[**Capt Thighbiter**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2303-capt-thighbiter/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 475 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Brentwood, NY

[Posted August 31, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=216162) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=216162)

I am needin differnt techniques for torture or punishment used on board ship during GAoP.

Things like keel hauling , but prerferably a bit more obscure then that.

Not to worry mates, its for the lyrics to a song I am writing, no practical application anticipated



[**William Brand**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1471-william-brand/)

* Mercury Malefactor
* 
* 
* Admin
* 8,884 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Logan, Utah
* Interests:My name is William Pace and I live and work as a graphic designer, illustrator and photographer in Northern Utah. I'm married to the lovely Tracy Pace and we have three children. In addition to all things art, I enjoy traveling and meeting new people from every walk of life. I've always been a fan of history, theology, and of course, Pyracy.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSkt-q-HihQ

[Posted August 31, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=216174) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=216174)

Spiking - A man's hand was nailed to the main mast and he was given a knife whereby he might cut his hand lose. He also had the choice of pulling his hand over the large nail head. Either way his hand was destroyed and his lively hood with it.

Over the Barrel - The most common method of punishment aboard ship was flogging. The unfortunate sailor was tied to a grating, mast or over the barrel of a deck cannon.

Keelhauling - The guilty party would be stripped of clothing and a rope would be passed under the ship from port to starboard. The man's hands would then be secured to the rope . Often his legs would also be bound together to prevent him from swimming. He was never weighted down in any way, for this may prevent him from hitting the bottom of the ship. He would then be tossed overboard and a selected group of men would then attempt to the pull the man out of the water, by passing him under the boat and out the other side.

Of course the captain would select the men but it rarely mattered how many people hauled the man out.

If the man was pulled slowly he would most likely drown. The shock of the cold ocean combined with the wake of the moving ship was usually more than enough to cause the strongest man to fill his lungs with sea water.

If the man was pulled quickly, he would undoubtably hit the bottom of the ship, which was covered with razor sharp barnacles. In the end he most likely bled to death from the injuries incurred or suffered a slow painful death from infection.

There was also the possibility that the rope would snap while rubbing against the keel. And then to make matters worse, if the man did actually survive, the Captain could always accuse the crew of doing the punishment incorrectly and order it done again!

With such a cruel punishment facing one's possible future it becomes readily understandable why a crew might mutiny under a cruel Captain. (More to come-- such as when Keelhauling was finally stricken from Royal Navy Law)

Toe The Line - The space between each pair of deck planks in a wooden ship was filled with a packing material called "oakum" and then sealed with a mixture of pitch and tar. The result was a series of parallel lines a half-foot or so apart, running the length of the deck. Once a week, as a rule, usually on Sunday, a ship's company was ordered to assemble into their divisions.

To ensure a neat alignment of each row, the sailors were directed to stand with their toes just touching a particular seam. Another use for these seams was punitive. A miscreant might be required to stand with their toes just touching a designated seam for a length of time as punishment for some minor infraction of discipline. From these two uses of deck seams comes our cautionary word to "toe the line."

Shot Drill - This particular punishment was the norm at Garden Island Naval Prison around the turn of the century. RN sailors were made to carry a 32 pound "shot" - or cannon ball - around a circle, and at a designated point put it down. Then they were to pick it up again and carry it once more for the measured distance. When news of this reached the Sydney newspapers there was somewhat of an outcry, although it did not seem to have much effect.

Mastheading - Often the punishment of midshipmen, who as nearly "officers and gentlemen" were not subject to the physical punishment of the sailors. The delinquent middie was sent to the "crows nest" on the top of the main part of a mast; that is, below the topmast, which was a short mast lashed to the lower mast. There the young gentleman would sit, far above the deck and often above the sea as the ship rolled. He could be there for some hours, as his superior dictated, and might miss meals too.

Lesser punishments...

Cleaning the heads - "Heads" was the name given to that part of sailing ships forward of the forecastle and around the beak which was used by the crew as their lavatory. Although the sea washed the heads clean as the ship pitched, the heads still needed a regular scrub-down with a broom.

Spitting on the deck might mean carrying a spittoon around.

Dirty clothing could mean a sailor was condemned to carry it for a certain time lashed to an oar.

[**MadMike**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1572-madmike/)

* First Mate
* 
* 
* Member
* 251 posts
* Location:Careened near the Gulf of Mexico
* Interests:1712 raid on Dauphin Island, Alabama.

[Posted August 31, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=216187) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=216187)

One of my fav's from "Captured by Pirates" was a group of pirates tying a fellow up and subjecting him to the torture of thousands of mosquitoes... 

Yours, Mike

[**Capt Thighbiter**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2303-capt-thighbiter/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 475 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Brentwood, NY

[Posted September 1, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=216437) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=216437)

Spiking.. I'd not heard that one afore. Thanks, thats what I'm looking for.

Over the Barrel - similar to Kissin the Gunners Daughter, right?

Any one else?

[**Dorian Lasseter**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/137-dorian-lasseter/)

* Where's My Water
* 
* 
* Member
* 3,266 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:The Sea!
* Interests:18th Century reenactment; Maritime, F&I...
Did ECW as well...
All BP firelocks and cannons!

Also enjoy Swordfighting and a good Donnybrook

Got a question for or about me? Ask!!!

[Posted September 1, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=216449) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=216449)

Wolding - taking a short length of line, wrapping it around a person's head at the line of the temples, and using a stick or belaying pin to tighten it like a turniquet (sp), sometimes there would be knots in the line at the temples to cause more pain. Ususlly used to gain information from said torturee...

[**flying-dutch-man**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3186-flying-dutch-man/)

* Deck Hand
* 
* 
* Member
* 67 posts

[Posted September 4, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=216860) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=216860)

a cat o' nine tails. this is a whip-like weapon that had nine slashed wihipps on it.

[**Matty Bottles**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/949-matty-bottles/)

* Notorious Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 891 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Milwaukee, WI
* Interests:Writing, Art, Spending exorbinant amounts of money on action figures, rum, murder.

[Posted September 14, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=218733) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=218733)

I remember reading of a captain who drilled a hole in a heavy block of wood, ordered the offender to insert his finger into the hole, and then hammered a wooden wedge into the hole with the finger, most likely crushing the finger and certainly making it impossible to remove until the wedge had been removed. The offender was then ordered to work the top ropes with this block of wood dangling from one crushed finger.

[**LongTom**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2786-longtom/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 629 posts
* Location:San Francisco or thereabouts
* Interests:"If I was a blackbird, could whistle and sing..." (Hm. I guess I must be a blackbird.)<br>Makin' hats, really big ones.<br>WizKids Pirates series games.

[Posted September 16, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=219057) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=219057)

Let's not forget that horror among horrors: six-water grog!

[edit] Okay, joking aside, three-water grog wasn't instituted until 1740, so six-water grog can't be any older than that. (see history of Admiral Vernon and grog [here](http://www.pussers.com/rum/history))

But it's still truly vile.

[**JohnnyTarr**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3101-johnnytarr/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,082 posts
* Location:Kohler, WI
* Interests:Sailboats, sailing, Geocaching, beer and wine making, cartography, weapon fighting, fiddle.

[Posted September 17, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=219124) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=219124)

Just a thought I had while reading these punishments. Why would a captain reduce the effectivness of a sailor that would be caused by some of these punishments? I understand the need for strict control over the ship but if you did not need the man and he was that much of a trouble why not just pitch him over board? Or are they tring to use him as a visual sign as to what can happen? Should cut out his tounge in that case then.

[**Dorian Lasseter**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/137-dorian-lasseter/)

* Where's My Water
* 
* 
* Member
* 3,266 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:The Sea!
* Interests:18th Century reenactment; Maritime, F&I...
Did ECW as well...
All BP firelocks and cannons!

Also enjoy Swordfighting and a good Donnybrook

Got a question for or about me? Ask!!!

[Posted September 18, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=219276) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=219276)

Aye Ladd...

It would be that grande idea of makin' an example out o' one sailor.... An' for that matter, much of this would be used on 'prisoners' or some such....

The Cat was usually Navy punishment, some o' them others sound like a particular captain's invention, not a widely used practice...

[**Matty Bottles**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/949-matty-bottles/)

* Notorious Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 891 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Milwaukee, WI
* Interests:Writing, Art, Spending exorbinant amounts of money on action figures, rum, murder.

[Posted September 24, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=220535) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=220535)

Well, insofar that I do not even know if the wooden block punishment actually happened, that seems to me to be less a punishment by example and more of a roundabout way of execution. I'm not sure what law limited the punishment of ship captains, but a heavy wooden block dangling from a crushed finger all you scurry about the top ropes seems like a fatal fall waiting to happen.

[**Tall Paul**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1113-tall-paul/)

* Ship's Master
* 
* 
* Member
* 169 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Colchester, Essex. United Kingdom. Britans oldest recorded Town.

[Posted September 25, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=220610) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=220610)

In the Royal Navy, The rules proscribing the appropriate punishment for any given offence where pretty clearly laid out, and whilst I am sure that there were abuses, for the most part, they were adhered to.

The worst Naval punishment was considered to be Flogging Around the Fleet. A grating was lashed to a long boat, and the man to be punished was lashed to the grating. He was then rowed to every ship anchored at that port, and flogged before the assembled crew. Recipients of this punishment often didn't survive.

In the Merchant fleet, there were no such regulations, The captain of a Merchant vessel pretty much had free reign as to what punishments he administered. It is here that the more extreme punishments like Spiking, and the wooden block occurred.

Pirate punishment/Torture was often just as imaginative, Nailing a mans foot to the deck and leaving him out on a heaving deck during a storm for example. (That wasn't just in the film yellow beard.)

In Esquamelling's book "The Buccaneers of America", he describes a number of tortures used to force victims to reveal the locations of hidden valuables.

The only one that I can remember offhand, consisted of driving four wooden stakes into the ground, them tying ropes to the victims wrists and ankles, and suspending him between the four stakes, with the ropes stretched as tightly as possible.

The ropes were then struck with sticks so that the vibrations wracked through the victims body.

"Tall Paul" Adams.

[**JohnnyTarr**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3101-johnnytarr/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,082 posts
* Location:Kohler, WI
* Interests:Sailboats, sailing, Geocaching, beer and wine making, cartography, weapon fighting, fiddle.

[Posted September 25, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=220633) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=220633)

I have also hear of this one being done with wet rope. As the rope dried it would shrink and slowly pull the limbs out of their sockets. Very painfull and you could survive.

[**John\_Flint**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3418-john_flint/)

* Deck Hand
* 
* 
* Member
* 81 posts
* Location:Southern California

[Posted September 26, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=221003) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=221003)

Sounds fun...

[**Cpt. Alva**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3512-cpt-alva/)

* Ship's Master
* 
* 
* Member
* 155 posts
* Location:The Skanktuary
* Interests:Monkeys, Ninjas, Pirates, Mutants, Videogames, Clowns, Robots, Superheroes, Music, Zombies, Dinosaurs, Cowboys, Movies, Art, and everything in between

[Posted September 27, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=221111) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=221111)

Cordingly wrote in "Under the Black Flag" that a man would be forced to place a finger into a hole in a heavy block of wood.......then wedges would be driven into the hole (And the finger) until it swelled up and he'd be forced to carry the block for several hours..........one could easily lose a finger or hand in such a way.........

you don't miss 'em until they're gone.......I sliced one of my thumbs off once......thank goodness for modern surgery........or I might be "Nine Fingers" Alva, instead of "Eats People" Alva........

As far as the wet rope thing goes, it works....but there's a similar torture, that can be done with strips of wet rawhide......not so much a pirate torture as a Native American one, but inventive nonetheless......

they'd wrap a person, mummy-style in strips of wet rawhide, then stake him out in the sun.......as the hide dried, it would TIGHTEN around the person, squeezing them from all sides......victims often suffocated.....

[**JohnnyTarr**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3101-johnnytarr/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,082 posts
* Location:Kohler, WI
* Interests:Sailboats, sailing, Geocaching, beer and wine making, cartography, weapon fighting, fiddle.

[Posted September 27, 2006](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=221140) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=221140)

How about staking a man out below the high tide line and waiting.

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted March 21, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381605) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381605)

I thought this was sort of interesting. It's from the footnotes of the book I am currently entering into my notes, *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete*, Volume I, Edited by J.S. Cummings.

“[Footnote 2] Blasphemy was forbidden on board Spanish ships (*REC*, Ley 33, tit. XXIV, Libro IX) and a sailor found guilty twice was liable to have his tongue pierced with a burning iron (W. L. Schurz, The Manila Galleon (New York, 1939), 272); obstinate offenders were liable to marooning (A. Gschaedler, ‘Religious aspect of the Spanish Voyages in the Pacific during the 15th and early part of the 17th centuries, *The Americas*, IV (1948), 302-15). There was, no doubt, a feeling that blasphemy endangered the lives of all on board by provoking God’s wrath. Gambling was theoretically forbidden, but in fact there was betting on all sorts of things from the next day’s weather to cockfighting. Gemelli-Careri lost a pair of gold and emerald cuff-links to such a bet (Schurz, 271).” (Navarrete, p. 21)

Edit: *REC* stands for *Recopilación de leyes de los reynos de las Indias*.

[**Daniel**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/352-daniel/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 652 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:McLean, VA
* Interests:History, pirates, fiction, writing, writing historical fiction about pirates, jokes, games, law.

[Posted March 21, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381615) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381615)

Ages ago in the Library of Congress, I read about a sailor who was whipped with the "Pizzle of an Elephant," for I know not what hideous offense.

The pizzle is the animal's male copulatory organ, as you might surmise.

[**Calico Jack**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/953-calico-jack/)

* Ship's Master
* 
* 
* Member
* 126 posts
* Location:Port o' Halifax, New Scotland...

[Posted March 21, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381617) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381617)

For actual torture, there is of course that "fine" example of the most terrible of men, Edward Low. R. Scoggins has a brief bit of research at <http://portfolio.agnesscott.edu/rscoggins/freshman/fall/fys/piratesresearch.doc> which samples the "techniques" reported of Low and others, which should be useful for a quick browse.

[**MarkG**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10527-markg/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 587 posts
* Location:Ohio

[Posted March 21, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381630) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381630)

 On 3/21/2010 at 10:36 AM, Mission said:

I thought this was sort of interesting. It's from the footnotes of the book I am currently entering into my notes, *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete*, Volume I, Edited by J.S. Cummings.

“[Footnote 2] Blasphemy was forbidden on board Spanish ships (*REC*, Ley 33, tit. XXIV, Libro IX) and a sailor found guilty twice was liable to have his tongue pierced with a burning iron (W. L. Schurz, The Manila Galleon (New York, 1939), 272); obstinate offenders were liable to marooning (A. Gschaedler, ‘Religious aspect of the Spanish Voyages in the Pacific during the 15th and early part of the 17th centuries, *The Americas*, IV (1948), 302-15). There was, no doubt, a feeling that blasphemy endangered the lives of all on board by provoking God’s wrath. Gambling was theoretically forbidden, but in fact there was betting on all sorts of things from the next day’s weather to cockfighting. Gemelli-Careri lost a pair of gold and emerald cuff-links to such a bet (Schurz, 271).” (Navarrete, p. 21)

Edit: *REC* stands for *Recopilación de leyes de los reynos de las Indias*.

The spike through the tongue was a common punishment. This was done to colonists at Jamestown who missed church during the martial law period.

Mark

[**Fox**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1019-fox/)

* Old Twillian
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,564 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

[Posted March 22, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381636) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381636)

How gruesome you all are!

Either Monson or Butler (I forget which) tells us that in the early 17thC RN the punishment for being found snoozing on watch was to have a bucket of water poured over your head. If an offender was caught a second time then his arms were raised above his head and a bucket of water was poured down each sleeve. IIRC the third offence carried a beating from all the officers of the ship.

[**Jas. Hook**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11157-jas-hook/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,650 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Long Island NY
* Interests:Fishing & Piracy

[Posted March 22, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381646) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381646)

Pelting prisoners with broken bottles.

Jas. Hook

[**MarkG**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10527-markg/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 587 posts
* Location:Ohio

[Posted March 22, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381677) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381677)

Let's start a round of "What do you do with a drunken sailor?"

Mark

[**Captain McCool**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11102-captain-mccool/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 530 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Golden, Colorado
* Interests:Piracy, of course. Also, skiing, fencing, graphite/charcoal drawing, writing, ren-faires, etc.

[Posted March 24, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381779) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381779)

Haha, oh that's just cruel...

I believe I read somewhere that there existed a punishment for those who urinated in the ballast, wherein they were forced to drink a pint of the same. Apparently urinating in the ballast was fairly common in rough weather when men didn't feel inclined to relieve themselves in the head, where they would be exposed to the elements.

I believe I've also heard about "screwing out the eyes" of certain prisoners, but I don't remember where from. I seem to recall Francois l'Ollonais being mentioned specifically as doing this, but it's been a while since I saw it.

[**Daniel**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/352-daniel/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 652 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:McLean, VA
* Interests:History, pirates, fiction, writing, writing historical fiction about pirates, jokes, games, law.

[Posted March 24, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381788) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381788)

 On 3/24/2010 at 1:57 AM, Captain McCool said:

I believe I've also heard about "screwing out the eyes" of certain prisoners, but I don't remember where from. I seem to recall Francois l'Ollonais being mentioned specifically as doing this, but it's been a while since I saw it.

Sounds like just a distorted version of "woolding," which was mentioned upthread a little ways. If you tightened the knotted rope around the prisoner's head enough, his eyes would burst out. L'Ollonois's men reputedly did that, and Morgan's too. Twisting the knotted rope with a piece of timber would be a "screwing"-like process.

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted March 24, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=381801) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=381801)

Ah, the ballast. I have never heard of such a punishment, but here's some stuff about the ballast. The first is from Stephen Bown's book *Scurvy: How a Surgeon, a Mariner, and a Gentleman Solved the Greatest Medieval Mystery of the Age of Sail*. The second two are from W.R. Thrower's book *Life at Sea in the Age of Sail* (which I admit is not very well documented, but which is extraordinarily tempting to use because it's so graphic)...

“The ships always leaked, and pumps could never keep the water out entirely, so the ballast of gravel or sand became incredibly putrid. Ventilation was poor and the bilge gases so noxious that is was extremely hazardous for carpenters to go below to work in the hold. The stench was unbearable and occasionally men suffocated from inhaling the fumes.” (Bown, p. 15)

"The normal place for voiding in a ship was called the heads; this was in the bows where ‘seats of convenience’, consisting of spaced planks, were provided. The seats on one side were used by the officers and those on the other side by the crew. But it was only possible to use them in fine weather; when the weather was bad – well, you can judge. The effect of this was that the bilges of those sailing ships always contained plenty of human excrement, which was just one more thing that made them, and the whole ship too, foul and smelly. The foul bilge water was to some extent soaked up by any ballast, such as gravel, that the ship was carrying, thus spoiling all attempts to sweeten the hold.” (Thrower, Sea, p. 82)

“In an attempt to concentrate and localize the sea water which was always getting in, most ships had a place called a ‘well.’ This as its name suggests, was a sump in the lowest part of the hold kept clear of ballast or cargo and where the pumps were connected. The wells had dangers of their own due to the accumulation of noxious gases (methane and sulphuretted hydrogen) which sometimes asphyxiated men working in them to clear pump inlets or on some similar job. In naval vessels there was a standing warning about going down a well without first lowering a lighted lanthorns. Another cause of persistent dampness was the constant washing down especially in naval ships, where there was more over-crowding and dirt than in merchantmen.” (Thrower, Sea, p. 36)

[**captscurvy\_nc**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10634-captscurvy_nc/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 488 posts

[Posted April 5, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=382660) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=382660)

 On 9/4/2006 at 8:44 PM, flying-dutch-man said:

a cat o' nine tails. this is a whip-like weapon that had nine slashed wihipps on it.

The best part of this is the condemed had to make the whip himself by unwinding the rope into the nine pieces and knotting the ends. So not only are you beaten but you had to make the weapon that did the damage

[**Tartan Jack**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/4587-tartan-jack/)

* Notorious Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 908 posts
* Location:South Carolina
* Interests:History, Scotland, Batman, Cars, and more<br />Married with 2 kids<br />

[Posted April 5, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=382666) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=382666)

 On 3/22/2010 at 11:50 PM, MarkG said:

Let's start a round of "What do you do with a drunken sailor?"

Mark

"Drunken Sailor"

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus:]

Way hay and up she rises

Way hay and up she rises

Way hay and up she rises

Earl-eye in the morning

Shave his belly with a rusty razor,

Shave his belly with a rusty razor,

Shave his belly with a rusty razor,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus]

Put him in the hold with the Captain's daughter,

Put him in the hold with the Captain's daughter,

Put him in the hold with the Captain's daughter,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus]

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus]

Put him the back of the paddy wagon,

Put him the back of the paddy wagon,

Put him the back of the paddy wagon,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus]

Throw him in the lock-up 'til he's sober,

Throw him in the lock-up 'til he's sober,

Throw him in the lock-up 'til he's sober,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus]

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus]

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

What do you do with a drunken sailor,

Earl-eye in the morning!

[Chorus]

(From <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/greatbigsea/drunkensailor.html> )

Plus:

1. Put him in the long boat till he's sober,

2. Keep him there and make 'im bale 'er.

3. Shave his belly with a rusty razor.

4. Put him in bed with the captain's daughter.

<http://www.thebards.net/music/lyrics/What_Do_With_Drunken_Sailor.shtml>

**Edited April 5, 2010 by Tartan Jack**

[**captscurvy\_nc**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/10634-captscurvy_nc/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 488 posts

[Posted April 6, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=382668) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=382668)

wasn't there a line about "have you ever seen the captains daughter?

**Edited April 6, 2010 by captscurvy\_nc**

[**Tartan Jack**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/4587-tartan-jack/)

* Notorious Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 908 posts
* Location:South Carolina
* Interests:History, Scotland, Batman, Cars, and more<br />Married with 2 kids<br />

[Posted April 6, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=382670) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=382670)

Probably.

There are many, many verses and variations of them.

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted April 6, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=382671) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=382671)

We're getting off topic...Oh, wait, I see! The punishment is imagining you guys singing! Very clever.



[**Tartan Jack**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/4587-tartan-jack/)

* Notorious Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 908 posts
* Location:South Carolina
* Interests:History, Scotland, Batman, Cars, and more<br />Married with 2 kids<br />

[Posted April 6, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=382686) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=382686)

No.

Relevant in how the various details of that song reflect punishments used by/on sailors aboard nautical craft, inc. "pranks" played by sailors on one another.

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

[Posted April 6, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=382688) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=382688)

I don't think you could actually use that as evidence that such things actually happened. The lyrics could have just been something that amused the sailors which happened to fit the tempo of that song. Think about the lovely camp/folk song "Great Green Gobs of Greasy Grimy Gopher Guts." I don't know about any of the camps you guys attended, but those things were never on the menu of the places I went. (The song was, just not the contents.) 

[**Admiral Kilo**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11322-admiral-kilo/)

* Deck Hand
* 
* 
* Member
* 75 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:West Coast
* Interests:To many to list right now, may update later.

[Posted June 16, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=386549) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=386549)

I confess, I only glanced over the previous posts, but I thought I would share that I read somewhere that pirates rarely used torture as punishments. When punishments were used it was a bit more reasonable, but many pirate crews became pirate crews having mutinied against a navy fleet. The reasons being the low pay, unfair treatment, torture methods/punishments used, etc. All-in-all, life was somewhat crappy. So, they mutiny and become a democracy, making things fair and everything divided evenly so no man is making practically no profit while the higher-ups get rich.

[**Daniel**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/352-daniel/)

* Pyrate Captain
* 
* 
* Member
* 652 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:McLean, VA
* Interests:History, pirates, fiction, writing, writing historical fiction about pirates, jokes, games, law.

[Posted June 17, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=386594) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=386594)

 On 6/16/2010 at 5:39 AM, Admiral Kilo said:

I confess, I only glanced over the previous posts, but I thought I would share that I read somewhere that pirates rarely used torture as punishments. When punishments were used it was a bit more reasonable,

Depends on who was the victim. You're right that pirates very rarely punished their own crew with flogging or other tortures. But they tortured prisoners all the time. The Port Royal and Tortugfa buccaneers were particularly notorious for torturing prisoners. It wasn't even that remarkable by the standards of the time; Thirty Years' War mercenaries had routinely done the same nasty stuff to anyone unlucky enough to fall into their hands.

 Quote

but many pirate crews became pirate crews having mutinied against a navy fleet.

There's where you're mistaken. Not a single pirate crew is known to have got its start by mutinying against a naval captain (much less a whole fleet). Several pirates did start out as mutineers - notably Every, Lowther, Culliford, Fly, and Gow - but all these mutinies occurred on merchant or privateer vessels, not navy ships. The reason is pretty clear: private ship owners kept crews small, so you only needed to recruit a few followers to organize a successful mutiny. Nut navy ships had huge crews, which required a large force to overcome, and every man you brought into the plot was one more potential informer. Plus, navy ships were patrolled by large forces of rigidly disciplined marines, a major impediment to mutiny. On the rare occasions that Royal Navy ships did mutiny, it was often a bloodless affair, with the crew essentially going on strike rather than physically attacking their officers, and they were usually just demanding back pay or better rations rather than seizing the ship for piratical purposes.

Of course, some navy sailors did become pirates, but only after deserting or simply being paid off and discharged, not because of a mutiny.

[**Gumbatz**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11249-gumbatz/)

* Deck Swabber
* 
* 
* Member
* 36 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Jacksonville FL
* Interests:Live Steel, Black Powder, Fight Choreography, Festival Management.

[Posted June 17, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=386651) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=386651)

 On 4/6/2010 at 1:17 AM, captscurvy\_nc said:

wasn't there a line about "have you ever seen the captains daughter?

That would be a Thighbiter lyric, I do believe? Captain?

[**Capt Thighbiter**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2303-capt-thighbiter/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 475 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Brentwood, NY

[Posted June 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=386677) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=386677)

 On 6/17/2010 at 10:07 PM, Gumbatz said:

 On 4/6/2010 at 1:17 AM, captscurvy\_nc said:

wasn't there a line about "have you ever seen the captains daughter?

That would be a Thighbiter lyric, I do believe? Captain?

Ah, Guvnah, good to hear from ye again. Alas, while we use the lyric, tis not of our own creation. I believe this is a 'rennfaire' added lyric, not part of the traditional lyrics for the tune. But who knows. "Drunken Sailor" has been around a long time, being at the height of it's popularity around 1710 or so. In the interim period, there is room for almost anything to have been sung to it.

[**Fox**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1019-fox/)

* Old Twillian
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,564 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

[Posted June 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=386692) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=386692)

 Quote

...But who knows. "Drunken Sailor" has been around a long time, being at the height of it's popularity around 1710 or so...

This being Twill, I feel justified in asking whether there's any evidence of the song that early?

[**Admiral Kilo**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/11322-admiral-kilo/)

* Deck Hand
* 
* 
* Member
* 75 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:West Coast
* Interests:To many to list right now, may update later.

[Posted June 18, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=386700) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=386700)

Ok, I was misinformed about mutinies, but I double checked what I'm about to say this time.

What Do You Do With A Drunken Sailor was first reproduced in printed form in 1824-25, according to Wikipedia, Songfacts, and a few other sites, but I can't find anything online about the book called "*Cole's Selection of Favourite Cotillions*" which is what the sites say it was published in. Various sites agree that it is much older than it's printed form and according to song facts it was the only song the Royal Navy allowed it's crewmembers to sing while on board. The line "Wey, hey, up she rises" comes from raising the sail and/or hoisting the anchor.

[**Capt Thighbiter**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2303-capt-thighbiter/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 475 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Brentwood, NY

[Posted June 20, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=findComment&comment=386749) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/8429-torture-and-punishment/&do=reportComment&comment=386749)

Foxe, I will take a look see, can't remember just where I read that. This being Twill, you are justified in asking the question.