



To Swear like a Sailor: Maritime Culture in America, 1750-1850

Paul A. Gilje

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Anyone could swear like a sailor! Within the larger culture, sailors had pride of place in swearing. But how they swore and the reasons for their bad language were not strictly wedded to maritime things. Instead, sailor swearing, indeed all swearing in this period, was connected to larger developments. This book traces the interaction between the maritime and mainstream world in the United States while examining cursing, language, logbooks, storytelling, sailor songs, reading, images, and material goods. To Swear Like a Sailor offers insight into the character of Jack Tar - the common seaman - and into the early republic. It illuminates the cultural connections between Great Britain and the United States and the appearance of a distinct American national identity. The book explores the emergence of sentimental notions about the common man - through the guise of the sailor - appearing on stage, in song, in literature, and in images.

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