

**Hinckley, Erik S., ed. *Merchant and Naval Ship Movements, 1764–1799: International Notices from the Connecticut Courant*
McFarland, 2025**

247 pp., illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index

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In his publication, Hinckley compiles reports on ship movements that appeared in the *Connecticut Courant* from the late colonial era up until the end of the French Revolution. Therefore, the book is meant to be a documentary resource and a steppingstone for further research rather than a work of historical analysis. In total, it offers information on more than 1,300 ships and over 500 individuals, most of them captains, and their maritime endeavors. Although the news items were all published in Connecticut and accordingly focus on North Atlantic events, some reports originate from the Baltic, Caribbean, and the Mediterranean Sea, and occasionally even from the Pacific and Indian Ocean. Regarding the chronology of the events, Hinckley explains that he follows the order of his source material and presents the events as they were reported in Connecticut, not as they historically occurred.

The book offers a glossary of maritime terms and specialized vocabulary. Furthermore, an index allows readers to cross-reference the entries, although it focuses mostly on ship names and regimental numbers. It would have been beneficial to offer the reader more abstract terms like “women” or “native Americans” or to include implicit references. For example, under “shipwreck” only articles with the exact term are listed. This is but a fraction of the reports on ships lost or stranded. Thus, the most effective way to use this book is a full read-through.

Keeping this in mind, Hinckley offers an impressive variety of information that can be used to answer a multitude of research questions. He presents his reports in four chronological chapters: late Colonial Era, the American Revolution, the Post-Revolutionary Era, and finally the French Revolution. The entries vary considerably in length, many being just two or three lines, while others span half a page. They are edited with a light modernization of spelling that is indicated for accuracy. Only some of the longer entries are abridged.

The history of maritime trade and warfare is the prominent theme of this work. The reports include information on the duration of voyages as well as typical and spectacular cargo. Furthermore, when reporting on captured prizes, shipwrecks, or lost cargo, the reports usually include the estimated value of the

goods. By connecting the places of origin and routes one could extrapolate a trade network that connects the coast of Connecticut with the Caribbean, other British colonies, and Europe.

Especially, but not exclusively, in times of war special attention is given to naval movements. Reports offer the names and armaments of hundreds of naval vessels and their large and sometimes small engagements. One could easily use Hinckley's book to write a microhistory of maritime warfare in North America. Not only action is covered in the reports, but also the construction of warships or their general movements, whether friend, foe, or neutral. This includes the transport of infantry regiments which are described by name and destination. As noted above, these reports are not confined to North American waters but offer information about engagements from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. Special attention is consistently given to privateers as either a threat to North American maritime connectivity or as source of economic gain. Thus, the *Courant* reports on losses, warns of dangers in specific places, and at the same time glorifies the success of North American privateers.

But that is just the tip of the iceberg. Hinckley's collection offers a window into many more topics, such as the history of maritime dangers and methods to escape them. This includes storms, cliffs, and shoals, as well as illness and preventive measures. Particularly fascinating is the possibility to compare how a singular event, like a heavy winter storm, affected different ships and how their crews responded in various ways.

Many of the ships carried not only cargo, but passengers – voluntary as well as forced. The reports mention the transport of convicts and enslaved individuals, as well as migrants from various parts of Europe. It is obvious that their numbers increase in times of peace and decline in times of war. The same trend applies to women aboard ships, who are mentioned as captains' wives, as part of travelling families, or as victims of shipwreck.

Looking beyond the content of the *Courant* and toward the function of the newspaper itself, Hinckley's book also provides fascinating insight into the history of information and knowledge. The reports oftentimes mention the arrival of new prints from Europe or other colonies as well as rumors and news conveyed by captains or passengers. Therefore, one could use certain well-known events to map how long it took for news to reach Connecticut and to assess if the report was accurate or distorted.

To conclude, Hinckley's collection is well executed and will hopefully inspire many researchers to follow in his footsteps. It is applicable to many fields of historical research, though the limitations of the index make a read-through the best way to use it. This is not a drawback, however, as reading

the book in full allows the reader to discover dozens of small but fascinating stories hidden within the news.

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Klein Käfer, Natacha, ed. *Privacy at Sea: Practices, Spaces and Communication in Maritime History*

Springer Nature Publications, 2024

xiii + 400 pp., illustrations, notes, tables, appendices, bibliography, index
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For some, early modern seafaring evokes a romantic notion of freedom and discovery. Many maritime scholars, however, have traditionally approached seafaring by focusing primarily on the destinations of early modern voyages. More recently, studies have increasingly examined oceans and ports as social maritime spaces governed by rules and practices distinct from those on land. In this context, the ship in all its forms represents the exact opposite of the romanticized idea of freedom: on a confined wooden vessel in the middle of the vast oceans, people were confronted above all with the limits of their personal freedom and the vulnerability of their privacy.

In this edited volume, Natacha Klein Käfer, Assistant Professor at the Centre for Privacy Studies at the University of Copenhagen, explores together with fourteen other contributors the concept of privacy at sea and how it was experienced by contemporaries. The Palgrave Macmillan series *Global Studies in Social and Cultural Maritime History* is a very well-fitting platform for those case studies. The series situates maritime history within a global, social and cultural context, going beyond traditional economic, political, and military perspectives. It encompasses different maritime and coastal spaces from antiquity to the present, with a particular emphasis on work with gendered, postcolonial and global perspectives. Thus, Klein Käfer's volume examines the early modern period in its full range (1500–1800) and focuses on the global maritime spheres of predominantly Southern European nations, alongside a few Anglophone case studies.

The volume is organized around an in-depth exploration of privacy at sea. Its introduction provides a rigorous theoretical framework within privacy studies, while the case studies are grouped into four thematic sections. Each section presents three detailed case studies, followed by a concluding epilogue (Part V) by Klein Käfer and Mette Birkedal Bruun, which integrates the results