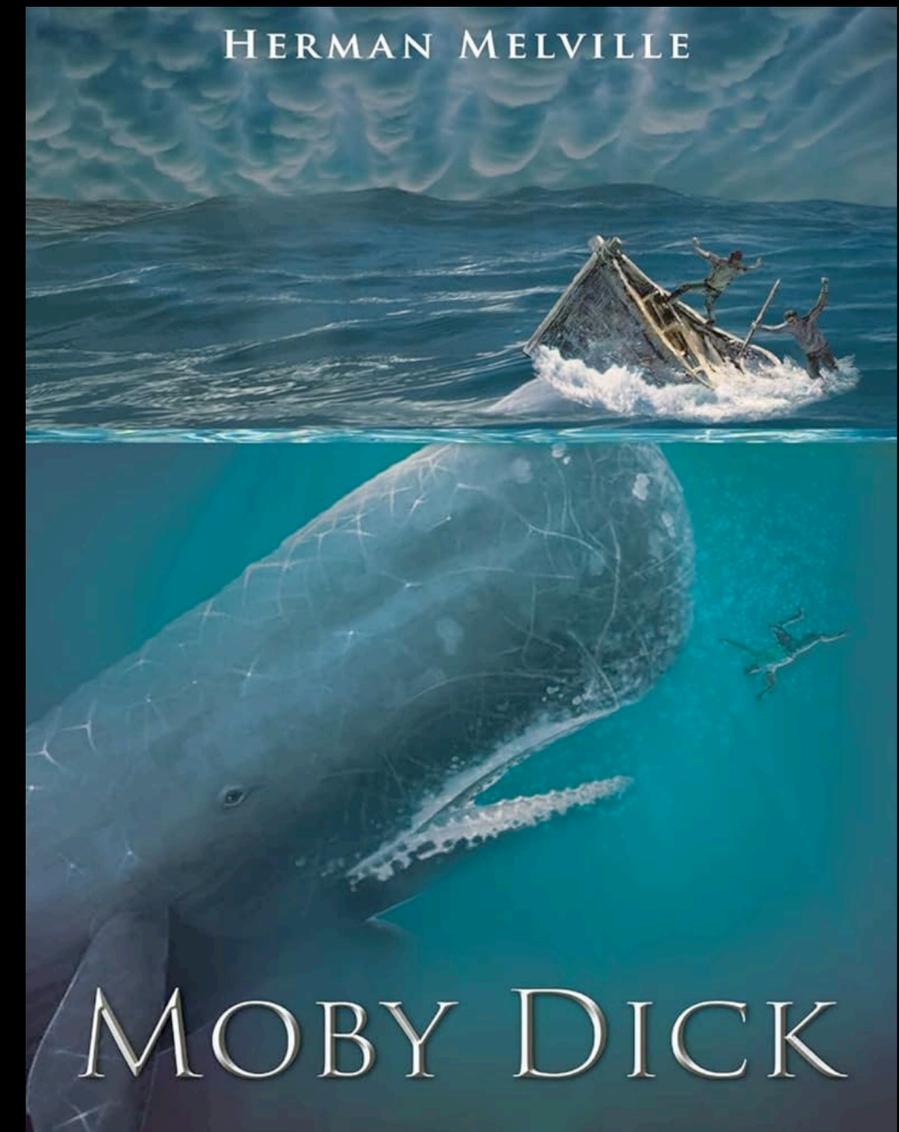


Moby-Dick

ECL 522: American Lit 1800-1860
Professor Jessica Pressman
Fall 2025

Day 15: Chapters 43-57



ADMIN

- Thursday was our best day of closer reading, collaborative conversation—keep it up!
-

ADMIN

- Halloween extra credit??

ADMIN

- You will receive feedback and grades on Essay 1 by the end of the week—maybe sooner— by email.
 - Feedback is intended to support revision.
- Revisions due 11/9 (or before), when Essay 2 is due. .. though you can send them earlier (and should!). Email revisions directly to me, and I will email you back with a final grade.

ADMIN

- Midterm essay grades— this week by email.
- Grading Rubric (for this assignment and all):
- C: attempt at a thesis and attempt at some close reading
- B: thesis and close reading
- A: strong thesis and close reading

ADMIN

- **Common writing problems:**
- No real debatable claim— just summary
- Not proving thesis
- Not making connections between your points
- Not using the text as proof— summary rather than explication

Reminder— Participation grade

Grading Rubric for Classroom Participation

A= attend class regularly, prepared to participate, and participate actively (generously and generatively) in class discussion

B= attend class regularly, prepared to participate

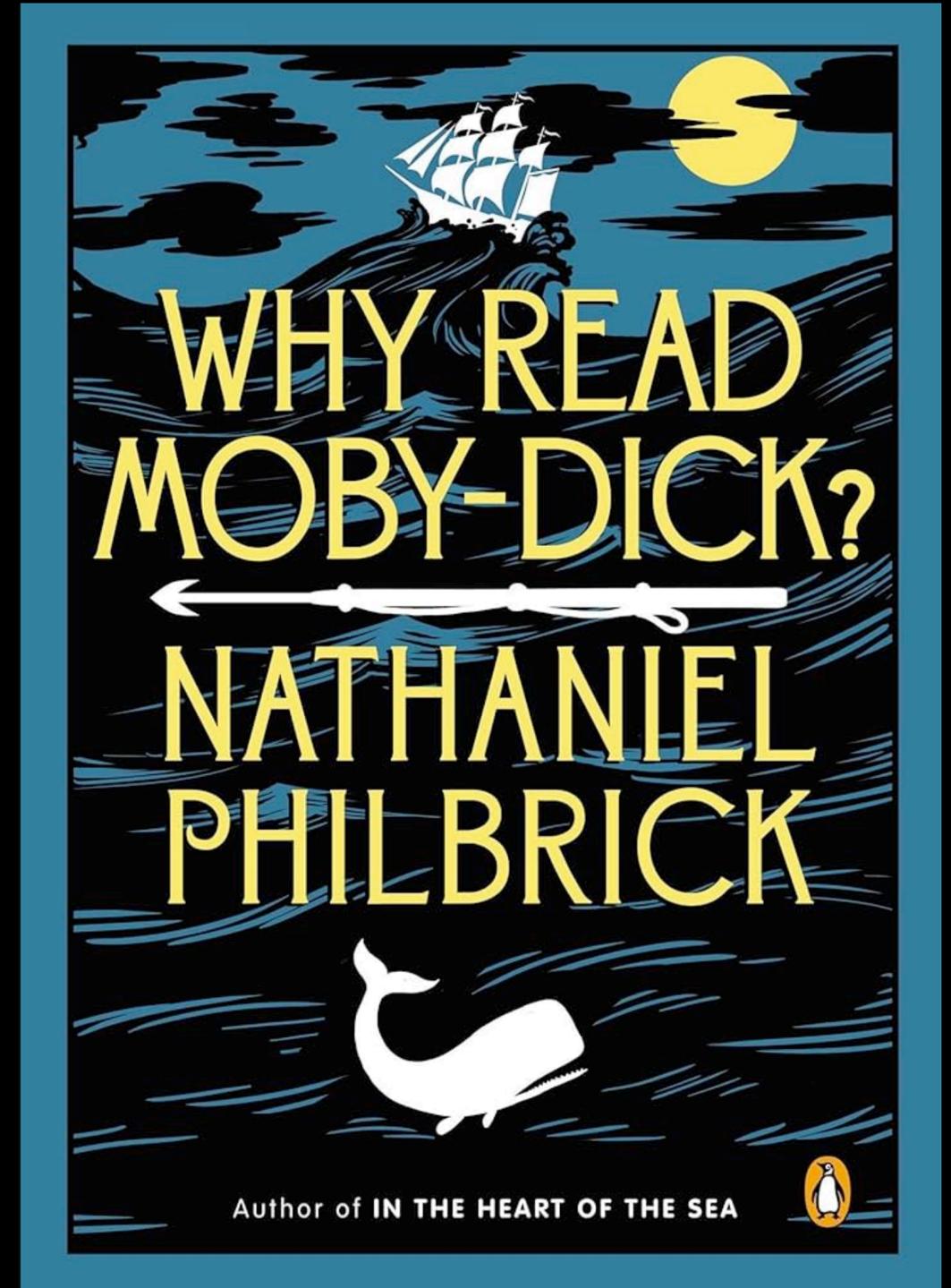
C=attend class regularly

From last time — the relevance of our study

Why Read Moby-Dick?

“Contained in the pages of *Moby-Dick* is nothing less than a genetic code of America” (6)

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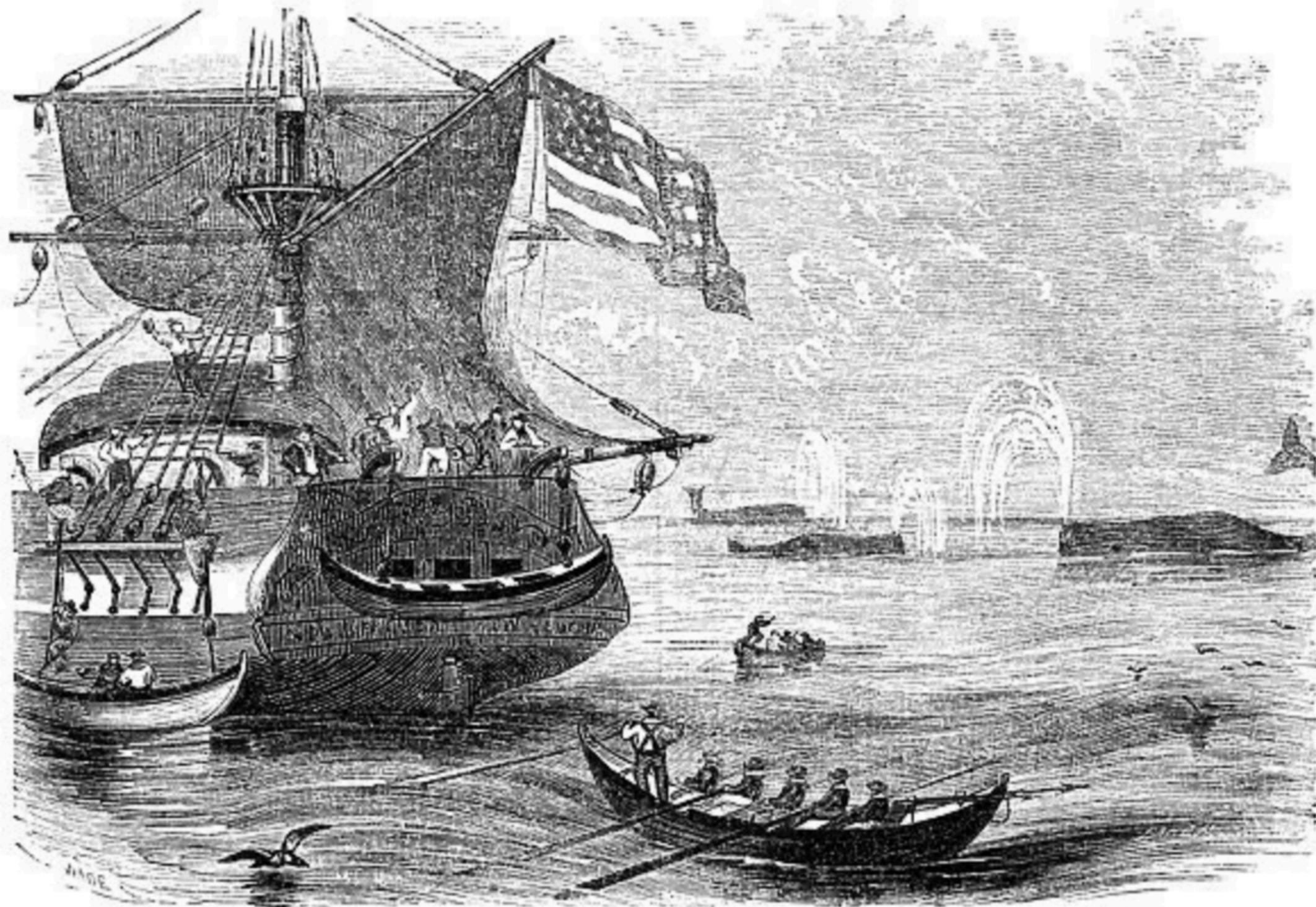


Discussion

- Questions? Concerns at this point?
- Passages to discuss

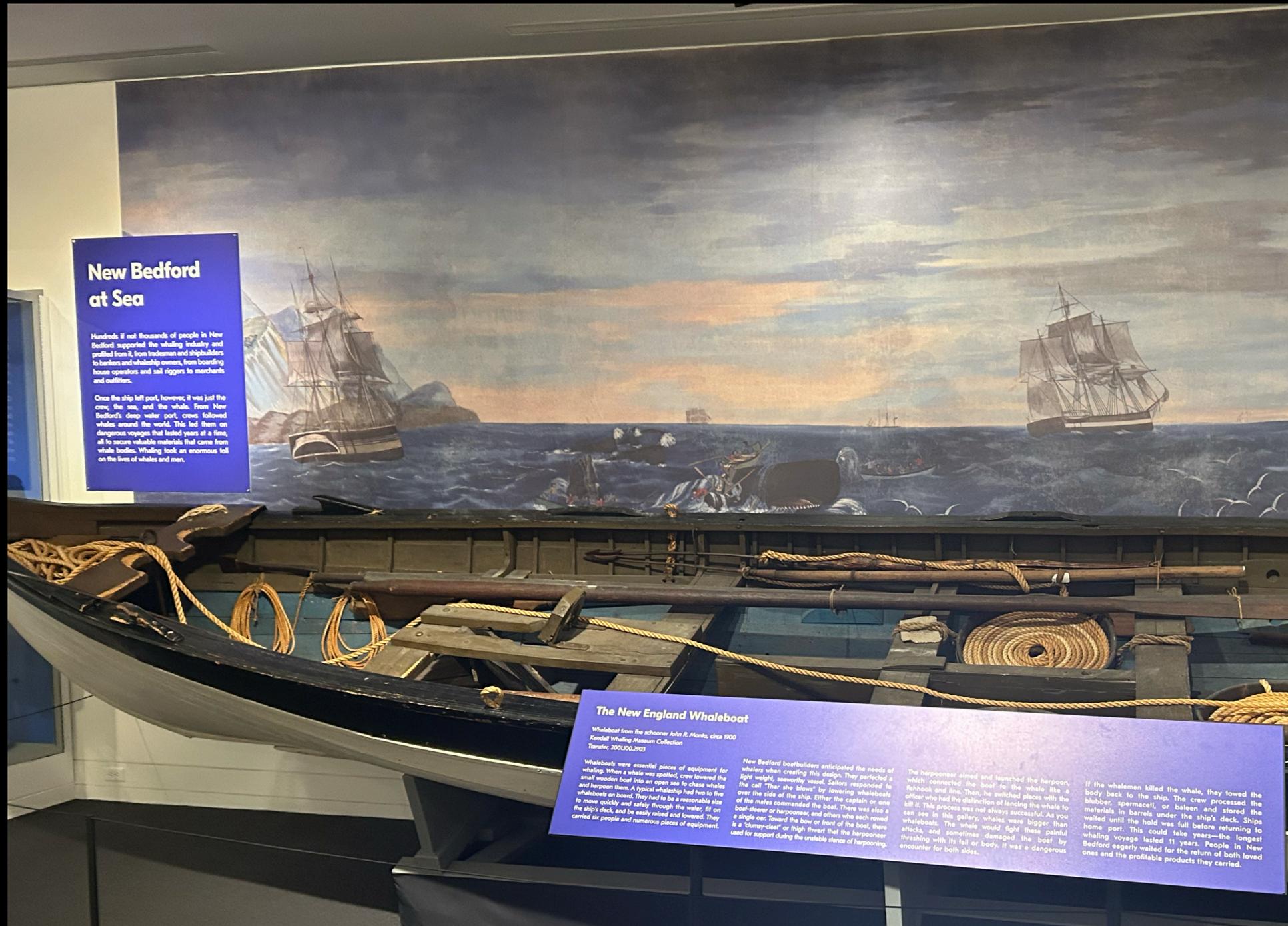
Ch. 48: The First Lowering

Lowering the Boats (1855)



LOWERING THE BOATS.

The boats



New Bedford at Sea

Hundreds if not thousands of people in New Bedford supported the whaling industry and profited from it. From tradesmen and shipbuilders to bankers and whaling owners, from boarding house operators and sail riggers to merchants and outfitters.

Once the ship left port, however, it was just the crew, the sea, and the whale. From New Bedford's deep water port, crews followed whales around the world. This led them on dangerous voyages that lasted years at a time, all to secure valuable materials that came from whale bodies. Whaling took an enormous toll on the lives of whales and men.

The New England Whaleboat

Whaleboat from the schooner John R. Meritt, circa 1900
Kendall Whaling Museum Collection
Transfer, 2001.100.2903

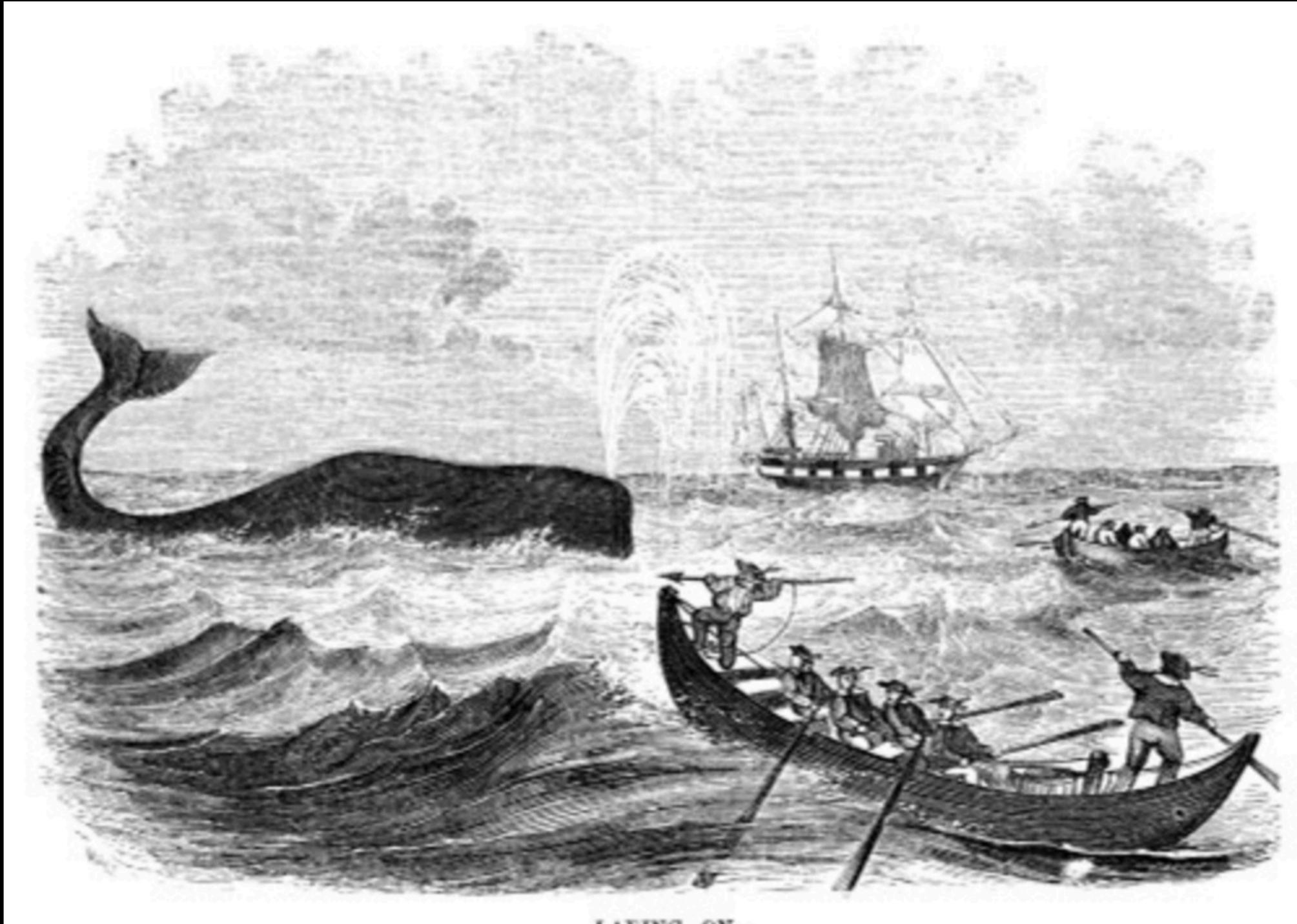
Whaleboats were essential pieces of equipment for whaling. When a whale was spotted, crews lowered the small wooden boat into an open sea to chase whales and harpoon them. A typical whaling ship had two to five whaleboats on board. They had to be a reasonable size to move quickly and safely through the water, fit on the ship's deck, and be easily raised and lowered. They carried six people and numerous pieces of equipment.

New Bedford boatbuilders anticipated the needs of whalers when creating this design. They perfected a light weight, seaworthy vessel. Sailors responded to the call "The she blows" by lowering whaleboats over the side of the ship. Either the captain or one of the mates commanded the boat. There was also a boat-stewer or harpooneer, and others who each rowed a single oar. Toward the bow or front of the boat, there is a "clumey-clear" or fligh flumet that the harpooneer used for support during the unstable times of harpooning.

The harpooneer aimed and launched the harpoon, which connected the boat to the whale like a fishhook and line. Then, he switched places with the officer who had the distinction of lancing the whale to kill it. This process was not always successful. As you can see in this gallery, whales were bigger than whaleboats, and sometimes damaged the boat by attacking, and sometimes damaged the boat by thrashing with its tail or body. It was a dangerous encounter for both sides.

If the whalemans killed the whale, they towed the body back to the ship. The crew processed the blubber, spermaceti, or baleen and stored the materials in barrels under the ship's deck. Ships waited until the hold was full before returning to home port. This could take years—the longest whaling voyage lasted 11 years. People in New Bedford eagerly waited for the return of both loved ones and the profitable products they carried.

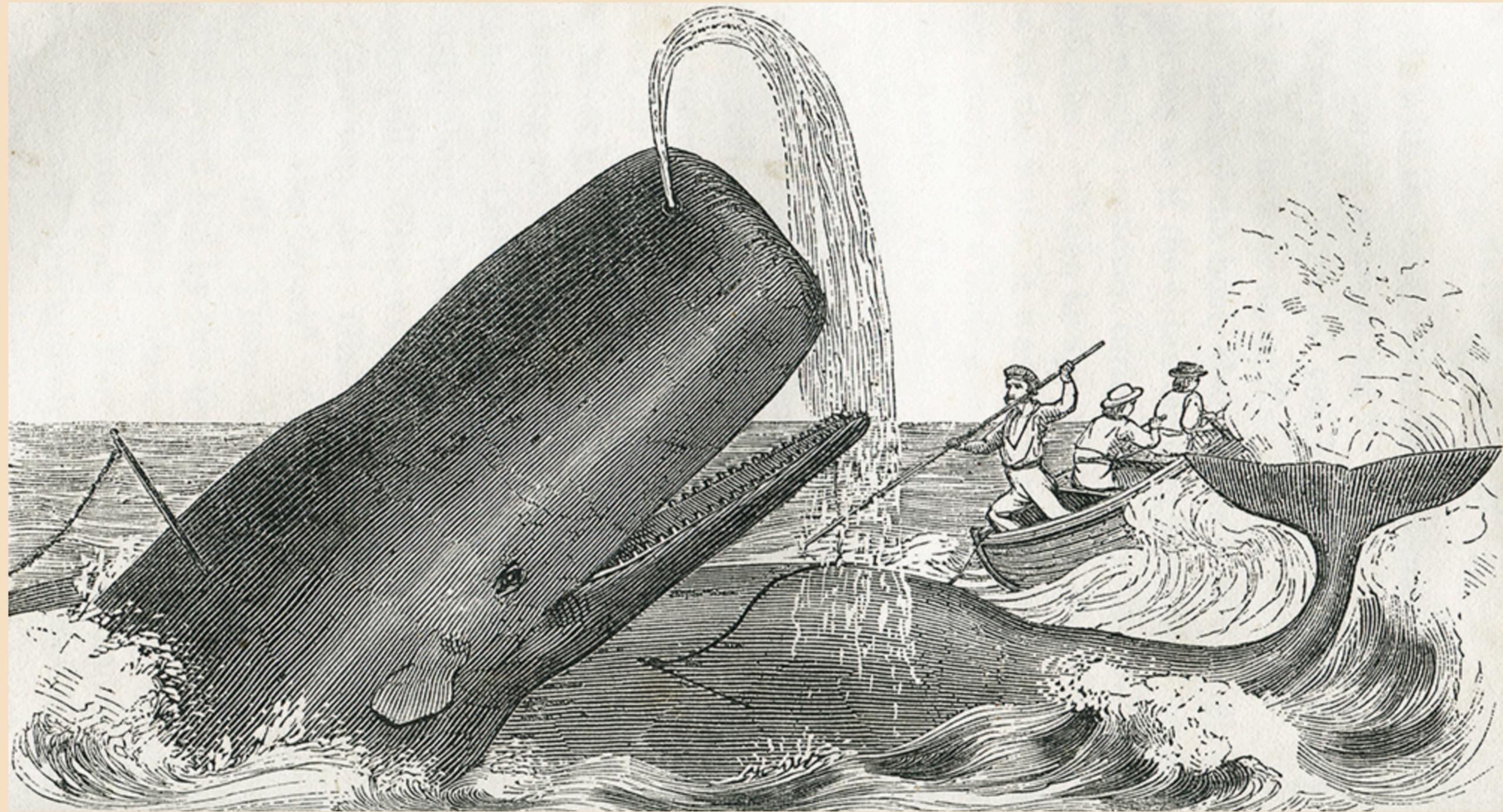
Laying On (1855)



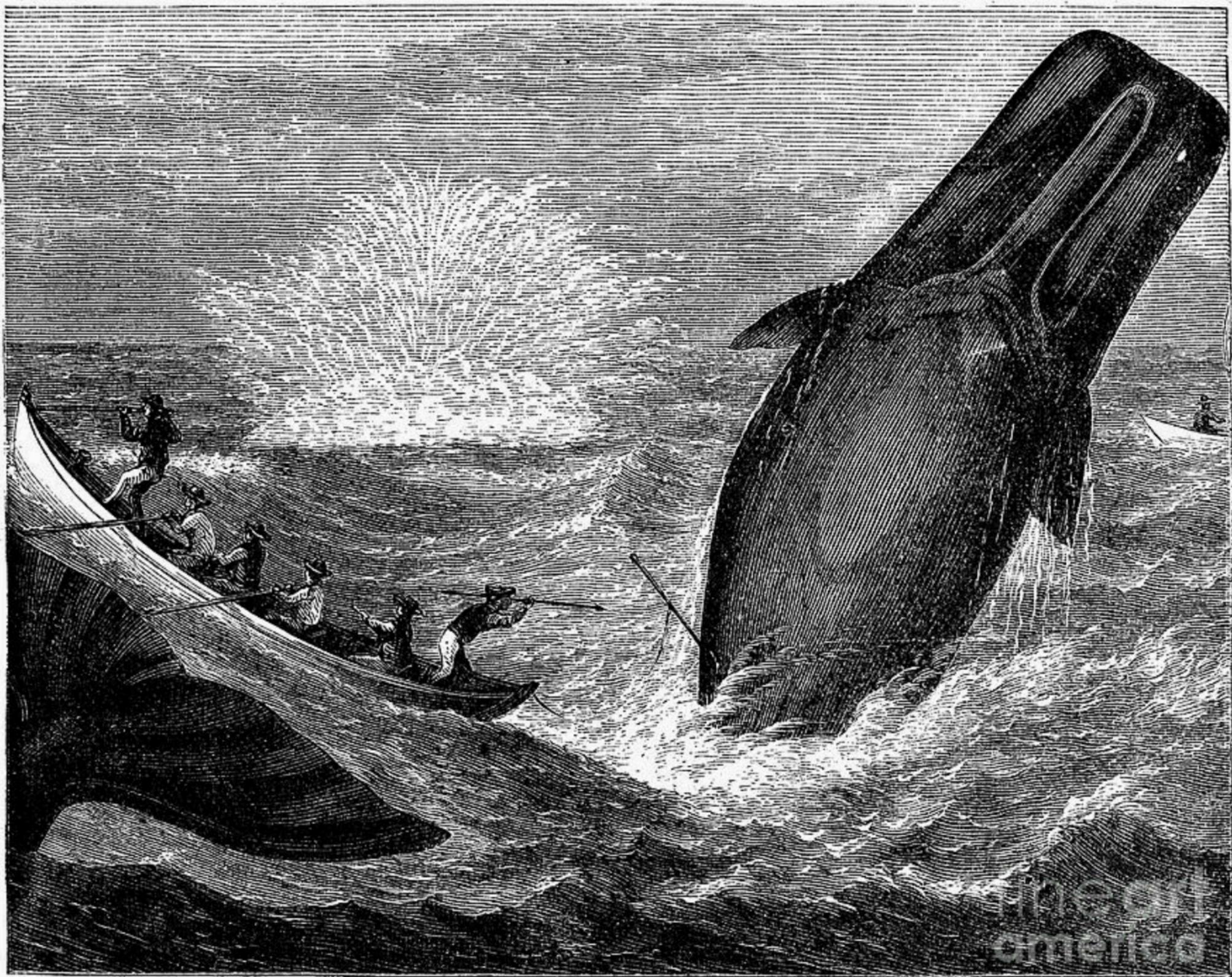
LAYING ON



LANCING A WHALE



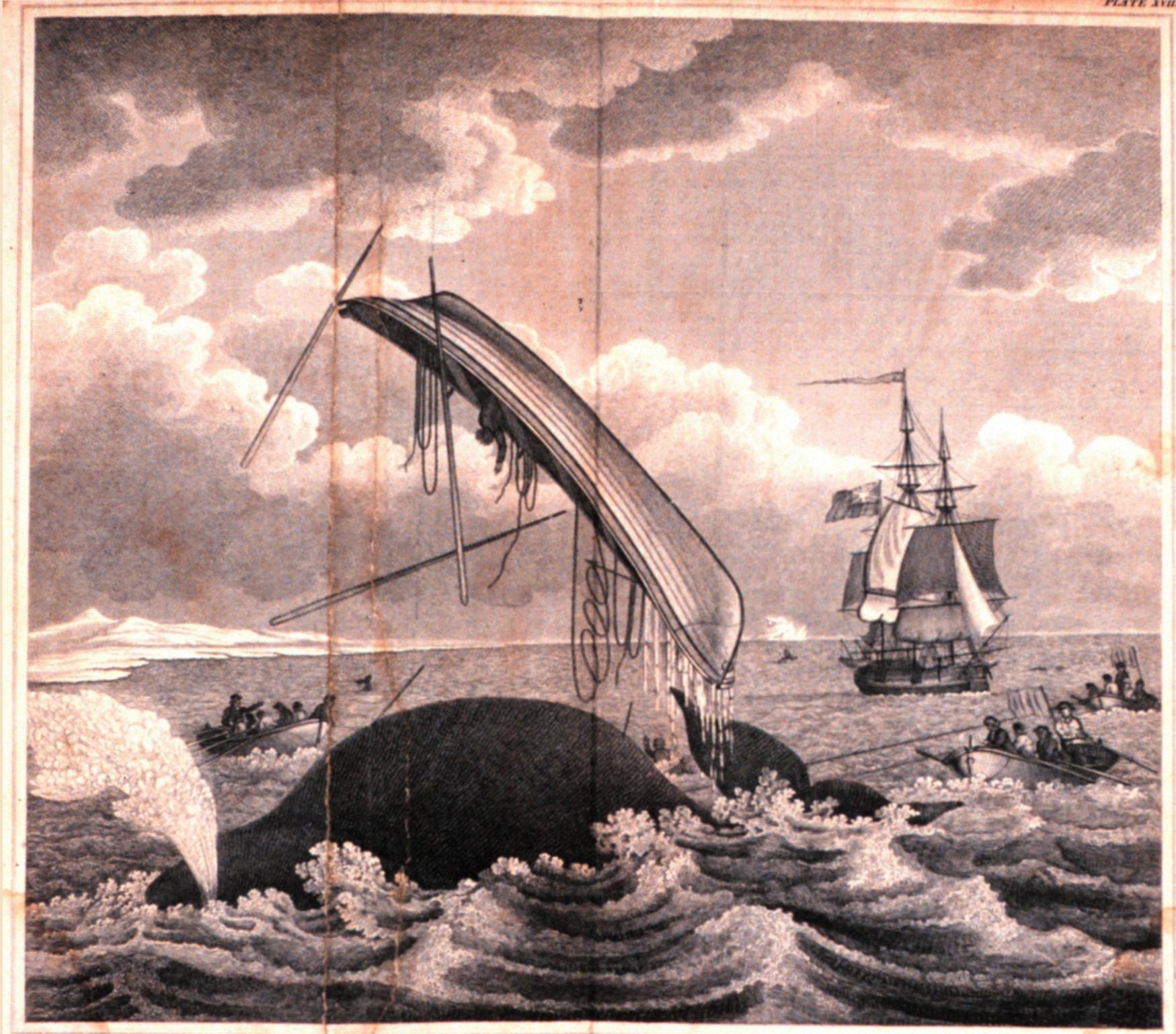
Scoresby



STRUCK ON A BREACH.



Garneray



From an Original Design by James Wakel Esg. Designer Hill.

Engraved by W. D. Lockhart Edinburgh.

DANGERS OF THE WHALE FISHERY.

H. Durand

The Whale Chase

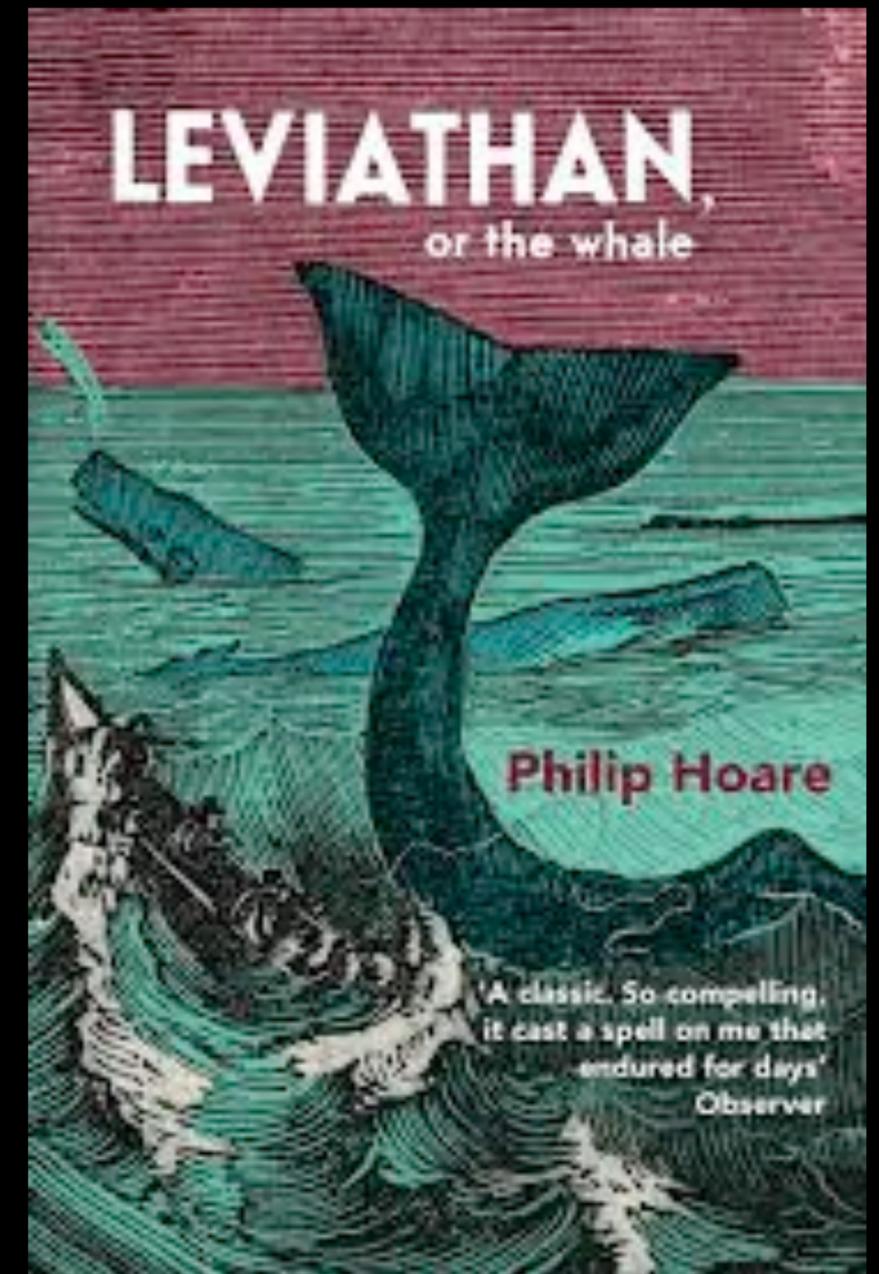
“In the Heart of the Sea” (2015, dir. Ron Howard)

* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98nXj7jF-_A

*

-“On one side, the world’s greatest predator, more legendary than real; on the other, young American heroes, men who risked everything in the pursuit of oil. Theirs was a quest that asserted the myth of America, the great new democracy in which anyone might find their fortune” (Philip Hoare, 173)

-



Ch. 55: Of the Monstrous Pictures of Whales

- Guido Reni's (1575-1642)
- *Perseus* (p. 286)





Pieter Lastman (Dutch, 1583 - 1633), *Jonah and the Whale* (1621),



Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568–1625) - *Jonah Leaving The Whale*

•

Art History/Epistemology

Ch. 55: Of the Monstrous Pictures of Whales

Ch. 56: Of the Less Erroneous Pictures of Whales, and the True Pictures of Whaling Scenes

Ch. 57: Of Whales in Paint, in Teeth; in Wood; in Sheet-Iron, in stone, in Mountains, in Stars

[View full results for 'epistemology'](#)

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epistemology, *n.*

Text size:

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Quotations: [Show all](#) | [Hide all](#) Keywords: [On](#) | [Off](#)

Pronunciation: Brit. [▶](#) /ɪˌpɪstəˈmɒlədʒi/, U.S. [▶](#) /əˌpɪstəˈmɑlədʒi/, [▶](#) /ɛˌpɪstəˈmɑlədʒi/,

[▶](#) /iˌpɪstəˈmɑlədʒi/

Frequency (in current use): ●●●●●●●●

Origin: A borrowing from Greek, combined with an English element; modelled on a German lexical item. **Etymons:** Greek *ἐπιστήμη*, *-OLOGY comb. form.*

Etymology: < ancient Greek *ἐπιστήμη* knowledge (see [EPISTEME n.](#)) + *-OLOGY comb. form...* ([Show More](#))

Philosophy.

The theory of knowledge and understanding, esp. with regard to its methods, validity, and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion; (as a count noun) a particular theory of knowledge and understanding.

[Thesaurus »](#)
[Categories »](#)

1847 *Eclectic Mag.* Nov. 306 The title of one of the principal works of Fichte is '*Wissenschaftslehre*,' which, after the analogy of *technology*..we render *epistemology*.

1854 J. F. FERRIER *Inst. Metaphysic* 46 This section of the science is properly termed the *Epistemology*... It answers the general question, 'What is Knowing and the Known?'—or more shortly, 'What is Knowledge?'

1882 *Athenæum* 20 Oct. 402/2 He divides his work into four sections, dealing with epistemology, ontology, anthropology, and ethics.

Take Aways?