woman.[300] Even on board the pirate ships, disguised as a man, she attempts to mimic domesticity and form a private sphere within a public one, asserting that "What she wanted most of all was to go ashore and settle down".[301] But even as Mary succeeds

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[297] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench* 69-71; this is very different from *A General History*, where one of the least callous pirates, Bartholomew "Black Bart" Roberts, captures a slave ship and burns it with the slaves still on board: Johnson, *A General History of the Pyrates*, 235-6.
[298] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 16.
[299] Ibid., 17.
[300] Ibid., 30-2.
[301] Ibid., 33.

as essentially a pirate queen, Shay suggests that she wanted normalcy more than she knew herself:

> To say she craved consciously for a home and children would be laughable; it is highly probable that after she rose to command she never saw herself as a woman, that is, as a wife with dresses and underskirts, herding a brood of squally brats out of danger. Yet there is much that went on in her subconscious that neither we nor she could tell. We do know that she, woman-like, craved the comfort and the safety of a hearthside.[302]

Shay was perhaps addressing the belief that as more women entered the workforce they were denying themselves their true calling and were not even themselves aware of it. Those anxieties manifest themselves further when Shay showed that love and romance strengthen women like Anne and Mary, but that it weakens and emasculates their men. It becomes a trope that Anne emasculates and overshadows Rackam, something that never appeared before the twentieth century. Mary's duel, while present, had been altered; instead of protecting her lover from another pirate, she kills her abusive husband when he picks a fight with her new love interest, leaving her available to pursue him.

Over the course of the text Mary experiences a process of moral decay. She begins as a criminal, but only because it was what her mother taught her. Then she was pressed into piracy only to avoid sexual assault and is definitively anti-pirate. She states that she did not enjoy being a pirate but that she worked hard and well on principle.[303] Eventually she works her way up to pirate captain, then to pirate queen with her own island, apparently having lost any earlier scruples.

Anne's role, though rather minor, is still that of the harlot. It follows the traditional storyline that she was openly a woman but wore men's clothing, and she is

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[302] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 100.
[303] Ibid., 26.

described as strikingly beautiful, very feminine, Irish and (surprisingly) blonde: "The woman, tall, blonde and fully developed, dropped a curtsey that proved she knew the ways of the world. She had rosy cheeks and when she spoke it was with a rich Irish brogue that betrayed her nationality."[304] Anne is depicted as being inherently sensual, violent, threatening, disloyal, a slave to her passions and having completely disregard for proper social norms. The dichotomy between the two women is more noticeable and poignant when they are together; Anne is a foil for Mary, not the other way around. With her lustiness and immorality she emphasises Mary's positive qualities through comparison. Shay put a twist on the old proposition story, making it so that Anne had known from the beginning that Mary was a woman and was simply teasing her.[305] It was in the twentieth century that crossdressing became associated with homosexuality, so perhaps Shay was attempting to avoid any potential implications of lesbianism.[306] Anne and Mary begin as friends, with Anne even having a maternal role towards Mary, but Shay was sure to remind the reader that Anne is ruthless and disloyal. Anne threatens Mary if she ever tries to steal Rackam, but it is not about love; it is about power. It reinforces their heterosexuality but it also establishes Anne as violent, power-hungry, manipulative, and self-centred and that she uses her sexuality as a weapon to get what she wants. Anne recounts her life story and it is almost identical to *A General History* but with fewer details about her conception, and ends by saying that she did not "regret her ill-planned life".[307] But aside from this, this is one of the more sympathetic depictions of Anne up to this point. She is described as honest and looks after Mary; though she is still

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[304] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 67.
[305] Ibid., 68.
[306] Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 152.
[307] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 69.

depicted as a calculating shrew, there are rumblings of a shift in her character that will reveal itself in the 1980s. Unlike Mary, Anne does not sail or fight (except in emergencies); she is the lady of the ship. This creates an even larger gap between the two women, making Mary more endearing and independent instead of self-indulgent and controlling like Anne.

Pirate Wench was less visual than most of the earlier works, very likely because of a more literate population. Yet Mary's appearance is described at length, especially at the height of her power: "This pirate captain put on some airs. The wench herself wore silk breeches and satin brocaded waistcoats and a crimson silk shirt. A gallant hat with an enormous feather completed her garb. About her waist was a great sash of green and into it were thrust her pistols, silverbutted, and her goldhilted poniard."[308] The extremely ornate and impractical appearance that Shay describes here is one that is closer to Captain Hook or the images of iconic pirate illustrator Howard Pyle than any historical pirate. On multiple occasions throughout the story Mary's breasts play the role of revealing her gender, and on the cover of the novel (figure 4.1) she is wearing feminized men's clothing, with her shirt open to the waist, revealing the obvious outline of her breasts. While in the twentieth century there were fewer visual depictions of Anne and Mary's breasts, they continued to play an important role in the storylines.

The Second World War led to an upheaval of gender roles, primarily due to the unprecedented levels of women's participation in war industries. In a remarkably brief span of time gender politics in America were revolutionized. The war infused popular culture in every way, both during and after the war. For years people grappled with the aftermath, trauma and upheaval of the war through the creation and consumption of

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[308] Shay, *Mary Read, Pirate Wench*, 103.

popular culture.[309] It also brought more sexual freedom, and by the mid-to-late-twentieth century it was a public topic for discussion instead taboo. The war brought millions of Americans into contact with new ideas and experiences they never would have had otherwise and brought American women opportunities for paid skilled labour that had never before been available to them, and which many of them found incredibly rewarding. They were permitted to participate in the military in unprecedented numbers and varieties of roles; though women had been peripherally involved in warfare for centuries as nurses, cooks, domestic workers, followers and sometimes in combat, it was never on this scale or this official. The type of work women were assigned often reflected the traditional gender roles that still permeated society, that of women as caretakers. Women may have been in the workforce in huge numbers but that work was still gendered.[310]

The number of women employed in the American labour force exploded from 11,970,000 in 1940 to 18,610,000 in 1945, an increase of almost 40%.[311] Women were laid off in large numbers after the war even though 75-80% of women working during the war reported that they wanted to keep their jobs.[312] Women's work during the Second World War gave them more legitimacy, respect and power in society.[313] However, despite all of the radical changes during the Second World War, as Susan Hartman notes in her book *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s*, the

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[309] Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids*, 50.
[310] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 15.
[311] Ibid., 21.
[312] Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 23.
[313] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 21; It is important to note that this refers more so to white women than women of colour, who, though they also had more opportunities for work and progress, were still a marginalized community whose experiences were very different from those of white women. However, because all the female pirates I will be examining in this time period are white and products of a mainstream popular culture which predominantly reflected white experiences, those are the ones I shall be exploring.

very economic prosperity along with the renewed confidence in American institutions induced by victory...contributed to a mood of conservatism and complacency. Having weathered the strains and inconveniences of the military crisis, most Americans were more interested in holding onto their wartime gains, in maintaining things as they were than in social and economic experiments aimed to alleviate the inequities and injustices that remained in the social fabric.[314]

Instead of a revolution of gender politics, the war was treated as a "temporary disruption of peacetime routine" and the propagandist message was that women took jobs out of duty, not out of personal desire or fulfillment.[315]

There was a new type of pirate in the twentieth century: the cinematic pirate, which is distinct from the historical or literary pirate, though the three often intermingle and fuse together. Pirates have been a staple in film since its very first inception, and the early pirate films of the 1920s (such as *The Black Pirate* starring Douglas Fairbanks Jr., which did for pirate films what *Treasure Island* did for pirate literature), though different from the modern cinematic pirate, visually shaped and created many of the iconic images in the genre, including the now-cliché riding down a ship's sail with a knife. While pirate films did not initially transition well into talkies, they returned to popular favour in the 1930s and remained a public favourite until the 1960s. They were especially popular in the Depression for depicting "conflict between the haves and have-nots of society", which has always been at the root of the fictional pirate's appeal.[316] They decreased again in popularity during the Second World War for appearing frivolous, but made another comeback at the tail end of the war years. This "cycle", as Brian Taves refers to them in

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[314] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 12.
[315] Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 54-55.
[316] Brian Taves, *The Romance of Adventure: the Genre of Historical Adventure Movies*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), 68-69.

The Romance of Adventure: The Genre of Historical Adventure Movies, was a darker and more violent depiction of pirates than before the war.[317]

Hollywood pirates were based almost entirely on the nineteenth-century depictions of piracy and so were already multiple points away from the centre of the web. So what we have are cinematic pirates based on literary pirates (based on literary pirates, based on literary pirates…) based on historical pirates. After so many degrees of separation the stories and images have evolved into something different. The standard plot of these early pirate films was that a pirate is an aristocratic man in disguise who had a good reason to turn to piracy, who by the end marries the lovely prim lady and returns to his sophisticated life.[318] Male pirate films would "handle the topics of oppression, revolt and 'proper governance'…[and] oppose what they characterize as tyranny, and often portray just – if limited – rebellions and struggles for freedom," which is a theme consistent throughout pirate fiction, especially in the twentieth century and later.[319]

Pirates are almost always in the adventure genre, which Taves describes as being fundamentally optimistic, "inputting American ideals to past foreign struggles for freedom."[320] This is true for all adventure films but even more so for pirate adventure films because of their specific defining relationship with freedom. Taves breaks adventure films up into five categories, with pirates as a subcategory of swashbucklers (which also includes characters like Robin Hood and the Three Musketeers). Taves defines the swashbuckler as a character who "offers the appeal of characters who briefly but justifiably succeed in transgressing the law, yet whose ultimate impact is to uphold justice

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[317] Taves, *The Romance of Adventure*, 72-3.
[318] Neil Rennie, *Treasure Neverland: Real and Imaginary Pirates* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 220.
[319] Steve Neale, *Genre and Hollywood* (London: Routledge, 2000), 52.
[320] Taves, *The Romance of Adventure*, 14.

and morality."[321] What sets the pirate film apart from the other swashbucklers is, of course, the setting at sea, which negates the often 'lone wolf' persona of the main swashbuckler because a pirate is nothing without their crew.[322] The pirate was almost always either a hero or an anti-hero, very rarely a villain. But the manner in which Taves describes the mid-century pirate film (anti)heroes is reminiscent of a perception of pirates as freedom-fighting working-class heroes that has already begun to take root, but which Rediker solidified in *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*.

Hollywood films had a significant influence on gender norms at the time through fashion, celebrity culture, movie stars, romance, drive-ins, etc.[323] The films in the years following the Second World War were reacting against the perceived dissolving of tightly held traditional gender roles. So while popular culture was addressing and reflecting women's experiences on a never-before-seen scale, it remained "rooted in a context which sustained the centrality of women's domestic lives and their relationships with men." Any female characters who stepped outside these bounds were depicted as threatening and villainous.[324] It also contributed to the commodification and commercialization of sex, and reinforced images of women as objects of sexualization.[325] The films glorified domesticity and equated happiness and safety with men and marriage.[326] Motherhood was heralded as the pinnacle of female achievement, an inheritance of America's nineteenth-century Republican Motherhood. In the 1930s the infamous Hollywood production code came into effect and overhauled the ways in which sexuality, and specifically women, were depicted in film: "In specifying the no-no's of

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[321] Taves, *The Romance of Adventure*, 17.
[322] Ibid., 25.
[323] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 240.
[324] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 189.
[325] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 277-279.
[326] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 164.

cinema, it covered, with meticulous prurience, every conceivable offense to God, mom, and man"[327]

Before the Second World War women were depicted in films only in traditionally feminine professions, such as secretarial work, nursing, domestic work and teaching. After the war they branched out into public sphere professions including medicine, politics, journalism, business and law.[328] Brandon French in *On the Verge of Revolt: Women in American Films of the Fifties* states that women in this period lived a double life of sorts, maintaining their traditional domestic roles while they were suddenly a necessary facet of the work force.[329] Like the warrior women before them, women in post-war films turned everything topsy-turvy and that was acceptable as long as they righted it by the end either through marriage and domesticity or the appropriate punishment (which was often the case for female pirates).[330] Hence the lack of female pirate films during the war; redeeming a woman in trousers lines up with post-war issues, but it would not have served well as war propaganda. Film was unique in the way that it was male-dominated industry and yet at the same time featured women in such prominent and vital positions.[331]

There were so few female pirates as leads because that would make it a 'woman's film' instead of an adventure film, and none of the female-led pirate films were hits.[332] Molly Haskell in *From Reverence to Rape: the Treatment of Women in the Movies* describes women's film as being perceived as "soft-core emotional porn for the frustrated

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[327] Molly Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape: the Treatment of Women in the Movies* (New York: Penguin, 1975), 117.
[328] Brandon French, *On the Verge of Revolt: Women in American Films of the Fifties* (New York: Ungar, 1983), xvi.
[329] Ibid., xvii.
[330] Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 97.
[331] Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape*, 8.
[332] Taves, *The Romance of Adventure*, 135.

housewife".[333] Taves argues that the reason there are so few women leads in adventure films, and specifically pirate films, is because historically there were no women present, which is an unfortunately common misconception and yet another example of how women are written out of history.[334] The idea that women were absent from seafaring is as much created by adventure films as it is reflected in them. He also suggests that the films have little to say about contemporary gender and sexuality when in fact mid-century pirate films have much to say about ideas regarding post-war American sexuality, morality and gender.

While *The Spanish Main*, which RKO studios released in 1945, was by no means the first pirate film in Hollywood, but it was the first to feature an overt female pirate. It was released as a response to the massively popular pirate film *The Black Swan*.[335] A corrupt Governor in the Spanish Main unjustly sentenced an innocent Dutch sea captain to hang, but he escapes and becomes a pirate known only as the Barracuda and sets out to get revenge. He kidnaps a Contessa who was engaged to marry the Governor and declares that he shall marry her instead, and over the course of her captivity on his ship they develop feelings for each other. He brings her to a pirate hideout where they meet Anne Bonny, a female pirate who desires the Barracuda for herself. Anne and the Contessa duel for his affections but their pistols turn out to be empty and they part ways. The Barracuda, his crew, the Contessa, Anne Bonny and her pirates team up to defeat the Governor. Anne dies in battle but gives her blessing to the Contessa and the Barracuda, who defeat the Governor and sail off into the sunset.

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[333] Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape*, 155.
[334] Taves, *The Romance of Adventure*, 122.
[335] Rennie, *Treasure Neverland*, 242.

The influence of the Second World War is evident in Anne Bonny's appearance in *The Spanish Main* (figure 4.2). Women's fashions at the time mirrored military uniforms; they had broad, square shoulders, straight lines and comfortable designs. During and immediately following the war years, styles were simple and practical because of the fabric shortages and the practicality for which the war called.[336] In the 1950s this changed to an image of decadence and glamour, reflecting instead of the wartime abstemiousness the wealth of the post-war economic boom.[337] The female stars of the 1950s – Marilyn Monroe, Jayne Mansfield and the like – all emphasized the female breast. As Marilyn Yalom argues in her book *A History of the Breast*, "men needed to be reassured that the nightmare of the war was over ad that the breasts they had dreamed of were available to them. The emphasis on breasts also carried a clear message for women: your role is to provide the breasts, not the bread."[338] While because of strict censorship in mainstream film there was rarely any form of nudity that did not mean there was any less focus on the commodification and sexualization of the female breast.

The images of Anne Bonny in this film as well as the other are part of a tradition of how female pirates have been styled, which is reminiscent more of *Zee-Roovers* than *A General History*. Instead of being dressed identically to male pirates they dressed as feminized versions of male pirates, with styled hair, makeup, cinched waists and low-cut shirts. Ironically, because of the production code many of the twentieth century images of female pirates were much more conservative than those of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The female pirates were always beautiful, and were very rarely disguised as men. Cinematic female pirates were based more on a nineteenth-century cultural

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[336] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 195.
[337] Ibid., 199.
[338] Yalom, *A History of the Breast*, 138.

conception of female pirates than an historical one, even though Anne and Mary remained at the core.

The cinematic female pirates were rarely the main character, and even when they were, the male lead superseded their personal narrative. She was usually there to make the female love interest jealous, or to provide sexual intrigue. In only two of the four classic Hollywood films was she the main character and/or love interest. She also died in three of the four. In a complete reversal of anything I have looked at to this point, in these films there is an Anne without a Mary. In three of the four films Anne Bonny was an actual character (in Anne of the Indies she has a different last name but it is certainly her). Mary is entirely absent for the first time, as are the foundational points of Anne's story. Unlike earlier (and later) examples, in the 1940s and 50s they just dropped historical figures – Anne, in this case – into completely fictional circumstances. The only consistent aspects were that her name was Anne and she was a Golden Age female pirate. This shows how Anne Bonny (and Mary) became a byword for female pirates, in a sense becoming symbols of themselves even without their defining plot points.

The heroine/harlot dichotomy continued to exist in *The Spanish Main* and the other mid-century Hollywood female pirate films, and while Anne was still the harlot the heroine manifested in a different way. Instead of having the heroine be a female pirate, the heroine was almost some sort of variation of a feminine woman who did not disguise herself as a man or dress as one. In *The Spanish Main* the heroine to Anne's harlot is not Mary but the fictional Contessa. Anne is volatile, violent, petty and bitterly jealous of the heroine, while the Contessa is aristocratic, feminine and elegant, yet assertive and independent. The gap between the heroine and harlot grew exponentially. The heroine was rarely a pirate but sometimes engaged in battle or piracy out of necessity, then

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returning to feminine normalcy, just as society expected women to do after working during the war, unlike the harlot who refused. The heroine usually shames or out-classes the harlot, exposing her as vulgar by comparison.

Hartman notes that in mid-century Hollywood there was a dichotomy of the helpless and the treacherous woman, which corresponds to my heroine and harlot. During the war the films emphasized female strength because it was needed, but after the war when it was not required the films heralded female helplessness.[339] This was an extension of Robin Miskolcze's assertion that the nineteenth-century woman-as-victim idea was a foundational aspect of American identity and masculinity that continued to resonate. During the Second World War women were used as "symbols of a besieged nation" and represented home, family and everything for which the men were fighting.[340] As Haskell puts it in *From Reverence to Rape*, the "whore-virgin" (or heroine-harlot) idea "took hold with a vengeance in the uptight fifties, in the dialectical caricatures of the "sex pot" and the "good girl"".[341] Sexual behaviour – be it too much, too little or just right – was a defining feature of a woman's identity.

20th Century Fox released *Anne of the Indies* in 1951 (figure 4.3). It follows a notorious pirate, Captain Providence, who is the scourge of the Caribbean. It is revealed that the Captain Providence is a woman, Anne, Blackbeard's protégée. Anne captures a vessel and finds a French prisoner on board, Pierre, who she enlists as part of her crew. She brings him to meet Blackbeard, who also does not trust him, so Anne begins to suspect him as a spy until Pierre reveals that he has half of a map that leads to Captain Henry Morgan's treasure. Anne and her crew stop in a deserted cove to prepare the ship

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[339] Hartmann, *Home Front and Beyond*, 202.
[340] Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 6-7.
[341] Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape*, vii.

for the voyage, where Anne and Pierre begin a romance. Blackbeard arrives, having discovered that Pierre had been an officer in the French navy and attacks Pierre, but when Pierre tells her that he had been thrown out of the navy in disgrace she defends him, therefore severing ties with her father figure. By the time they arrive in Port Royal to retrieve the other half of the map, Anne has fallen in love with Pierre. When he goes on land alone to get the map he meets with the British naval officers for whom he has been spying on Anne and reveals everything he knows about her, and is then reunited with his beautiful wife, Molly. Anne's first mate had followed Pierre and brings back the news to Anne, who escapes the British and kidnaps Molly in the process, intending to sell her in a slave market out of jealousy. When Pierre attempts to rescue Molly, Anne is victorious and maroons the couple on a desert island. However, Anne is wracked with guilt and goes back to rescue them. As she arrives and sends a boat to Pierre and Molly, Blackbeard arrives as well. Anne decides to engage Blackbeard in battle herself so Pierre and Molly could escape, sacrificing her own life for them.

Anne does not use the name Bonny in this film but at this point any female pirate named Anne is almost certainly based on Anne Bonny. Considerably more authority and power was assigned to the female pirate in the twentieth century, as if it would not otherwise be justifiable to have them as a lead character. In *Anne of the Indies* Anne is not only a pirate captain but the protégée of Blackbeard himself, though there is no evidence the two ever crossed paths historically. The personal trajectory of the female pirate in *Anne of the Indies* is quite similar to that in *The Spanish Main*, with the Anne/harlot/pirate character attacking the elegant heroine out of crude jealousy then sacrificing her own life so the hero and heroine could be together. In fact, the dynamic between Anne and Molly and Anne and the Contessa are almost identical, despite Anne Providence having more

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screen time than Anne Bonny. Both female pirates redeem themselves while conveniently getting out of the way of the romance plotline through dying, so they themselves do not get a happy ending. Honey discusses a popular fiction genre during and after the Second World War called the Confession Formula, consisting of "sin-suffer-repent" which she describes as: "the standard plot is that the heroine is victimized or violates norms of behavior, suffers the consequences, learns a vital lesson about life, and vows to live by the lesson she has learned".[342] In both *The Spanish Main* and *Anne of the Indies* the female pirates follow this formula, only as criminals they come to a worse end. Ironically, as Haskell notes, the women who became movie stars and played the villainesses who get punished for choosing careers over love did precisely that – often ruthlessly – to get those roles and their stardom.[343]

There is a scene in *Anne of the Indies* in the isolated cove where Anne puts on a fancy dress and romances Pierre, a clumsy attempt at domesticity. She rejects her beloved father figure for the first man to treat her as a woman instead of as a man, betraying her – perhaps unconscious, as they were for Mary in *Pirate Wench* – desires to be a normal woman. Neil Rennie in *Treasure Neverland: Real and Imaginary Pirates* describes *Anne of the Indies* as being "characterized primarily by a gender crisis" and states that "A woman can be a fiercer pirate than a man but not if she discovers her gender. Romance is more powerful than wealth, the real treasure is love not gold".[344] This film suggests that Anne cannot be both a woman and a pirate, and that all it takes to be a normal woman is the love of a man, which was standard messaging in this time period.

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[342] Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 141.
[343] Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape*, 5.
[344] Rennie, *Treasure Neverland*, 245.

Universal Pictures' 1952 *Against All Flags* (figure 4.4) begins with a British naval officer, Brian Hawke, getting lashed on board a ship in order to more convincingly infiltrate the pirate kingdom Libertalia. He reaches the island and requests to become a pirate but must stand trial before the Captains of the Coast, the island's most powerful pirates. One of the pirates is a woman named Spitfire Stevens who is attracted to Hawke, and another is Roc Brasiliano, who grows jealous of Hawke and forces him to duel one of the other pirates. When Hawke is victorious Brasiliano puts him on his crew. Hawke meets with Spitfire, who he finds out is the daughter of one of the men who founded the island and was the one who taught her how to fight. Hawke tries to memorize a map of the island's fortifications in her room while flirting with Spitfire and teaching her how to be a proper woman. Hawke joins Brasiliano on a raid, capturing the Princess Patma, who was disguised as a harem girl. When Hawke discovers her secret and rescues her she falls deeply in love with him. Back at Libertalia Hawke rebuffs Spitfire to focus on his mission, then when he tries to purchase Patma at the slave auction to protect her from the pirates, Spitfire buys her instead out of jealousy. She then asks Hawke that if she provides him with a ship if he will take her to England where she can finally be a civilized lady, and they confess their love for each other. That night Hawke begins sabotaging the cannons hidden around the fort and signals the British before going to rescue Patma. However, Brasiliano and Spitfire catch him and tie him to a post where he will drown at high tide. Spitfire secretly unties him then she and Brasiliano with Patma as their prisoner take to the sea to confront the British. The British are reluctant to engage lest they harm Patma, but Hawke sneaks onto the ship and duels Brasiliano, killing him. He and Spitfire return to the British ship and reaffirm their love.

This is the only non-Anne female pirate in the mid-century Hollywood movies. It is, however, another example of a female pirate being given considerable amounts of power and authority. But, as with Anne Providence, that was power was given to her by a father figure, just as Fanny Campbell received her skills from male authority figures. The heroine/harlot dichotomy is not nearly as clear cut in *Against All Flags* as in the other movies. It is more of an internal conflict between Spitfire and Prudence (her real name), similar to that within Mary in *Pirates Own Book* and Adelayda in *The Beautiful Pyrate*. This will happen with increasing frequency, with the heroine/harlot dynamic being more of a struggle between womanhood and piracy, or motherhood and a career, etc. Spitfire shares qualities with both Anne and Mary: she is a reluctant pirate who wants to flee and be legitimate, feminine and domestic (Mary) but she is also a redhead, jealous and dressed in men's-style clothing but not disguised as one (Anne). Like Pierre and Anne Providence, Hawke's love and guidance is what Spitfire needs in order to be Prudent/ce (a name choice which feels rather heavy-handed). In the end Prudence is victorious.

United Artists released *Captain Kidd and the Slave Girl* in 1954. Lord Bellamont rescues Captain Kidd from the gallows, hoping Kidd will lead him to his buried treasure. He stations a spy, a woman named Judith, on board Kidd's ship. Kidd's crew mutinies and makes him the captain so they can find his treasure (just as Bellamont planned) and Kidd reluctantly agrees. Kidd figures out the whole thing had been a trick and maroons his treacherous crew. He then discovers that Judith is a spy as well, and keeps her prisoner as he goes to Turtle Island find his treasure, with Bellamont in pursuit. On the island Kidd and Judith become romantically involved and discover that a large contingent of pirate captains, including Blackbeard and Anne Bonny, have landed on the island. Kidd poses as Captain Henry Avery with Judith disguised as his slave and joins the

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pirates' feast. Anne Bonny, however, is a former lover of Avery's and knows Kidd's true identity and they form an alliance. Kidd and Judith escape but Bellamont captures them; Judith rekindles her romance only to free Kidd in secret and the two return to the island. Bellamont recaptures them and tortures Kidd to find the location of the treasure, which they retrieve. However, Anne alerts Blackbeard that the treasure is leaving the island and they combine forces to attack Bellamont, with Anne dying in battle. Bellamont escapes back to his ship pursued by Kidd, who fights and kills him, rescuing Judith. They escape in a small boat when Bellamont's ship crashes into Blackbeard's, both ships sinking and taking the treasure with them.

Captain Kidd and the Slave Girl, like *Against All Flags*, complicates the heroine/harlot dichotomy in interesting ways. Judith and Anne appear to *both* be harlots, though one redeems herself through love and the other dies in battle for a third time. Judith appears as a heroine and fine lady, but is actually a femme fatale and a treacherous spy sent to sabotage Kidd only to fall in love with him and become the heroine she appeared to be at the beginning. Anne does not have any romantic ties to Kidd – though she is shown to be promiscuous by having had an affair with Avery, who is a villain in the movie – but she is sneaky, self-serving, violent and dressed as man. So while the Confession Formula applies to Judith, Anne in this case dies an antagonist.
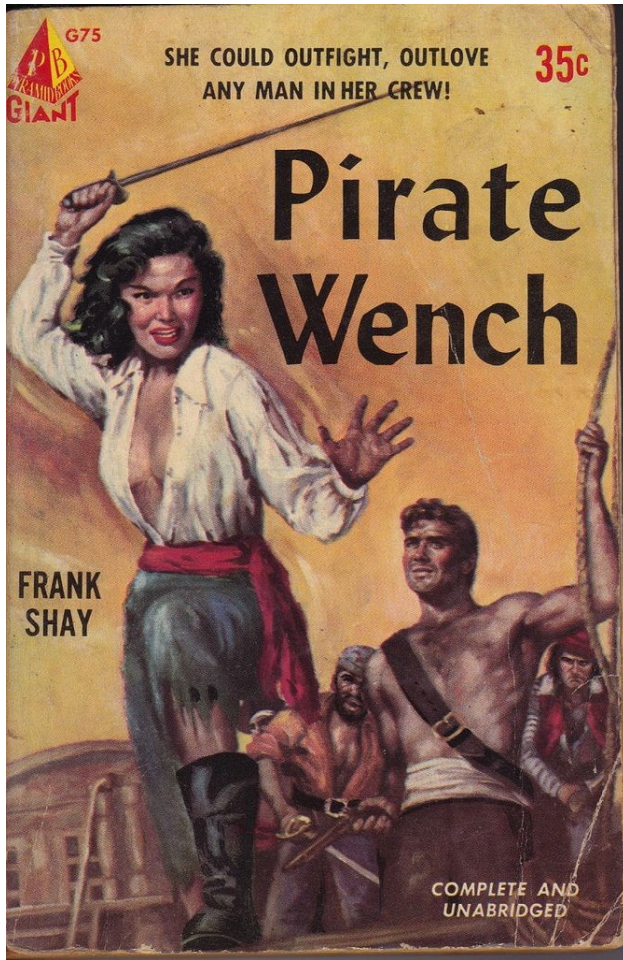
Figure 4.1: *Mary Read, Pirate Wench* **by Frank Shay (1934)**

Figure 4.2: Anne Bonny in *The Spanish Main* **(1945)**

Figure 4.3: Anne Providence in *Anne of the Indies* (1951).

Figure 4.4: Prudence 'Spitfire' Stevens in *Against All Flags* (1952)

Figure 4.5: Morgan Adams in *Cutthroat Island* (1995)

John Carlova's 1964 book *Mistress of the Seas* was the first full-length text about

Anne Bonny. It is a self-declared meticulously-researched academic biography, despite a

lack of footnotes and bibliography. Carlova mixed academic language with heavily

stylized writing, introducing the text as "the true story of Anne Bonny, a beauteous

buccaneer who used sex as well as a sword to slash her way to power".[345] This text came

at an interesting point in Anne and Mary's cultural history for, as poorly done as it was,

Mistress was still the first academic text about the two women and remains to this day a

foundational source of the modern scholarship. At what point does a secondary source

become a primary source? Should this book be classed as a primary source about how

Anne and Mary were perceived in the 1960s, or is it recent and influential enough to be

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[345] John Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 11.

considered part of the contemporary historiography? For my purposes I will be using it as a primary source due to it being the first 'academic' study of Anne and Mary and because of the considerable impact it has had on both female pirate history and fiction, and because as much as it claims to be history it is closer to historical fiction than anything else.

Because *Mistress* was the first "official" text about Anne it became foundational for later works and established some of what have become part of Anne's mythos. Some of those additions are the assertion that she had romantic and sexual relationships with Benjamin Hornigold, Stede Bonnet and Blackbeard, and that Blackbeard named his ship, *Queen Anne's Revenge*, not after the Queen but Anne Bonny.[346] Like many works that address pirates, this text straddles the line between history and fiction. That in itself is not a problem; the issue is that the text in no way acknowledges this. The suspiciously persistent claims at authenticity were acceptable for eighteenth-, nineteenth- and even early-twentieth-century texts but this falsely historical text has done irreparable damage to the historiography and Anne and Mary.

Mistress is an example of what has become pirate literature's signature mix of fact and fiction, and is very similar to *Pirate Wench* in the way that it used the basic foundation of Anne and Mary's mythos – the duel, the proposition, the capture and the dog quote – but with significant amounts of additions and artistic license. One thing that Carlova invented was that Anne's father's name (which had never been mentioned before this text) was William Cormac. Despite this being an invention, it continues to appear in

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[346] This is unlikely for a multitude of reasons, one being that Blackbeard died in battle in 1718, the same year that Anne Bonny became a pirate.

modern reputable texts, which Neil Rennie has also noted.[347] Carlova arbitrarily put

statements in quotation marks as if they were references, yet it is highly doubtful that any

eighteenth-century sources described Anne's "full and red sensual" lips or her breasts as

being "milk white and the size and strength of melons."[348]

One of the popular anecdotes from Anne's original backstory that has reappeared

again and again over the years is the claim that she beat a man to the ground for

attempting to rape her. There are lots of implications in this story, regarding both Anne's

temper and sexuality, and it is interesting to see the different ways in which it has been

treated. This time, however, is especially notable. Instead of having Anne pummel an

attempted rapist the author has her attack a man with whom she consensually had sex

who then tried to use their sexual relationship as a reason Anne's father should make her

marry him:

> The feelings of a smitten swain, first permitted the full joys to be found beneath
> Anne's skirts, and then abruptly shut out, can easily be imagined. When this
> happened to a hot-blooded youth named Fortesque Kendal, son of a wealthy
> planter, he made the mistake of trying to compromise Anne. He spread the word of
> how he had repeatedly "rolled" the Cormac belle "beneath bushes and in barns,"
> then went to Anne's father and generously offered to marry her.[349]

There are considerable implications in this intentional change. While the original text also

used the story as means to criticize Anne's sexuality by suggesting that since she was

capable of defending herself against unwanted advances any sexual activity was a result

of her own desires, this is equally critical in a different manner. Carlova was writing this

text in the 1960s, which was when second wave feminism was beginning to mobilize on a

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[347] Rennie, *Treasure Neverland*, 261; one of these texts is *Women Sailors and Sailors' Women* by David Cordingly, in which he perpetuates the name William Cormac and the idea that Anne settled down and married respectably: Cordingly, *Women Sailors and Sailors' Women*, 87.
[348] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas,* 28.
[349] Ibid.*,* 29.

large scale. One of the issues the movement addressed was the problem of sexual violence; it is unlikely that had Carlova kept the original story it would have been interpreted as a criticism rather than an act of independence.

Carlova does re-frame and alter some previously ingrained aspects of Anne's mythos. As Frank Shay began in 1934 and the Hollywood films perpetuated, Carlova assigned Anne more power and authority than she ever had. He did this partially through her sexual exploits with essentially every famous pirate of the era and by having her weaken and usurp Rackam. Another significant change was the capture, which is usually an exciting story of Anne and Mary being the last pirates standing and reprimanding their crew for cowardice. Instead, while Mary does just that, Anne is unconscious for the entirety of the capture, which is disappointingly passive compared to the myth.[350] Carlova does quote *Tryals* and *A General History* directly during Anne and Mary's trial, including the iconic dog quote.[351] There is also an epilogue about Anne settling in the American west: "A couple described as "a surgeon and his laughing, pregnant wife" are known to have joined a party of pioneers at Norfolk. The surgeon and his wife were undoubtedly Michael and Anne."[352] Like the name William Cormac, this baseless story has permeated academia and appears occasionally. It also appears in her Wikipedia page, which, although the website is notoriously inaccurate, still shows the degree to which this text has come to shape Anne's modern history.

Published in the early years of second wave feminism, *Mistress* contained some complex sexual politics. Carlova openly addressed how historical figures were understood through contemporary moral frameworks, noting that "generations have a bad

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[350] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas,* 240.
[351] Ibid., 250.
[352] Ibid., 253.

habit of judging past eras in the light of their own supposed civilization. Today Anne might well be considered a flame-tempered wanton fit only for the gas chamber or electric chair."[353] Yet while he seemed to be aware of this subjectivity he did not make any effort to counter it, going on to shame Anne's sexuality and give chapters titles like "Whimsical Wanton".[354] However, some of the more progressive features of the 1960s occasionally reveal themselves, such as when Carlova states that "Her [Anne's] greatest sin – at least in the light of her own times – was one of feminine rebellion".[355] In *Mistress* began the formation of Anne-as-feminist-heroine that one could see even in the mid-century Hollywood films as Carlova mixed modern and traditional views of Anne and gender. He depicted Anne as independent and strong whilst also sexualizing and shaming her.

Mistress still contained the heroine/harlot dichotomy, but placed the focus on the harlot. In this text at least, though the harlot was the centre of attention instead of the heroine, she was not yet the feminist stand-in that she will become in later depictions. Carlova depicted Anne with the same flaws that she has always had, only he had more interest in exploring those flaws than he did in showing Mary's virtues. The mid-century Hollywood films complicated the heroine/harlot dichotomy (mostly through lack of research) and that continued here. As with the mid-century Hollywood films, there was an inversion of the Anne versus Mary preference. For possibly the first time Mary was a chapter in Anne's story instead of vice versa. Anne still fulfilled the harlot role, but instead of being the titillating foil for the main character heroine she was the main subject of the story. While the author placed considerable focus on Anne's sexual exploits, unlike

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[353] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas*, 11.
[354] Ibid., 27.
[355] Ibid., 11.

earlier works he did not confine her to lust. She does experience love, and in fact it is

suggested that her sexual exploits are all just a means to finding love. 1960s feminism

worked against the idea that marriage, motherhood and domesticity were the only options

for women but it was not yet at the peak of its influence as it would be in the 1970s and

80s. Clearly when this text was written there were still people who believed in the same

post-war idea that a woman's place was in the home and even if she had a series of

adventures and mishaps that is where she would inevitably end up. Anne's relationship

with motherhood was also explored more in *Mistress* than ever before. It has been

mentioned since *A General History* that Anne gave birth to a child in Cuba then

abandoned it to go back to sea, but Carlova spent more time on Anne's actual experience

of motherhood. When she first discovers her pregnancy she is initially upset and

reluctant, saying she felt "trapped", which correlates with what we know of her.[356] But as

she progresses she realises that deep down motherhood is what she truly desired.

      Carlova's depiction of Anne lacked depth and defined her almost entirely by her

sexuality. Her sexual and romantic activities are the primary forces driving the plot. The

author consistently describes her physically in extremely sexualised terms; it is

unsurprising that this text became the basis for at least one romance novel. There is a

powerful feeling that Anne is being described through the male gaze, for example: "Down

on the beach, astride a racing pony, was Anne Bonny, bare to the waist and wearing only

a pair of tightly revealing velvet breeches...Anne, her flaming hair flying, wheeled her

mount and dashed into the surf. When she emerged, her splendid breasts high and proud,

she looked like Aphrodite rising from the sea."[357] Carlova describes Anne's breasts

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[356] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas,* 116.
[357] Ibid., 67.

constantly throughout the book and she is often shirtless, reiterating the importance of the breast in female pirate imagery. It is also potentially in this text that the myth that Anne would go into battle topless was born: "with her [Anne's] bounteous charms thus bared, the stunning effect on the crew of the boarded ship can easily be imagined."[358] The language is consistently highly stylized and erotic, and Carlova equates sex drives with selfishness and hunger for power. He condemns her careless sexuality to the point of accusing her of (figurative) incest: "In fact, some of Anne's affairs at this time had a curious flavour of incest. Captain Jennings, whom she regarded as "a father" shared her bed on more than a few occasions."[359]

As I mentioned above, by this point crossdressing people had begun to be associated with homosexuality. This may be the first text that openly addresses homosexuality in Anne and Mary's stories – not including the proposition – though it is towards neither of the women, whose heterosexuality is continuously asserted. There is one queer character, a gay French pirate hairdresser named Pierre (stereotypes truly abound), who briefly goes to sea in a chapter called "The Pansy Pirate".[360] Carlova openly uses slurs such as aforementioned pansy, and making Anne and Pierre friends is condemnation against Anne by association. Even Rackam is not safe from accusations regarding his sexuality: "He was such a handsome lad he soon became a great favourite with homosexual ships' officers. This led to a sexual detour, if not a complete deviation, which later made Rackam's frantic heterosexuality suspect. Like many another great lover, Jack may have taken to chasing skirts mainly to prove to himself he was really a

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[358] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas*, 166; this myth was manifested notably in the internet depictions of Anne and Mary that chapter one discussed (figures 1.1 and 1.2).
[359] Ibid.*,* 76.
[360] Ibid., 78.

man."[361] It becomes a trope in the twentieth century that Anne is overbearing and controlling and emasculates Rackam by being "the real leader of the pirate ships he ostensibly commanded", with later writers turning Rackam into a weak fop.[362] This seems to be a statement against the growing normalcy of women entering the working world and how that affected men. The author also blames Anne and her superior leadership for Rackam's downfall: "The deterioration of Calico Jack Rackam as a leader and a lover can be traced directly to Anne. As a buccaneer and a bed-partner, she was far too demanding. She drove poor Jack to drunk, drugs, and impotence. When he failed her – first as a leader, then as a lover – she began to openly dominate him."[363]

Mary appears as a minor character in *Mistress*. The heroine/harlot relationship is maintained and the only substantial difference is that more attention is on Anne instead of Mary. The proposition story is the reader's introduction to Mary; it highlights Anne's deadly sex drive – having just taken the blame for Rackam's deterioration – and lack of loyalty, as well as Mary's modesty and dedication to love instead of lust. It is also highly fetishistic and comic:

> Blushing furiously, Mark [Mary] tore himself away and hurried down the corridor...Anne's interest had now mounted beyond mere curiosity. As a sexual huntress, her full instincts were aroused….Anne followed him, still smiling but inexorably closing in for the kill. Her moist red lips were slightly parted, showing her even white teeth, which now looked strangely sharp. Her green eyes were veiled, yet intense. In a shaft of light, her hair seemed to explode into scarlet...The huntress had had enough of such evasion. Breathing almost audibly, she lunged at her quarry. Mark stumbled, nearly fell backward, then recovered enough to push Anne off….Anne grabbed him again, fiercely this time, and flung him on the bed. Before he could spring back up, she had tumbled on top of him. In a wild flurry of skirts and hair, they rolled all over the big, canopied bed, wrestling grunting and straining. Mark, fighting as though for his very honor, sobbed, "You're making a

[361] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas*, 97.
[362] Ibid., 164.
[363] Ibid., 181.

great mistake!" Anne struggled no less strenuously. She ripped her victim's shirt loose, tore off the buttons of his trousers, and worked her hand between his legs. Anne abruptly drew back and exclaimed, "Good Lord, lad, you've got not parts!"...The torn shirt and a tight binding of cloth beneath had parted to reveal a pair of small, firm, female breasts.[364]

Never has this scene been depicted in such detail. Anne appears as an almost literal animal and predator, which seems alarmingly violent even though it was intended to be comedic and/or erotic. Mary is again revealed by her breasts, underlining their continued relevance to their identities.

The following chapter recounts Mary's backstory, and is overall very close to the original in *A General History*. Though there are some invented details, it is very similar and even has some quotes directly from *A General History*. Carlova does alter the story so that it was Captain Bellamy who initially pressed Mary. When Mary falls in love with her second husband, the author states that he is six years her junior and cites maternal instincts as why she was drawn to him.[365] Thus follows the famous duel story, also featuring direct quotes from *A General History*, though with some changes. The duel occurs *before* she reveals herself to him as a woman, and is in fact the moment when she reveals herself to the entire crew when Anne rips open Mary's shirt and shouts "a woman has fought your battle for you!"[366] This is reminiscent of the image in *Histoire des Pirates* (figure 2.4) in which Mary opens her shirt to her opponent, though Carlova gives the actual act to Anne.

In *Mistress* Anne was not disguised as a man for any significant amount of time and dressed quite effeminately for the most part: "On deck, in her swashbuckling Cordoba boots, velvet breeches and silken blouses, she lived a life as adventurous as any

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[364] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas,* 184-5.
[365] Ibid., 195.
[366] Ibid., 197.

man of the day. In her sumptuous salon, dressed in the finest of gowns, she lived the grand life of a lady."[367] Her pirate attire is similar to that of Mary Read in *Pirate Wench* and the female pirates in the Hollywood movies in that it is feminized versions of men's clothing, usually flattering and decadent.

Anne often ruminates on her sexual and romantic behaviour, and she and Mary in one scene have an open discussion about the difference between love and lust, with Anne declaring ""I have never lacked for men...but that's quite a different matter. I have never known a man who as wholly satisfying, who could bring me true love...Perhaps if I had, my life would have been different..."[368] Mary is definitely depicted as being better off with love than Anne is with lust. And for the first time Anne is depicted to agree with this and long for love instead of wallowing in her sin. It is also the first time Anne got a happy, romantic ending. She falls in love with a ship's surgeon named Michael (of whom nothing has even been said before this book) and suddenly all of her domestic womanly love dreams have come true and she wants to leave piracy and have children and settle down: "She had rejected the lust of a moment for the love of a lifetime. This, Anne was now certain, was the true love she had long been waiting for."[369] Anne's sexuality is still something to be suppressed and overcome, with her one true love to guide her. It is only then that she sees the errors of her ways, admitting that "Jack Rackam, like so many other men in my life, was a victim of my own immaturity. I gathered men like an excited child gathers bright toys – and some of those toys, like poor Jack himself, were broken by me.

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[367] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas*, 208.
[368] Ibid., 208.
[369] Ibid., 227.

For that I am sincerely sorry. I can say that now because I have reached maturity – a maturity brought to me by true love."[370]

Pamela Jekel published her romance novel *Sea Star: Private Life of Anne Bonny, Pirate Queen* in 1983. It is based almost entirely on *Mistress of the Sea* and its content is virtually identical, but because *Sea Star* was written almost twenty years later it is not only an entirely different genre (historical romance), but the conclusions are extremely different. This is a perfect example of how despite the constant recycling of minimal information, the conclusions that writers and audiences draw from that information can vary wildly from century to century or even decade to decade. One of *Mistress'*s main flaws was how it was essentially historical fiction under the guise of academia, but this text is taking that information (regardless of authenticity) and intentionally placing it in a fictionalised framework. So even though it is maintaining the myths from *Mistress*, Jekel is knowingly engaging with a *fictional* history, saying that it "is not, strictly speaking, a work of fiction, nor can it entirely be claimed a work of truth".[371]

Sea Star is exceptional because it is the first of the works in this thesis that is an example of female scholarship. Up to this work, pirate fiction had been the domain exclusively of men; first as true crime, then histories, then boys' juvenile fiction, then adventure films. However, in the 1970s and 80s women started actively acknowledging and trying to negate the male gaze. One of the reasons there were virtually no examples of female authorship of female pirate fiction is because the female authors did not want to

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[370] Carlova, *Mistress of the Seas,* 249.
[371] Pamela Jekel, *Sea Star: Private Life of Anne Bonny, Pirate Queen* (New York: Harmony Books, 1983), 339.

be personally equated with the criminal crossdressing women, which is also the reason so few women wrote about lesbianism before the 1970s.[372]

It is little surprise that the first female-authored work about female pirates was within the romance genre, which has always been associated with women readers and authors. The modern genre of romance originated in the 1970s, and the organization Romance Writers of America was founded in 1981, only two years before Jekel published *Sea Star*. Romance narratives are central to modern popular culture and are indicative of the way the treatment love and marriage have evolved from a practical transaction to an aspect of a person's identity.[373] It was, and is, an oft-belittled genre for being silly or shallow (apparently this is what happens when women write about women's perspectives and experiences). Romance was usually written in the vernacular with female leads, and was also perceived as being lower-class and lower quality, which is consistent for pirate fiction.[374] Romance has dozens of sub-genres but one of the most popular is the historical romance (such as *Sea Star*), which have been nicknamed 'bodice rippers' for easily discernible reasons.[375] Its two main characteristics are that it has to have a happy ending that resolves the love story (how this plays out has become more complex and diverse in recent years), and that it must take place before 1945.

So in addition to being the first example of female authorship it is also the first to be targeted specifically to women, which led to a very different depiction. We have seen different works of pirate fiction written for men and children (of both genders) and the

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[372] Foster, *Sex Variant Women in Literature*, 116.
[373] Catherine M. Roach, *Happily Ever After: the Romance Story in Popular Culture* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), 3.
[374] Dana Percec, *Romance: the History of a Genre* (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 1.
[375] Pirates (female and otherwise) have been a staple of the romance genre since its inception as a sub-category within the historical romance branch. A preliminary search of "pirate" under historical romance on Amazon.com provided over 2000 results.

differences between those. It is also evidence of how Anne and Mary's stories can be moulded to fit not only contemporary values, but also genres, as was visible with film. There is so much ambiguity around their stories that it leaves lots of room for narrative flexibility. The romance genre is similar to the warrior woman and female pirates because it can be both regressive and progressive at the same time; they can challenge ideas about gender and sexuality while also reinforcing them.

Carlova wrote *Mistress* in the early years of second wave feminism and Jekel wrote *Sea Star* at its peak. Themes that were hinted at in *Mistress* – though often negatively – come to fruition in *Sea Star*. It is by no means the first examples of female pirates being used as a vehicle to depict second wave feminist politics; Steve Gooch in his 1978 play about Anne and Mary, *The Woman Pirates*, overtly confesses as much. These politics manifest themselves in *Sea Star*, despite it having almost identical content to the very ideologically-different *Mistress*. Jekel is an example of how *Mistress* became the leading authority on Anne Bonny and how its influence began to spread, as Jekel states in the afterword: "I am especially indebted to John Carlova whose excellent biography of Anne Bonny, *Mistress of the Seas*, was my principal source of research."[376] Decades later Carlova's information remained unquestioned. There are many instances where she quotes almost verbatim, and she follows the story to a tee. It is within Anne's own internal monologue and character development that the differences are visible. But Jekel reveals more of an awareness about the ambiguities within Anne and Mary's mythos and how their story is a cultural one as well as historical, that "in a large sense, history

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[376] Jekel, *Sea Star*, 339.

belongs to those who write it, and their own imaginations and accounts of Anne are now indelibly parts of the facts of her life."[377]

It is fascinating to see how the exact same scenarios in *Mistress* and *Sea Star*, depicted from different perspectives, can have significantly altered implications. As I have discussed, a common feature of twentieth century female pirate fiction is the addition of unprecedented power and authority. That was present in *Mistress*, but in a manner that made Anne appear power hungry and manipulative as she essentially hijacked Rackam's crew. In *Sea Star* Anne and Mary also seize power on the ship but it is because Rackam is a failure as a leader. They step in out of necessity but they keep him as a figurehead because they knew the crew would not accept two women as their leaders.[378] Instead of being manipulative shrews, they are strong, capable women who are forced to muffle their competency behind a foolish man in order to be heard. Women in the 1980s were developing more high-powered careers and entering into previously male-dominated positions, all while trying to maintain a family life. In other words, women were 'trying to have it all', and that struggle is visible in Anne and Mary's difficulties aboard their ship. Instead of being represented as threatening, they are positive examples of contemporary feminism. Another minor yet significant change is during the capture Anne is an active participant instead of being unconscious for the whole thing, and of course no Anne Bonny representation is complete without her dog quote.[379]

This text is notable because it marks the shift from harlot as cautionary tale and foil to well-developed feminist character. Just as for centuries people have projected fears and insecurities regarding women, gender and sexuality onto Anne's character, now the

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[377] Jekel, *Sea Star*, 340.
[378] Ibid., 247-8.
[379] Ibid., 297; 313.

harlot has been adopted as a symbol of female independence. Instead of being punished for rejecting social norms and conventions she is celebrated for it. Like adventure films, romance novels are always framed in contemporary morality, be it intentional or not. Anne in *Mistress* craves power and sex and love but is also shallow and directionless. *Sea Star* Anne seeks one thing above all: freedom and choice. And that is the core of modern feminism: "She would have preferred her fortune and her freedom, too, but if she had to lose one to gain the other, then she felt it was a fair trade."[380]

In *Mistress* Motherhood is shown to be what Anne craves deep down despite her rebellion; in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Anne's lack of interest in motherhood was evidence of her depravity. In *Sea Star* Anne ponders the dangers and patriarchal demands of motherhood in the eighteenth century.[381] When Anne herself becomes pregnant, she is frustrated by the limitations and risks and how others treat her, challenging the idealistic perception of pregnancy and motherhood.[382] Her baby was stillborn and it devastated her, but because the author showed more depth and range in Anne's emotions towards it does not seem so two-dimensional.[383] This Anne often appears to be a mouthpiece for the modern feminist struggle; balancing work and life, love and sex and challenging tradition: "It's for sure I'll not be stowed away like some housewife! The day I wait on the beach for some man, the waves'll run backwards. I can ship with you 'til near my time and then we can careen the ship, and i can deliver the babe all at once…And then I'll give it up as a foundling."[384] In the 1980s, most mothers were

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[380] Jekel, *Sea Star*, 99.
[381] Ibid., 41-2.
[382] Ibid., 183.
[383] Ibid., 207.
[384] Ibid., 185.

also working, due in part to feminism and financial requirements.[385] Jekel captures the frustration and exhaustion of wanting more than the world is willing to give, of being a woman in a man's world:

> She and others like her always fretted against something or someone, exhausting themselves with what they could not do, or fighting against insidious fences over which they were not allowed. She remembered how free she'd felt when she dressed as a man; left in peace to go wherever she wanted unaccosted, moving freely...She even noticed, when she wore a man's garments, that she felt more wanton - even arrogant and domineering just as men often were. She wondered briefly how it was that the mind expanded outward in such a way to the flesh's release.[386]

Just as in *Mistress*, Anne finds true love and wants to leave piracy, but Anne makes it clear that she is not going to change who she is: "My love, I'm ready to choose a new life. But not a new man, I will always be an outlaw...I mean someone who lives outside the law, who goes over walls, who's free. Who chooses uncertainty over security, who takes disorder and surprise and magic over righteousness...I will and can give it up, but only once you understand that I do so because it no longer pleasures me."[387] Using the same information and plot as Mistress, Jekel completely changes the message with just a little exposition. Instead of living in a limbo waiting for domestic bliss, Anne makes conscious choices throughout her life, and those choices may change as she grows and matures but that does not mean she is leaving herself behind.

One cannot really depict Anne without making her promiscuous; the question is how it is treated and the conclusions. In *Mistress* Anne uses her sexuality for power and to satisfy whims and is shamed for it. In this we encounter many of the same sexual

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[385] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 332.
[386] Jekel, *Sea Star*, 219.
[387] Ibid., 288.

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exploits, but with more insight into Anne's character the reader can now see motivations like curiosity, pleasure, rebellion against convention and resistance. Carlova's Anne may have used sex for power, but she rarely had the power in the situations. This Anne has control over her sexual encounters and her own body: "She had enjoyed his caresses but had not yet decided whether he was going to be able to carry out their promise. She knew that he didn't know her at all. That in fact, none of the men who had grappled her knew her. None of them wanted to know her, only to have her. She was not disappointed by such a discovery, but neither did she intend to give herself without due payment."[388] In 1968 protesters committed the first act of bra-burning (there was no actual burning, they threw the bras in the trash) at the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City.[389] Second wave feminists were reacting against centuries of oppression and control over the female body, epitomized by the literally restrictive, financially expensive and socially required bra. The act of revealing one's breasts became an act of feminist defiance. When someone calls Anne a harlot – such as her own mother – the reader sympathizes with Anne instead of agreeing.[390] There is also an explicit instance of sexual violence, something else that has been hinted at but never openly addressed. Anne's new husband, James Bonny, forces himself on her on their wedding night.[391] This is radical for a few reasons: not only is it a risqué scene to include, but the topic of marital rape is still poorly understood and underrepresented. Again, the reader is meant to sympathize *with* Anne as she fights to be an independent, sexually liberated woman while the culture tries to stop her.

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[388] Jekel, *Sea Star*, 72.
[389] Yalom, *A History of the Breast*, 243.
[390] Jekel, *Sea Star*, 66.
[391] Ibid., 91-2.

Sea Star has none of *Mistress'* homophobia. A queer woman is present (not Anne herself – not yet) and is treated with respect. In *Mistress* Anne's toleration of queer people was a mark against her character, while in *Sea Star* it is a sign of freedom and rejecting restrictive social norms: "Madeline preferred woman in all places, including her bed, and so her hut and its adjoining veranda became the gathering spot for the female elite of New Providence."[392] In the twentieth century the idealized image of pirates as the pinnacle of freedom and the rejection of oppression came to fruition, but it was not until later the female pirates in particular became associated with that and more.

Again, Mary is a chapter in Anne's story. But that can be assigned to the author's dedication to *Mistress* and the ways in which Anne lines up neatly with second wave feminist ideals. Mary still shows the heroine qualities – modesty, humility, etc. – but no longer at Anne's expense. They are two different women who want different things without one being better than the other.

Cutthroat Island was an MGM romantic-comedy released in 1995 (figure 4.5).[393] With inflation, the film is notorious for being the biggest box office flop of all time and was a part of a resurgence in popularity of pirate films in the 1990s after a drop in the 1960s, 70s and most of the 80s.[394] The movie tells the story of female pirate captain Morgan Adams who needs to rescue her father from her uncle (both pirates), the latter of whom is trying to compile three pieces of a map held by the three brothers that would lead to a buried treasure. However, the map is in Latin so Morgan goes to Port Royal to find a translator, where she buys a thief at a slave auction named William who can read

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[392] Jekel, *Sea Star*, 114.
[393] It was also the last film Jose Menendez produced – which nearly ruined him – before his sons infamously murdered him.
[394] Pennell, "Who Needs Pirate Heroes?" 66.

Latin. She is recognised, a wild chase ensues and they escape to Morgan's ship. They engage in battle with Morgan's uncle, in which she is wounded. While William treats her wounds they begin a romance. They decipher the map and make it to Cutthroat Island, where the treasure is buried. They find the treasure but are interrupted by Morgan's uncle, who captures William and the gold. Morgan attacks her uncle's ship, kills him and rescues William as the treasure goes down with the ship. However, Morgan thought to mark the treasure with barrels so they retrieve it and sail away for more adventures.

Cutthroat Island visibly draws inspiration from the mid-century Hollywood films both in imagery and in plot. Like Spitfire Stevens in *Against All Flags* and Anne Providence in *Anne of the Indies* Morgan inherits her authority from her father figure instead of earning it herself. Neither Anne nor Mary appear by name in *Cutthroat Island*, but Morgan falls within the inheritance of Anne's harlot role; Anne served as inspiration for many of the mid-century films, named or not, and the romance and adventure characters, the genres on which *Cutthroat Island* is drawing. The film overall does not seem well-researched and contains many of the most basic pirate tropes (buried treasure, walking the plank, exotic pets, etc.) so Morgan's character is most likely based solely on *cultural* female pirates.

A decade after *Sea Star* and over thirty years after *Mistress*, *Cutthroat Island* was the next step in the complication of the heroine/harlot dynamic. There is only one female character – the female pirate – which means that the heroine/harlot dichotomy cannot exist externally. Instead it exists socially and internally, similar to Spitfire Stevens. We continue see the tension of woman versus pirate; personal choice versus social/cultural expectation. The film embodies what has become the standard female pirate imagery: long flowing hair, feminized men's clothing, cinched waists and tall, tight boots. Morgan

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and her love interest have a similar dynamic to Rackam and Anne; she is the brawn and he is the brains. Like Anne, Morgan is impetuous, violent, wild and promiscuous, and uses her womanhood strategically as a weapon, which has become an empowered act instead of manipulative, showing that womanhood is a strength, not a weakness. However, there are constant phallic jokes and references based around Morgan, implying that she is not a female pirate as much as she is a woman trying to be a male pirate and emasculating the men at the same time.[395]

Morgan is still very much heterosexual; she is introduced by a heterosexual encounter, which asserts not only her heterosexuality but her rejection of social norms and gender roles (which is shown to be a good thing). However, there are still some restrictions around a harlot's acceptable behaviour; Morgan has casual sexual encounters in the film and is not shamed for it, but she is still shown to be seeking long-term monogamous heterosexual love as the end goal.

The depiction of female pirates in popular culture have always reflected contemporary ideas about gender, morality and sexuality, but it was not until the twentieth century that they became conscious vehicles for feminist ideals as well as male anxieties. *Pirate Wench* in 1934 followed by *The Spanish Main*, *Anne of the Indies*, *Against All Flags* and *Captain Kidd and the Slave Girl* in the 1940s and 50s were manifestations of how the Second (and the First) World War revolutionized women's roles in American society and concerns about how – and if – they would return to pre-war normalcy. Into the last third of the twentieth century, instead of grappling with post-war uncertainty female pirates instead became a medium for both men and women to engage with second wave feminism through *Mistress of the Sea*, *Sea Star* and *Cutthroat Island*,

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[395] Canfield, "Something's Mizzen," 61.

the second of which was also the first instance of female scholarship in almost three hundred years. Evidently, Anne and Mary's stories have been freely adapted to reflect the different ways in which gender has been conceived. For the first time Anne became the main subject of interest, first as a harlot, then as a harlot who was a heroine in her own way when she coincidentally paralleled second wave feminist ideas.

Chapter Five
Conclusion

Female pirates have consistently been used as vehicles to communicate cultural truths about gender, morality and sexuality. In the introduction I posed the question as to how the modern view of Anne and Mary, and their fictional descendants, came about. Beginning in the eighteenth century and moving on through to the end of the twentieth, I explored the many different ways in which Anne and Mary were depicted in popular culture and how those depictions represented drastically different contemporary frameworks about gender and morality. These representations revealed themselves through the female pirate's visual depictions, which was remarkably common in works of female pirate fiction, as well as the heroine/harlot dichotomy and the gradual process of mythologization. The heroine/harlot dichotomy refers to the relationship between Anne and Mary, in which Anne was the morally debased, sexually voracious woman and Mary was the redeemable, virtuous woman – despite her criminal tendencies. This duality reappeared consistently in female pirate fiction, not only between Anne and Mary but with fictional female pirates as well. This relationship exposed ideas of morality around women's sexuality in particular, and how that could determine a woman's moral identity. The process of mythologization evolved slowly over the years as writers and artists filled in the gaps and embellished Anne and Mary's story, which was vague and dubious already. This is the aspect in which truth became intermingled with fiction, and the potential motivations behind those alterations and additions revealed much about contemporary culture. The question of what is true and what is not is less important than *why* those myths emerged.

The second chapter examined the birth of Anne and Mary's origin story in *The Tryals of Captain John Rackam and Other Pirates* and, most importantly, *A General History of the Pyrates*. The former may have been their introduction but the latter is what cemented the two women's place in popular culture. It was from *A General History* that every other representation of Anne and Mary sprang, all the way up to the twenty-first century. There is evidence that some creators, such as John Gay, Charles Ellms and Frank Shay, took inspiration directly from *A General History* for their depiction of female pirates. However, there are some works that have more degrees of separation; for example, *Histoire des pirates* was based more on *Pirates Own Book* which was itself in turn based on *A General History*. As works of female pirate fiction became more embellished, mythologized and further away in time from *A General History* the text's influence becomes less clear; however, if one traces the link from work to work – which I did in this thesis – it becomes evident that *A General History*'s chapter on Anne and Mary remains at the core of any depiction of a female Golden Age pirate. *A General History*'s Anne and Mary have become so deeply foundational that they have transcended their own histories to become archetypes of themselves. Even if someone had never heard of Anne, Mary or *A General History*, the text's influence on the cultural depiction of female pirates has become so universal that their image of a female pirate springs from that source regardless.

Another reason for Anne and Mary's continued relevance is their applicability to questions of gender, sexuality and morality. As I have shown, the answers Anne and Mary have to provide to these questions have been radically different over the centuries, even contradictory. In the eighteenth century they were part of a long tradition of female crossdressing in Europe that was not necessarily linked to gender or sexual identity. What

was more relevant than the crossdressing itself was the motivation for a woman to begin crossdressing, be it a noble cause (pursuing a lover, financial desperation, etc.) or a selfish one (pursuing one's own desires). Eighteenth-century crossdressing women reinforced heteronormative ideas instead of challenging them, which would be a later assumption.

Nineteenth-century crossdressing women were treated very differently than their eighteenth-century predecessors. With the prominence of the polarizing gender sphere system that situated women in the private, domestic sphere and men in the public there were fewer morally-ambiguous anti-heroes, including female pirates. Heroines were expected to meet the American ideals of womanhood, which naturally excluded criminals. Therefore, most of the fictional female pirates of this era had some redeeming factor, such as Fanny Campbell who was legally a pirate but in fact a patriotic privateer in the American Revolution. These gender ideals also gave birth to a new female pirate trope: the pirate-mother. Visible in Ruth in *Pirates of Penzance*, Polly in *The Queen of Pirate Isle* and most famously Wendy Darling in *Peter Pan*, the pirate-mother is a female pirate (or pirate-adjacent woman) who fulfills a maternal role to a group of male pirates. This could have only happened in the nineteenth century, not the eighteenth, because with the decline of piracy as a threat their depiction in popular culture became less realistic and menacing and more comedic and targeted towards juveniles. The pirate-mother allowed for female pirate characters to maintain feminine ideals whilst still being involved with piracy.

In the twentieth century came the cinematic pirate, a descendant of the literary pirate, and female pirates moved from the page to the Hollywood silver screen. Their heyday was the post-war years of the late-1940s and 1950s. In this time period the primary influence on gender norms was the Second World War and its aftermath. During

the war women had enlisted, both as military personnel and as civilians, in unprecedented numbers. They entered the workforce to replace the men who were fighting overseas and became an indispensable facet of the war effort, getting for many of them their first taste of financial and social independence. However when the war ended and the men returned home, the women were expected to happily return to normal, which many of them were not content to do. The female pirates in the mid-century Hollywood films address this dilemma of returning to normalcy after the war: if it could be done, how, and how people felt about it. Most of the female pirate characters, such as Anne Providence and Spitfire Stevens, reflect male insecurities about women who had taken up in a traditionally masculine trade and the desire to return those women to post-war normalcy, and the main method to do so was to domesticate them through heterosexual romance. This is one of the reasons that Anne began to be represented more so than Mary, who had dominated the narrative up to this point; Mary did not need to be domesticated.

The next significant shift in gender politics and the depiction of female pirates was second wave feminism in the last third of the twentieth century. While Hollywood had been obsessed with taming Anne, second wave feminists adopted her as a feminist icon, such as Pamela Jekel in *Sea Star*. Many aspects of Anne's character were well-suited to embody second wave feminist ideals, such as her rejection of motherhood and traditional gender roles, her sexual liberation and her successful career in a male-dominated industry. Notably this was the first example of female scholarship in Anne and Mary's long cultural history. So in almost three hundred years after their first depiction, Anne and Mary's cultural significance regarding gender had almost completely reversed. Instead of reinforcing gender norms and heteronormativity they became icons of queer and feminist resistance. What is remarkable is that while their stories have been altered

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and embellished over the many years, their foundational narrative has remained the same. What has changed is the *perception* of those same stories. Anne in *A General History* is still essentially the same character as the Anne in *Sea Star* (just with considerable more detail); it is the meaning contemporaries have attached to her story that is the difference. As I have shown, Anne and Mary have always been used to confront contemporary questions about gender and morality; that has not changed and likely never will. What changes is the answers people take from them.

But that raises another question: why female pirates? What is it about these two crossdressing criminal women that has kept them consistently in the cultural consciousness through war, romanticism, feminism and revolution? I believe it is a combination of four main factors that make Anne and Mary uniquely suitable for their continued cultural role. Firstly, and potentially the most important factor, is the story's adaptability. As with so many Golden Age pirates, there are substantial blind spots and ambiguities in the narrative, which leaves it open to adaptation and interpretation without requiring too many alterations from the original tale. Secondly, there is enough historical grounding in the story to lend it legitimacy and makes the narrative more effective, as I discussed around the use of historical fiction. Thirdly, gender, morality and sexuality are profound questions with which popular culture will always grapple, even if the conclusions evolve. Anne and Mary address all of these questions in a unique and appealing way. Finally, as we have seen, pirates have always been a popular source of entertainment, all the way back to the classical era. Therefore, because Anne and Mary are adaptable yet authentic and relevant yet compelling, they are ideally suited for being vehicles for answering these questions.

Anne and Mary have become the archetypal female pirates. From the *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise to the grittier television series *Black Sails* and numerous video games they have served as inspiration for just about every Anglo-American female pirate character, consciously or otherwise, since 1721. They have become so deeply ingrained in western culture it is pointless to try to separate fact from fiction; at this point, the representations of Anne and Mary *are* the 'real' Anne and Mary. The stories about them circulated through modern media such as the internet, including the tumblr conversation from figure 1.2, are results of a slow evolution over the course of centuries as external cultural forces exerted themselves on the narrative. It is perhaps a little sad that Anne and Mary's lives have been twisted and moulded to reflect our own ideas, losing their identities to the whims of artists and authors. We have projected moral judgements onto them for our own devices, and any words and thoughts of their own have been lost to history. It is impossible to restore their identities to them but I hope that by studying how they evolved from historical figures to cultural archetypes I can at least acknowledge how those identities were taken from them in the first place.

In this thesis I have provided a comprehensive study of how exactly Anne and Mary as cultural icons have evolved in the time since their historical lives and the relationship between those mutations and significant historical moments regarding gender, morality and sexuality. These have included a considerable variety of media, languages and geographic origins, showing how Anne and Mary, as symbols, have transcended national borders, eras and cultures.

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Appendix

THE LIFE OF MARY READ

Now we are to begin a History full of surprizing Turns and Adventures; mean, that of *Mary Read* and *Anne Bonny*, alias *Bonn*, which were the true Names of these two Pyrates; the odd Incidents of their rambling Lives are such, that some may be tempted to think the whole Story no better than a Novel or Romance; but since it is supported by many thousand Witnesses, I mean the People of *Jamaica*, who were present at their Tryals, and heard the Story of their Lives, upon the first discovery of their Sex; the Truth of it can be no more contested, than that there were such Men in the World, as *Roberts* and *Black-beard*, who were Pyrates.

Mary Read was born in *England*, her Mother was married young, to a Man who used the Sea, who going a Voyage soon after their Marriage, left her with Child, which Child proved to be a Boy. As to the Husband, whether he was cast away, or died in the Voyage, *Mary Read* could not tell; but however, he never returned more; nevertheless, the Mother, who was young and airy, met with an Accident, which has often happened to Women who are young, and do not take a great deal of Care; which was, she soon proved with Child again, without a Husband to Father it, but how, or by whom, none but her self could tell, for she carried a pretty good Reputation among her Neighbours. Finding her Burthen grow, in order to conceal her Shame, she takes a formal Leave of her Husband's Relations, giving out, that she went to live with some Friends of her own, in the Country: Accordingly she went away, and carried with her her young Son, at this Time, not a Year old: Soon after her Departure her Son died, but Providence in Return, was pleased to give her a Girl in his Room, of which she was safely delivered, in her Retreat, and this was our *Mary Read*.

Here the Mother liv'd three or four Years, till what Money she had was almost gone; then she thought of returning to *London*, and considering that her Husband's Mother was in some Circumstances, she did not doubt but to prevail upon her, to provide for the Child, if she could but pass it upon her for the same, but the changing a Girl into a Boy, seem'd a difficult Piece of Work, and how to deceive an experienced old Woman, in such a Point, was altogether as impossible; however, she ventured to dress it up as a Boy, brought it to Town, and presented it to her Mother in Law, as her Husband's Son; the old Woman would have taken it, to have bred it up, but the Mother pretended it would break her Heart, to part with it; so it was agreed betwixt them, that the Child should live with the Mother, and the supposed Grandmother should allow a Crown a Week for it's Maintainance.

Thus the Mother gained her Point, she bred up her Daughter as a Boy, and when she grew up to some Sense, she thought proper to let her into the Secret of her Birth, to induce her to conceal her Sex. It happen'd that the Grandmother died, by which Means the Subsistance that came from that Quarter, ceased, and they were more and more reduced in their Circumstances; wherefore she was obliged to put her Daughter out, to wait on a *French* Lady, as a Foot-boy, being now thirteen Years of Age: Here she did not live long, for growing bold and strong, and having also a roving Mind, she entered her self on Board a Man of War, where she served some Time, then quitted it, went over into *Flanders*, and carried Arms in a Regiment of Foot, as a *Cadet*; and tho' upon all Actions, she behaved herself with a great deal of Bravery, yet she could not get a Commission, they being generally bought and sold; therefore she quitted the Service, and took on in a Regiment of Horse; she behaved so well in several Engagements, that she got the Esteem of all her Officers; but her Comrade who was a *Fleming*, happening to be a handsome

young Fellow, she falls in Love with him, and from that Time, grew a little more negligent in her Duty, so that, it seems, *Mars* and *Venus* could not be served at the same Time; her Arms and Accoutrements which were always kept in the best Order, were quite neglected: 'tis true, when her Comrade was ordered out upon a Party, she used to go without being commanded, and frequently run herself into Danger, where she had no Business, only to be near him; the rest of the Troopers little suspecting the secret Cause which moved her to this Behaviour, fancied her to be mad, and her Comrade himself could not account for this strange Alteration in her, but Love is ingenious, and as they lay in the same Tent, and were constantly together, she found a Way of letting him discover her Sex, without appearing that it was done with Design.

He was much surprized at what he found out, and not a little pleased, taking it for granted, that he should have a Mistress solely to himself, which is an unusual Thing in a Camp, since there is scarce one of those Campaign Ladies, that is ever true to a Troop or Company; so that he thought of nothing but gratifying his Passions with very little Ceremony; but he found himself strangely mistaken, for she proved very reserved and modest, and resisted all his Temptations, and at the same Time was so obliging and insinuating in her Carriage, that she quite changed his Purpose, so far from thinking of making her his Mistress, he now courted her for a Wife.

This was the utmost Wish of her Heart, in short, they exchanged Promises, and when the Campaign was over, and the Regiment marched into Winter Quarters, they bought Woman's Apparel for her, with such Money as they could make up betwixt them, and were publickly married.

The Story of two Troopers marrying each other, made a great Noise, so that several Officers were drawn by Curiosity to assist at the Ceremony, and they agreed among

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themselves that every one of them should make a small Present to the Bride, towards House-keeping, in Consideration of her having been their fellow Soldier. Thus being set up, they seemed to have a Desire of quitting the Service, and settling in the World; the Adventure of their Love and Marriage had gained them so much Favour, that they easily obtained their Discharge, and they immediately set up an Eating House or Ordinary, which was the Sign of the *Three Horse-Shoes*, near the Castle of *Breda*, where they soon run into a good Trade, a great many Officers eating with them constantly.

But this Happiness lasted not long, for the Husband soon died, and the Peace of *Reswick* being concluded, there was no Resort of Officers to *Breda*, as usual; so that the Widow having little or no Trade, was forced to give up House-keeping, and her Substance being by Degrees quite spent, she again assumes her Man's Apparel, and going into *Holland*, there takes on in a Regiment of Foot, quarter'd in one of the Frontier Towns: Here she did not remain long, there was no likelihood of Preferment in Time of Peace, therefore she took a Resolution of seeking her Fortune another Way; and withdrawing from the Regiment, ships herself on Board of a Vessel bound for the *West-Indies*.

It happen'd this Ship was taken by *English* Pyrates, and *Mary Read* was the only *English* Person on Board, they kept her amongst them, and having plundered the Ship, let it go again; after following this Trade for some Time, the King's Proclamation came out, and was publish'd in all Parts of the *West-Indies*, for pardoning such Pyrates, who should voluntarily surrender themselves by a certain Day therein mentioned. The Crew of *Mary Read* took the Benefit of this Proclamation, and having surrender'd, liv'd quietly on Shore; but Money beginning to grow short, and hearing that Captain *Woods Rogers*, Governor of the Island of *Providence*, was fitting out some Privateers to cruise against the *Spaniards*, she with several others embark'd for that Island, in order to go upon the

privateering Account, being resolved to make her Fortune one way or other.

These Privateers were no sooner sail'd out, but the Crews of some of them, who had been pardoned, rose against their Commanders, and turned themselves to their old Trade: In this Number was *Mary Read*. It is true, she often declared, that the Life of a Pyrate was what she always abhor'd, and went into it only upon Compulsion, both this Time, and before, intending to quit it, whenever a fair Opportunity should offer it self; yet some of the Evidence against her, upon her Tryal, who were forced Men, and had sailed with her, deposed upon Oath, that in Times of Action, no Person amongst them were more resolute, or ready to Board or undertake any Thing that was hazardous, as she and *Anne Bonny*; and particularly at the Time they were attack'd and taken, when they came to close Quarters, none kept the Deck except *Mary Read* and *Anne Bonny*, and one more; upon which, she, *Mary Read*, called to those under Deck, to come up and fight like Men, and finding they did not stir, fired her Arms down the Hold amongst them, killing one, and wounding others.

This was part of the Evidence against her, which she denied; which, whether true or no, thus much is certain, that she did not want Bravery, nor indeed was she less remarkable for her Modesty, according to her Notions of Virtue: Her Sex was not so much as suspected by any Person on Board, till *Anne Bonny*, who was not altogether so reserved in point of Chastity, took a particular liking to her; in short, *Anne Bonny* took her for a handsome young Fellow, and for some Reasons best known to herself, first discovered her Sex to *Mary Read; Mary Read* knowing what she would be at, and being very sensible of her own Incapacity that Way, was forced to come to a right Understanding with her, and so to the great Disappointment of *Anne Bonny*, she let her know she was a Woman also; but this Intimacy so disturb'd Captain *Rackam*, who was the Lover and

Gallant of *Anne Bonny*, that he grew furiously jealous, so that he told *Anne Bonny*, he would cut her new Lover's Throat, therefore, to quiet him, she let him into the Secret also.

Captain *Rackam*, (as he was enjoined,) kept the Thing a Secret from all the Ship's Company, yet, notwithstanding all her Cunning and Reserve, Love found her out in this Disguise, and hinder'd her from forgetting her Sex. In their Cruize they took a great Number of Ships belonging to *Jamaica*, and other Parts of the *West-Indies*, bound to and from *England*; and when ever they meet any good Artist, or other Person that might be of any great Use to their Company, if he was not willing to enter, it was their Custom to keep him by Force. Among these was a young Fellow of a most engageing Behaviour, or, at least, he was so in the Eyes of *Mary Read*, who became so smitten with his Person and Address, that she could neither rest, Night or Day; but as there is nothing more ingenious than Love, it was no hard Matter for her, who had before been practiced in these Wiles, to find a Way to let him discover her Sex: She first insinuated her self into his liking, by talking against the Life of a Pyrate, which he was altogether averse to, so they became Mess-Mates and strict Companions: When she found he had a Friendship for her, as a Man, she suffered the Discovery to be made, by carelesly shewing her Breasts, which were very White.

The young Fellow, who was made of Flesh and Blood, had his Curiosity and Desire so rais'd by this Sight, that he never ceased importuning her, till she confessed what she was. Now begins the Scene of Love; as he had a Liking and Esteem for her, under her supposed Character, it was now turn'd into Fondness and Desire; her Passion was no less violent than his, and perhaps she express'd it, by one of the most generous Actions that ever Love inspired. It happened this young Fellow had a Quarrel with one of the Pyrates,

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and their Ship then lying at an Anchor, near one of the Islands, they had appointed to go ashore and fight, according to the Custom of the Pyrates: *Mary Read*, was to the last Degree uneasy and anxious, for the Fate of her Lover; she would not have had him refuse the Challenge, because, she could not bear the Thoughts of his being branded with Cowardise; on the other Side, she dreaded the Event, and apprehended the Fellow might be too hard for him: When Love once enters into the Breast of one who has any Sparks of Generosity, it stirs the Heart up to the most noble Actions; in this Dilemma, she shew'd, that she fear'd more for his Life than she did for her own; for she took a Resolution of quarreling with this Fellow her self, and having challenged him ashore, she appointed the Time two Hours sooner than that when he was to meet her Lover, where she fought him at Sword and Pistol, and killed him upon the Spot.

It is true, she had fought before, when she had been insulted by some of those Fellows, but now it was altogether in her Lover's Cause, she stood as it were betwixt him and Death, as if she could not live without him. If he had no regard for her before, this Action would have bound him to her for ever; but there was no Occasion for Ties or Obligations, his Inclination towards her was sufficient; in fine, they applied their Troth to each other, which *Mary Read* said, she look'd upon to be as good a Marriage, in Conscience, as if it had been done by a Minister in Church; and to this was owing her great Belly, which she pleaded to save her Life.

She declared she had never committed Adultery or Fornication with any Man, she commended the Justice of the Court, before which she was tried, for distinguishing the Nature of their Crimes; her Husband, as she call'd him, with several others, being acquitted; and being ask'd, who he was? she would not tell, but, said he was an honest Man, and had no Inclination to such Practices, and that they had both resolved to leave

the Pyrates the first Opportunity, and apply themselves to some honest Livelyhood.

It is no doubt, but many had Compassion for her, yet the Court could not avoid finding her Guilty; for among other Things, one of the Evidences against her, deposed, that being taken by *Rackam*, and detain'd some Time on Board, he fell accidentally into Discourse with *Mary Read*, whom he taking for a young Man, ask'd her, what Pleasure she could have in being concerned in such Enterprizes, where her Life was continually in Danger, by Fire or Sword; and not only so, but she must be sure of dying an ignominious Death, if she should be taken alive?—She answer'd, that as to hanging, she thought it no great Hardship, for, were it not for that, every cowardly Fellow would turn Pyrate, and so infest the Seas, that Men of Courage must starve:— That if it was put to the Choice of the Pyrates, they would not have the punishment less than Death, the Fear of which, kept some dastardly Rogues honest; that many of those who are now cheating the Widows and Orphans, and oppressing their poor Neighbours, who have no Money to obtain Justice, would then rob at Sea, and the Ocean would be crowded with Rogues, like the Land, and no Merchant would venture out; so that the Trade, in a little Time, would not be worth following.

Being found quick with Child, as has been observed, her Execution was respited, and it is possible she would have found Favour, but she was seiz'd with a violent Fever, soon after her Tryal, of which she died in Prison.

THE LIFE OF ANNE BONNY

we have been more particular in the Lives of these two Women, than those of other Pyrates, it is incumbent on us, as a faithful Historian, to begin with their Birth. *Anne*

Bonny was born at a Town near *Cork*, in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, her Father an Attorney at Law, but *Anne* was not one of his legitimate Issue, which seems to cross an old Proverb, which says, *that Bastards have the best Luck*. Her Father was a Married Man, and his Wife having been brought to Bed, contracted an Illness in her lying in, and in order to recover her Health, she was advised to remove for Change of Air; the Place she chose, was a few Miles distance from her Dwelling, where her Husband's Mother liv'd. Here she sojourn'd some Time, her Husband staying at Home, to follow his Affairs. The Servant-Maid, whom she left to look after the House, and attend the Family, being a handsome young Woman, was courted by a young Man of the same Town, who was a *Tanner*; this *Tanner* used to take his Opportunities, when the Family was out of the Way, of coming to pursue his Courtship; and being with the Maid one Day as she was employ'd in the Houshold Business, not having the Fear of God before his Eyes, he takes his Opportunity, when her Back was turned, of whipping three Silver Spoons into his Pocket. The Maid soon miss'd the Spoons, and knowing that no Body had been in the Room, but herself and the young Man, since she saw them last, she charged him with taking them; he very stifly denied it, upon which she grew outragious, and threatned to go to a Constable, in order to carry him before a Justice of Peace: These Menaces frighten'd him out of his Wits, well knowing he could not stand Search; wherefore he endeavoured to pacify her, by desiring her to examine the Drawers and other Places, and perhaps she might find them; in this Time he slips into another Room, where the Maid usually lay, and puts the Spoons betwixt the Sheets, and then makes his Escape by a back Door, concluding she must find them, when she went to Bed, and so next Day he might pretend he did it only to frighten her, and the Thing might be laugh'd off for a Jest.

As soon as she miss'd him, she gave over her Search, concluding he had carried them

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off, and went directly to the Constable, in order to have him apprehended: The young Man was informed, that a Constable had been in Search of him, but he regarded it but little, not doubting but all would be well next Day. Three or four Days passed, and still he was told, the Constable was upon the Hunt for him, this made him lye concealed, he could not comprehend the Meaning of it, he imagined no less, than that the Maid had a Mind to convert the Spoons to her own Use, and put the Robbery upon him.

It happened, at this Time, that the Mistress being perfectly recovered of her late Indisposition, was return'd Home, in Company with her Mother-in-Law; the first News she heard, was of the Loss of the Spoons, with the Manner how; the Maid telling her, at the same Time, that the young Man was run away. The young Fellow had Intelligence of the Mistress's Arrival, and considering with himself, that he could never appear again in his Business, unless this Matter was got over, and she being a good natured Woman, he took a Resolution of going directly to her, and of telling her the whole Story, only with this Difference, that he did it for a Jest.

The Mistress could scarce believe it, however, she went directly to the Maid's Room, and turning down the Bed Cloaths, there, to her great Surprize, found the three Spoons; upon this she desired the young Man to go Home and mind his Business, for he should have no Trouble about it.

The Mistress could not imagine the Meaning of this, she never had found the Maid guilty of any pilfering, and therefore it could not enter her Head, that she designed to steal the Spoons her self; upon the whole, she concluded the Maid had not been in her Bed, from the Time the Spoons were miss'd, she grew immediately jealous upon it, and suspected, that the Maid supplied her Place with her Husband, during her Absence, and this was the Reason why the Spoons were no sooner found.

She call'd to Mind several Actions of Kindness, her Husband had shewed the Maid, Things that pass'd unheeded by, when they happened, but now she had got that Tormentor, Jealousy, in her Head, amounted to Proofs of their Intimacy; another Circumstance which strengthen'd the whole, was, that tho' her Husband knew she was to come Home that Day, and had had no Communication with her in four Months, which was before her last Lying in, yet he took an Opportunity of going out of Town that Morning, upon some slight Pretence: —All these Things put together, confirm'd her in her Jealousy.

As Women seldom forgive Injuries of this Kind, she thought of discharging her Revenge upon the Maid: In order to this, she leaves the Spoons where she found them, and orders the Maid to put clean Sheets upon the Bed, telling her, she intended to lye there herself that Night, because her Mother in Law was to lye in her Bed, and that she (the Maid) must lye in another Part of the House; the Maid in making the Bed, was surprized with the Sight of the Spoons, but there were very good Reasons, why it was not proper for her to tell where she found them, therefore she takes them up, puts them in her Trunk, intending to leave them in some Place, where they might be found by chance.

The Mistress, that every Thing might look to be done without Design, lies that Night in the Maid's Bed, little dreaming of what an Adventure it would produce: After she had been a Bed some Time, thinking on what had pass'd, for Jealousy kept her awake, she heard some Body enter the Room; at first she apprehended it to be Thieves, and was so fright'ned, she had not Courage enough to call out; but when she heard these Words, Mary, *are you awake*? She knew it to be her Husband's Voice; then her Fright was over, yet she made no Answer, least he should find her out, if she spoke, therefore she resolved to counterfeit Sleep, and take what followed.

The Husband came to Bed, and that Night play'd the vigorous Lover; but one Thing spoil'd the Diversion on the Wife's Side, which was, the Reflection that it was not design'd for her; however she was very passive, and bore it like a Christian. Early before Day, she stole out of Bed, leaving him asleep, and went to her Mother in Law, telling her what had passed, not forgetting how he had used her, as taking her for the Maid; the Husband also stole out, not thinking it convenient to be catch'd in that Room; in the mean Time, the Revenge of the Mistress was strongly against the Maid, and without considering, that to her she ow'd the Diversion of the Night before, and that one good *Turn* should deserve another; she sent for a Constable, and charged her with stealing the Spoons: The Maid's Trunk was broke open, and the Spoons found, upon which she was carried before a Justice of Peace, and by him committed to Goal.

The Husband loiter'd about till twelve a Clock at Noon, then comes Home, pretended he was just come to Town; as soon as he heard what had passed, in Relation to the Maid, he fell into a great Passion with his Wife; this set the Thing into a greater Flame, the Mother takes the Wife's Part against her own Son, insomuch that the Quarrel increasing, the Mother and Wife took Horse immediately, and went back to the Mother's House, and the Husband and Wife never bedded together after.

The Maid lay a long Time in the Prison, it being near half a Year to the Assizes; but before it happened, it was discovered she was with Child; when she was arraign'd at the Bar, she was discharged for want of Evidence; the Wife's Conscience touch'd her, and as she did not believe the Maid Guilty of any Theft, except that of Love, she did not appear against her; soon after her Acquittal, she was delivered of a Girl.

But what alarm'd the Husband most, was, that it was discovered the Wife was with Child also, he taking it for granted, he had had no Intimacy with her, since her last lying

in, grew jealous of her, in his Turn, and made this a Handle to justify himself, for his Usage of her, pretending now he had suspected her long, but that here was Proof; she was delivered of Twins, a Boy and a Girl.

The Mother fell ill, sent to her Son to reconcile him to his Wife, but he would not hearken to it; therefore she made a Will, leaving all she had in the Hands of certain Trustees, for the Use of the Wife and two Children lately born, and died a few Days after.

This was an ugly Turn upon him, his greatest Dependence being upon his Mother; however, his Wife was kinder to him than he deserved, for she made him a yearly Allowance out of what was left, tho' they continued to live separate: It lasted near five Years; at this Time having a great Affection for the Girl he had by his Maid, he had a Mind to take it Home, to live with him; but as all the Town knew it to be a Girl, the better to disguise the Matter from them, as well as from his Wife, he had it put into Breeches, as a Boy, pretending it was a Relation's Child he was to breed up to be his Clerk.

The Wife heard he had a little Boy at Home he was very fond of, but as she did not know any Relation of his that had such a Child, she employ'd a Friend to enquire further into it; this Person by talking with the Child, found it to be a Girl, discovered that the Servant-Maid was its Mother, and that the Husband still kept up his Correspondence with her.

Upon this Intelligence, the Wife being unwilling that her Children's Money should go towards the Maintenance of Bastards, stopped the Allowance: The Husband enraged, in a kind of Revenge, takes the Maid home, and lives with her publickly, to the great Scandal of his Neighbours; but he soon found the bad Effect of it, for by Degrees lost his Practice, so that he saw plainly he could not live there, therefore he thought of removing, and turning what Effects he had into ready Money; he goes to *Cork*, and there with his Maid

and Daughter embarques for *Carolina*.

At first he followed the Practice of the Law in that Province, but afterwards fell into Merchandize, which proved more successful to him, for he gained by it sufficient to purchase a considerable Plantation: His Maid, who passed for his Wife, happened to dye, after which his Daughter, our *Anne Bonny*, now grown up, kept his House.

She was of a fierce and couragious Temper, wherefore, when she lay under Condemnation, several Stories were reported of her, much to her Disadvantage, as that she had kill'd an *English* Servant-Maid once in her Passion with a Case-Knife, while she look'd after her Father's House; but upon further Enquiry, I found this Story to be groundless: It was certain she was so robust, that once, when a young Fellow would have lain with her, against her Will, she beat him so, that he lay ill of it a considerable Time.

While she lived with her Father, she was look'd upon as one that would be a good Fortune, wherefore it was thought her Father expected a good Match for her; but she spoilt all, for without his Consent, she marries a young Fellow, who belonged to the Sea, and was not worth a Groat; which provoked her Father to such a Degree, that he turned her out of Doors, upon which the young Fellow, who married her, finding himself disappointed in his Expectation, shipped himself and Wife, for the Island of *Providence*, expecting Employment there.

Here she became acquainted with *Rackam* the Pyrate, who making Courtship to her, soon found Means of withdrawing her Affections from her Husband, so that she consented to elope from him, and go to Sea with *Rackam* in Men's Cloaths: She was as good as her Word, and after she had been at Sea some Time, she proved with Child, and beginning to grow big, *Rackam* landed her on the Island of *Cuba*; and recommending her there to some Friends of his, they took Care of her, till she was brought to Bed: When she

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was up and well again, he sent for her to bear him Company.

The King's Proclamation being out, for pardoning of Pyrates, he took the Benefit of it, and surrendered; afterwards being sent upon the privateering Account, he returned to his old Trade, as has been already hinted in the Story of *Mary Read*. In all these Expeditions, *Anne Bonny* bore him Company, and when any Business was to be done in their Way, no Body was more forward or couragious than she, and particularly when they were taken; she and *Mary Read*, with one more, were all the Persons that durst keep the Deck, as has been before hinted.

Her Father was known to a great many Gentlemen, Planters of *Jamaica*, who had dealt with him, and among whom he had a good Reputation; and some of them, who had been in *Carolina*, remember'd to have seen her in his House; wherefore they were inclined to shew her Favour, but the Action of leaving her Husband was an ugly Circumstance against her. The Day that *Rackam* was executed, by special Favour, he was admitted to see her; but all the Comfort she gave him, was, *that she was sorry to see him there, but if he had fought like a Man, he need not have been hang'd like a Dog.*

She was continued in Prison, to the Time of her lying in, and afterwards reprieved from Time to Time; but what is become of her since, we cannot tell; only this we know, that she was not executed.