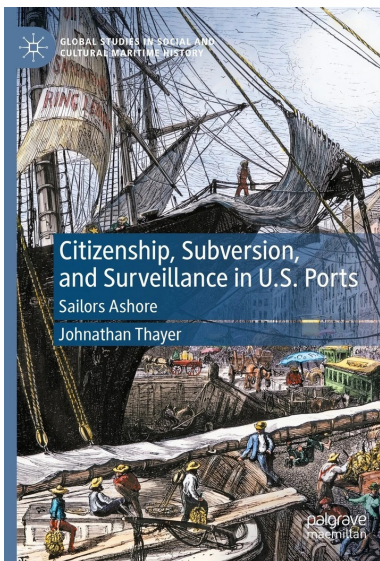


SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH SEMINARS

Citizenship, Subversion, and Surveillance in U.S. Ports: Sailors Ashore

Wed, March. 6th • 12:15–1:30 PM • PH 333



Featuring Dr. Johnathan Thayer, Assistant Professor – GSLIS Department.

This seminar will walk through a series of archival encounters that position sailortowns, or urban port districts defined by unique social, cultural, and economic characteristics, as portals that lead to reckonings with national and global forces of history. My book, *Citizenship, Subversion, and Surveillance in U.S. Ports: Sailors Ashore* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023), presents historical confrontations in the streets, back alleys, boardinghouses, and piers of the nation's sailortowns as microcosms through which larger narratives of national legal, political, social, and cultural developments can be understood.

Through this approach, the book argues first: that the forces of industrialization that transformed ship technology simultaneously transformed the working-class lives of merchant seamen, intensifying class conflict and producing collective networks of subversion and resistance within the urban borderland spaces of sailortowns in which sailors fought to maintain control over their mobility, agency, and rights. Second, that given their social, cultural, economic, geographic, and legal marginalization, merchant seamen have occupied essential roles at the parameters of U.S. urban, legal, labor, immigration, and wartime history. Third, that the constellation of these histories, embedded in the encounters and negotiations that merchant seamen provoked along the nation's coastlines and sailortowns, collectively represents a unique and essential perspective on the history of U.S. citizenship.