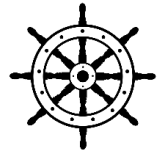




# The Mizzen



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Medeina Petruskaite

# The Mizzen's Paradigm: consent, diversity, accuracy, quality, student perspective, representing ourselves, our peers, and the people and places we visit with respect.

## The Drake Channel

Eric S.

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, with 8 sails hoisted and a bearing of 220°, the Alexander von Humboldt II cruised through the Sir Francis Drake Channel. 13 knots of wind from astern was harnessed by the canvas, with the yards set for a broad reach. To starboard: Beef Island and Tortola. Off port: Ginger Island and Cooper Island. 28°C, turquoise water shimmering in the sun's rays, lush green vegetation, beaches with white and golden sand, and catamarans gliding by with crisp white sails, provided a magical and memorable sensory experience. Competing narratives surround Sir Francis Drake and his exploits: to some a pirate, and to others, a privateer that advanced his country's overseas interests.



Image by Eric S.

After arriving in Santo Domingo, our group participated in a walking tour of the city. We visited the Alcázar de Colón, which was the residence of Christopher Columbus' son, Diego. This building was attacked and plundered by Drake. Other spots on the tour included the Panteón Nacional, the Cathedral of Santa Maria la Menor, Museo de las Casas Reales, and the Monumento de Fray Anton de Montesinos. The tour provided a deeper understanding of the Dominican Republic's colonial past before we embarked on the service-learning project the following day.



## Syncing Against Sinking

Anonymous

Across the globe, military groups practice marching in uniform lines. Religious devotees pray facing Mecca five times a day. Somewhere on the ocean, Class Afloat students and faculty gather without fail at 8 o'clock every morning for colours. Though varied in location, purpose, and population, these practices all share a common theme: ritualistic synchrony. Ritualistic synchrony is defined as the rhythmic matching of actions with others during a specific task. Within Class Afloat, numerous examples of synchrony are revealed: "hol weg" – ing (hauling lines) in unison, the morning ballet of chores, endless refrains of "What Do You Do With A Drunken Sailor?" and "Sailing Away," to name a few. Through analyses of prior psychological studies and trade-off theories, this piece aims to identify the significance, benefits, and downsides of ritualistic synchrony in the context of Class Afloat.

Evidence of ritualistic synchrony, such as dancing, chatting, or drumming, has been recorded in every region of the globe, and as far back as rock art in 38, 000 BCE (Gelfand). Its universality and timelessness suggests that it could be a historically adaptive characteristic of successful communities, such as the persistence of many religious groups. Daniel Stein, a researcher from UC Berkeley, proposes that, in addition to signaling commitment to others in a group, participation in rituals strengthens internal commitment, or the individual's personal attachment to a group. Stein states that arbitrary behaviours that recur in rituals may be subconsciously associated with social norms or values. Rituals also increase the desire to stay in a group, which is attributed to the concept of "collective effervescence," a term introduced by Durkheim and Swain in the early 1900s, describing the connection felt within a community that participates in synchronous action, leading to increased social bonding (Gelfand). Furthermore, experimental studies replicating synchronous action have found that people are significantly more cooperative and prosocial than in control conditions, and are more likely to make decisions that benefit the group, even to their own detriment (Gelfand).

In the context of Class Afloat, synchronous actions to enhance group bonding must seem entirely advantageous. It may even influence the number of people who wash out their nighttime oatmeal mugs or actually complete their chores, but is commitment and cooperation always a good thing? Psychologist Michele Gelfand and researchers from the University of Maryland characterize the idea of a trade-off: with conformity and interdependence comes a lack of creativity and individuality. Reneeta Mogan et al.'s research from the

continued

University of Auckland identifies shared goals as a significant contributing factor towards lack of imagination. Through a study involving synchronous movement and listening to a metronome before performing a task, Mogan concluded that there is a causal relationship between movement in sync, shared intentions, and lower scores on the Remote Associates Test, a test that measures creativity and convergent thinking (Mogan). Articulating individual and group goals is a fundamental part of the Sociology of Community (SOCO) sessions. There is a focus on becoming a global citizen and effective community member, but also on discovering personal values and critical thinking.

The trade-off between conformity and innovation may seem intuitive, but acceptance of such has led to a lack of research on the value of ritualistic synchrony in communities. Beyond overt efforts to fulfill SOCO goals while on Class Afloat, how are minute yet repetitive actions as a group subconsciously strengthening cohesion, and what effect does this have at an individual level? Further questions to explore are whether there is an optimal frequency or intensity of synchrony in groups that maximizes the beneficial impacts, as well as determining the length of time for which those effects may last once having left a group.

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#### Homestays

##### Pasha Jones

I am so happy that I got to live with another family for 3 days. I stayed with Yinet and her son Matteo, who live about 10 steps away from her brother. She shared her bathroom, blankets, towels, bed, and kitchen with me. My Duolingo Spanish only helped me with words like yes, water, and thank you, so the rest of the time we spoke through Google Translate. She told me that her house should feel like my own and that I can ask her for anything. It felt so welcoming, how she opened her home to me, a stranger.

I slept in a bed that was 3 feet away from hers and Matteo's. At around 7:30 a.m. every day, Matteo would say good morning to me. On weekends, he didn't have school so we would all eat breakfast together. I drank coffee and ate bread and watched Matteo as he played with his toys.

The last day we were there, we painted Yinet's house a coral pink with white windowsills. She stayed with us the whole time, helping with whatever we needed. Matteo played with his friends and watched us paint. Everyone was so kind; I think there was about 3 of her neighbors who stopped to hold the ladder that we were using while painting. I wish I could fully describe what it felt like to live with such generosity. I am so grateful that I got to share this experience with Yinet for a few days.



#### Un Mundo Sin Lenguajes

##### Mila Trager

When sign language becomes the only way of communicating, you start to ponder the power of words. You start to ponder the relationships you are missing out on, the laughs and the friendships that could have been. With a Spanish vocabulary that consists of only a little more than "no hablo español," I was nervous about the homestays in the Dominican Republic. My Spanish knowledge was equivalent to my host family's English skills. "How in the world is this supposed to work out?" I asked myself while walking through my homestay's doorway for the first time. Being in a foreign country without speaking the language or being accompanied by someone who does while living together with the locals is a reason to be uneasy if you ask me. Oh how different it all turned out to be.

The host family's hospitality did not need a language and neither did our gratitude. Especially the children: they do not care where you come from or what language you speak. As long as you understand their indications to take them for a piggyback ride and run around, the chances are high they will welcome you.

It made me think, if foreigners can get along without speaking each other's language, why can't politicians who are multilingual or who have the best interpreters in the world assisting them. So let us use words to spread love and laughter instead of hate and hostility.



## The Rooftops

### Kiran Séqueira

I am on a rooftop. I watch the shadows of the world dance under the nascent moonlight. The day's noise is hushed up by the growing darkness. Life hurriedly scatters away from the streets. They hide away from the stillness slowly coating the city. I stay. I can't sleep. I can't sleep because I know that only now, at night, is the time I can climb on the rooftops. Only now is the time I can see the streets' maze below my feet, only in darkness can I see the true lights shining in the city. In a bare world, nothing can hide our emptiness. No footsteps, no shuffling, no sound. No flow carrying us away. No one to block our sight. Every light has a purpose, every walker has a destination. Some climb upon the rooftops too. Some cry. Some jump. But some stay and map the maze with me. One day, maybe, we tell ourselves. One day, we'll get out.



## Being a Translator is...

### Andy Munar

I am from Panama, a Spanish speaking country, and as part of the Class Afloat itinerary, we have had the opportunity to visit other countries that speak it as well. I was so happy when we got to those places and I was able to speak my native language, which I don't get to do that much on the ship as the Spanish speaking community is small.

It was when we arrived in Tenerife, Canary Islands, that I got the first call on the intercom of the ship: "can someone that speaks Spanish come to the main deck please?" At that moment, as I was the sole Spanish speaker onboard, I went. The task was translating a conversation between a German crew member and the man from the gasoline truck so that we could safely get the correct amount of fuel for the ship.

In the Dominican Republic, we had the opportunity to do homestays in different communities for a few days. I was put in Nana and Antonio's house with 5 other girls, and I was the only one who spoke Spanish, therefore, I was the one that communicated what the other girls wanted to tell Nana and Antonio and vice versa. These were situations that made me feel happy that I am bilingual, and that I am able to help others.

However, this is where it gets difficult: one would think that because someone can speak more than one language, it is simple to translate things. It could be the case for some people, but not for me. Reasons for this include: some words may not have direct translations to other languages, the ambiguity of many words, and sometimes I understand a concept in one language, but I cannot explain it in another. One common one between bilingual people is forgetting a word in both languages. During this voyage, I also encountered some situations that showed me even more how challenging it is to be a translator.

Since I was able to speak the native language in the Dominican Republic, I was able to connect well with the locals. I did see how the students and the children wanted to talk and get to know each other but were unable to do so due to a language barrier. They communicated with non-verbal language, warmth, and smaller messages. However, it is challenging to connect with someone when you cannot speak the same language and your only other tool is someone speaking on your behalf.

A situation that I thought was comical, was when we got to the Dominican Republic, the Captain called me to his office to translate some immigration documents. I was translating a paragraph in English to him until I got to a word that I was unsure of the meaning.

Me: "I am not sure what 'desenrolo' means. It is close to another word, but I don't know if they mean the same thing."

Captain: "It means signing off the ship."

Me: "Thank you, wait, what? Who is translating here. That is my native language."

All of these situations made me realize and appreciate the hard work and effort that people who work in the translating field and who do it for large groups, like the organizer of our homestay program, put in to make people feel more welcome in different places and communities.

Being a translator is complex.



## A Welcome Home in the Dominican Republic

### Maya Schutz

68 houses, 2 days, and 48 students. That's a lot of painting. In the Dominican Republic we worked closely with our guide and his community leaders of the town Los Naranjitos, to find homes in need of paint. With the limited amount of time given, it was hard to find a task that would create real change. At the beginning I was skeptical because I am by no means qualified to paint a house or have the coordination to paint a straight line. In addition, our beautiful sunny day turned to a rainfall, apparently rain is a Class Afloat tradition. As the sun came out, we started painting. It became clear how grateful the communities were for our extra support. Many families' children joined us in painting, and grandmothers made us coffee. At points, I was feeling stuck being only 5'4, and having to reach 8 foot roofs. I then tried the jump and paint tactic; this was a complete failure. But then a neighbour found some rope and attached my paintbrush to a stick. Genius. Seeing the direct impact from families' smiles after having a colourful home made us feel good and excited about our day's work. At the end of a long day of painting, we all went back to our homestays.

My favourite part of our experience in the Dominican Republic, was staying with families within the community. These families were volunteers who generously welcomed us in their homes. I remember the first time we met our homestay mother Andrea. I was placed with the other Maia. We were trying to explain that both our names were Maya. Yes, both Maia and Maya were placed in the same house. Andrea kept asking, and what is her name, and we would respond with Maya. This went on for a few minutes until Andrea and us finally realized and the three of us could not stop laughing together. Even though Chloe and Ellie could not speak Spanish, we were keen to communicate with the community. I can't say the pronunciation was there, but we were up for the challenge. Every morning before we left, Andrea would always sit with us and we would drink her homemade coffee. She showed us her homemade fabric filtration device that would separate the beans and milk to pour through. At the end of the day, she would fill the room with happy laughter as we came back covered in paint. I know I speak for all students when I say that this experience gave us the same feeling of family and community we all longed for when applying to Class Afloat.



Image taken by a Local

## An Interview with Bruno

### T. anonymOus, DSST Crew Member

Interviewer = I : Bruno, you sailed such a long time on the ship over the last 30 years that you became kind of a living legend.

Bruno = B: Jawohl, my nicknames were "King of the Rig" and "Leading Wolf of the Rig Apes."

I: Bruno, there are rumours that a new sailing infotainment system should be installed on the ship with the name "Hey Bruno." Can you tell us something about it?

B: Sure, it is an absolutely innovative interactive system. A special device will be implemented in the ears of the students connected with a skin sensor. When you touch e.g. one of the pins on the pinrail, all relevant information about the connected running gear will be given, also any question in general of the world will be answered; just start with the phrase "Hey Bruno." By the way, I already invented it some years ago and gave it to a guy named Jeff Bázos who I accidentally met. He assured me to test it properly in the States. I heard that it runs nearly perfect under the name "Hey Alexandra" or so.

I: Bruno, you were on the first "törns" acting as "General Senior Facility Manager" (GSFM).

What do you think is paramount for good organisation onboard?

B: Enough Coke and regular abundant meals.

I: What could be improved?

B: Introduction of special events e.g. "All you can eat T-Bone Steaks" and a large variety of ice cream.

I: Some malicious voices on board compare you and your apprentice Bernd (the Bread) with Ernie and Bert. What do you say to this unflattering label?

B: Nonsense, Bernd is Bert and I'm not Ernie!

I: We heard that you will return as GSFM (General Senior Facility Manager). Right?

B: I will not come back in person. I founded the SFMS (Superior Facility Management School) to guarantee a perfect qualification for this challenging and sophisticated job for the upcoming CAF projects. My former apprentice Bernd (the Bread) will be the CEO of the school.

I: Good to know, ok just another few questions.

B: (interrupting) Sorry, 5.30 p.m., dinner time.

I: pity, but thank you very much for the interview.

B: (already gone).



## Fred and the Fluff

Cole Bonnell

Students in English 11 & 12 were provided with 3 different pictures at random and then were required to write a creative story.



The morning's first rays cracked through the parted curtains. Normally, Fred keeps his blinds plastered shut, an arrant attempt to prolong his slumber, his only refuge from the cruel world he'd grown to resent. The one that took his mother. The one that silenced him, that made him feel alone. It felt like everyday he was followed by a dark storm cloud, but it only rained on him. Only he saw the darkness. Like a single fish, trekking its way against the flow of the rest of the school, he'd learned it's better to just blend in, and let the current drag him along. The weight of his misery plastered him to his bed. But not today. Today, he let the world in. Today he jumped out of bed with a smile. Today was kayak day.

Fred walked over to the window, and ripped the curtains open the rest of the way. He gazed out at the yard, down the slope, to the dock. Fred's home was on the side of a small backcountry river in the northeast region of South Africa, and every year, on the country's National Holiday, Fred and his father would kayak down the river and spend two nights camping on its rich river bank: living off the land, fishing, hunting, and gathering. It was the boy's absolute favourite tradition. He opened his dresser, and picked out his clothes. He put on his Patagonia vest, one his mother had gifted him before his last trip down the river. It was the last gift she gave him before she was claimed by death's cool whisper. As it stretched over his slim body, he was reminded of her nurturing embrace. Between her arms was where he felt safest in the whole world.

He marched down the stairs and out into the yard. His bare feet tickled by the morning dew on the overgrown grass. His mother did the gardening, and since she'd passed, the plants had developed a mind of their own. Weeds popped up between every crack in the driveway, flowers, once healthy and tamed, lost their colour and turned a wretched black. Fred felt some compassion for the plants, for he too felt like he was losing his way without her. She was the one who made him smile, who kept him in check. Now his grades plummeted, and his room became dishevelled with no one telling him to pick up after himself. His dad was around, but he was a mere shell of the man he used to be. It felt like he was a ghost, roaming the house with the same blank look and the same emptiness that befell his son.

As Fred arrived at the dock, he was met with a puzzling scene. The kayaks, provisions, paddles, and tents sprawled across the dock. His father had clearly been up early preparing, but he was no where to be seen. He checked behind the rusted shack at the start of the dock, in the kitchen, in his father's room and all the bathrooms. His car was in the driveway, but he was no where to be found.

Confused and worried, Fred marched back to the dock, putting his toes in the water, and peaking behind the shrubs that hugged the river bank. There he was. His father lay in the shallow water, with something between his arms. As his father turned to him slowly, he could now see what he was holding. It was a baby gorilla, maybe 20lbs and two feet in length. It was adorable. Fred then noticed the gash on its foot, staining the surrounding waters blood red.

"Quick Fred, go grab the first aid kit" ordered his father.

Fred raced over to the pile of supplies that were laid out on the dock. The pair nurtured the gorilla back to health, and even brought him along down the river. As the years passed, "JoJo" became family. JoJo was Fred's new best friend, and having him helped Fred immensely. The two spent the following years together as chums; JoJo even came to prom. Eventually, JoJo had children of his own, and returned to the wild. But every National Holiday, until the day Fred's father passed, he'd come back, and venture down the river with the pair.



# The Art of the Bucket Shower

David Green

The village of Los Naranjotos recently experienced an inundation of Floaties. Armed with paint brushes, good intentions and a solid work ethic, they flooded the streets of this village leaving a vast swathe of beautifully redecorated houses in their wake. Their brushes did not fall haphazardly upon random slats though; homes were selected by local community leaders against a criterium of need, so that the splashes of color could lighten the lives of those who would feel it with the greatest impact. As ever, we brought a critical perspective to our endeavor. Is giving and helping always positive or can it sometimes be problematic? Can doing good cause harm? How can we be confident that our actions will have impact? Plenty of healthy debate was had with multiple perspectives shared and some rigorous arguments.

We were housed in local homes for the duration of our stay, allowing us to get a little closer to the culture than we might ordinarily do when we visit a port. Not all of the comforts we take for granted were readily available to all, one of which was hot showers with thunderous water on demand and with power-shower pressure. Showers in some of the more privileged parts of the world have become far more than a means of washing off the sweat of a hard day's labor; they have become an indulgence. I once showered in a home in Germany that had 1 overhead nozzle, 1 hand-held nozzle, 6 wall mounted jets and 3 vaporizers. I didn't know which buttons to press, but once I figured it out, it probably took me twenty minutes to work through every permutation of spray. Powering it down felt like decommissioning a nuclear power plant. We have become a species of shower-lingerers. We luxuriate in the spray. We use them not just to clean ourselves but to refresh, to destress, to indulge. In part this is due to the ease of it and the miracle of eternal flow. Turn the tap and the water always comes out, hot or cold. Where does it come from? A pipe. Down the drain, it always goes. To where? Nobody knows. Another pipe. Other people take care of harvesting it; other people take care of its safe removal. We are served a never-ending supply of the most precious resource the Earth has.

When I lived in Bhutan things were less straightforward. In my first house, the water came out of the taps for about 25 minutes a day, usually between the hours of 0600 and 0700. It wasn't so bad for me because I had my own little room and plenty of buckets, so I could usually supply myself for the day. The students in the dormitories weren't so lucky and were always thirsty. Often they'd knock on my door and ask for it. They couldn't flush their toilets properly in the dry season, so it just piled up. In my second house I had no running water in my home but there was a standpipe outside and it flowed reliably, so I could bring enough in. Sometimes I showered outside. In both cases though, and for a year, I became an expert bucket bather, a skill that I was happy to redeploy in Dominican Republic, where we had a mere dribble of cold water from the shower head. I believe in bucket showers. I think they're a good thing. Here's a few tips for having them:

1. Fill the big bucket the night before. The water will be a little warmer and you won't have to wait.
2. The big bucket must stay clean. Use the accompanying small jug as a ladle for removing water from the big bucket.
3. Do not hesitate - like wild swimming, you must steel yourself and dive in.
4. Placement of the first jug throw is crucial. Bend over and pour it over the head without splashing your torso too much. This will tell your body what's coming and lessen the shock when you... Pour the second one straight down your chest, from the collarbone, leaning backwards. The third one goes down your back. Good jug targeting maximizes coverage and brings the cold shock into a manageable - and comfortably invigorating - range.
5. Now soap. You're only doing this once so be thorough. If you're feeling flimsy or its particularly cold, limit application to vital regions: armpits, groin, bum and face (not in that order).
6. Reapply jugs. Good jug targeting now maximises rinse speed. You should be able to achieve full rinse in 5 or 6 throws of the jug.

Community etiquette bonus:

7. Refill the big bucket for the next user while you are drying yourself.

Now, when you look in the big bucket, you will find that you have become an efficient user of the world's most precious resource. Compared to an 11-nozzle power shower, you've hardly touched the sides. But you're clean. And invigorated. All without the indulgence and the associated shower-lingering profligacy. It's just a shower, I hear you cry! But such profligacy has a habit of spilling elsewhere and before you know it you'll be pouring champagne over your cornflakes, leaving your central heating on when you're not at home and taking your private jet out to grab coffee from Starbucks. So my advice to anyone who has the means and the inclination: spend a few months with a bucket. It might help keep you grounded and grateful and maybe even a little curious about how that tap of yours just keeps flowing, when so many others don't.



Image by Rob



Image by Eric S.

