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Time to Eat the Dogs

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Time to Eat the Dogs. Homepage header.

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Time to Eat the Dogs (blog). https://timetoeatthedogs.com/ .

A central goal of this blog is to broaden the conversation about science, history, and exploration and expand it beyond the limits of my own discipline, the history of science. Lots of people—explorers, scientists, anthropologists, literary scholars, and historians—have things to say about exploration. The hope is that this blog will not merely be a platform for my ideas but serve as a clearinghouse of ideas about exploration as it is discussed across its many disciplines.

About the Name

For many polar explorers, dogs served two purposes. They pulled sledges, and when they broke down, they were eaten as food, first by the healthier dogs, and then by the expedition party. Sometimes this happened as a last resort. Sometimes it was a part of a plan, a calculation of food, weight, and distance.

Exploration was difficult, even deadly, work. Explorers had to make decisions with a rational, and at times ruthless, efficiency. This did not always jibe with their public personae however. Explorers were often associated with the noblest traits of the nation, a set of ideals that did not include eating dogs (or other members of the party).

> There is some black humor in the name, but it also illustrates something more broadly true: explorers had to hew closely to complicated, even contradictory, codes of behavior. They were expected to be fiercely patriotic yet were often deeply egocentric. They seemed desperate to escape civilization yet also seemed equally obsessed with their public images back home. For me, these contradictions are the most interesting part of exploration history because they are most revealing about society, culture, and human nature. And they make good stories too. (Text from Michael Robinson)

Time to Eat the Dogs is is a blog about science, history, and exploration. Its podcasts and blog posts are written by various scholars across many disciplines. Books on science, history, and exploration are also featured and reviewed. Popular categories include Expeditions, Explorers, Popular Culture, and Polar Regions. The blog is administered by Michael Robinson , a professor of history at Hillyer College, University of Hartford.

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