



A History of Pirates: Blood and Thunder on the High Seas

Nigel Cawthorne

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This book looks at the reality behind the legends of Blackbeard, Calico Jack Rackham and several other cutthroats who sailed the high seas. It portrays the pirates, their weapons, ships, hideouts...and their victims.

A History of Pirates: Blood and Thunder on the High Seas Details

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Author : Nigel Cawthorne

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From Reader Review A History of Pirates: Blood and Thunder on the High Seas for online ebook

Larry says

Argh, matey, here be true stories of the pirates.

Steve says

This book reads more like a list than a book. Not nearly enough detail where there should be, and far too much of it where there shouldn't be. Badly needed an editor.

Leigh says

I read the first 30 pages and had to put it down. It reads like a 4th grader's book report, complete with random statements and incorrect word usage. I have a minor obsession with pirates, and I was looking forward to learning more, but this book was sadly lacking. Very disappointing.

Adam Fleming says

Pretty interesting book that gives you the straight dope on various pirates throughout history. It paints a picture that's hardly like Capt. Jack Sparrow, and more like a bunch of guys who were normal guys for the most part; they just broke the law every once in a while.

Starbubbles says

This book was awful. And yes, I was full of aw (the origin of awful) in how heinous this book was. I cringe at the thought of it being read by others and thought of as a creditable history. I am not saying the information was falsified, but it was not cited, at all. There were no footnotes, annotated bibliography, or any bibliography for that fact. Most historians will cite their work unless they are from the turn of the twentieth century or before, or are extremely established in their specialty and are lazy. This "author" is not established nor is he specialized in anything. A specialized author in Colonial America would not have made the mistake of stating that John Smith took Pocahontas as a lover. We all know that was something he embellished to sell books.

It bugged me that his currency would change as the book progressed. I understood going from Spanish count of eight to pounds. The power shifted towards England, and well, he is British. What I did not understand was him going to the American dollar for the last chapter or two. America was not an economic power, and made for confusing comparisons to the value of the different ships as the conversion rate was not made known. America's currency was so weak in the beginning that the Spanish Dollar was traded more frequently than the American one, hence America adopting the "dollar" as their own.

I read a book on China's only female emperor (of his) in the store once. The only crossover was his odd fascination with sex. The sexual practices and manuals were quoted in chapters establishing her childhood home and upbringing. I don't even think madams of brothels who have girls, sit down their kid and script out how to do it. I'm digressing, my point was that historians pick a field/subject to specialize in and become an expert in he clearly did not as the two books are in North America 1500s-1800s and China 300s.

Side note: judging from the very few books I saw on his massive list, I would venture that he is a sex historian. This book should have been "Love on the High Seas: A Tale of Blood, Sex, and Treachery on Board a Pirate ship." That would have been an interesting twist on what was a rather dull and poorly written book.

I'm so glad I wasted my first book of the year on this. I was tired of having drivel as my first book of the year, and apparently this year was little better. So much for starting the year with something of significance or value. Yes, I learned things in here, but I need to go back and read other books with actual credibility to ensure that what I read was not gibberish.

I learned a valuable lesson with this book; you get what you pay for, even with a book. I got this new hardback for less than \$8 on a popular topic. Red flag if I ever saw one. I will be applying this lesson to my further book purchases.

This brings me to my last point. Where was his editor? Did he think he not need one, since he himself *is* one? Huge mistake! It got so bad that I had to keep a pen nearby and make corrections. As anyone can tell from reading a review or two; I don't do grammar well. I barely understand the basics, and still can't really identify adverbs. If there isn't an "ly," I'm at a loss. It's a shame because it is written so accessibly. A high schooler could pick this up if they wanted to, read it, and understand it. But a high schooler can't read this because it would enforce the further deterioration of proper spelling and grammar. That was truly the biggest irony of this entire experience. He needed an editor so bad it was sad, and he was one.

Diane Funk says

The book was interesting and mentioned a lot of things I previously knew about pirates and their way of life, but also provided some insight into other pirates of which I was not aware. I read only one other book about pirates since I was a child. I did not realize how often pirates attacked on land and returned multiple times to the same location other than the few ports that were pirate havens. It was fun hearing a little more realistic description of these ports than what has been presented on the screen. One drawback to the book was the fact it seemed to jump back and forth in time in any given chapter. The saving grace was that the chapters dealt with specific subjects with regards to pirates which somewhat held the reader on track.

Leah says

The information was good. I just didn't enjoy the choppy way the information was presented. And he needed another edit before he published it.

Edward Perez says

I think this book would catch a lot of attention to its reader because the description is so intense and glorified. Blackbeard for an example had mythical features to himself, Captain Kidd who was among them. I, an anime reader, payed attention to this book carefully because the anime series One Piece relates in so many ways. This book really helped on how pirates lived and how they adapted to their environment, the weapons they used, the ships they built were pretty wild. Overall, i think this is a really good book for students who like to read about pirates.

Ethan Nahté says

A few minor mistakes throughout the book, but overall Cawthorne's knowledge of pirate history and lore is quite extensive and the book is a must for any reference shelf if one has an interest in pirates or requires research material.

Daniel says

Tot v?zând Pira?ii din Caraibe mi-am adus aminte c? am o carte documentar? despre pira?i. Nu mic? mi-a fost mirarea s? constat c? se cite?te repede (uneori traducerea cu infinitivul simplu m-a scos din ritm) ?i c? are multe informa?ii sociale, nu doar tehnice sau statistice. Pe mine m-a interesat mai mult partea de organizare, ierarhia (c?pitanul era ales democratic), pedepsele (ex. mersul pe scândur? nu era larg r?spândit, în schimb f?r? prea mare b?taie de cap un r?zvr?tit era f?cut „gubernatorul unei insule pustii”) ?i alte obiceiuri (culinare, de vestimenta?ie etc). Succint prezint? ?i tipurile de ambarca?iuni folosite, armamentul, drapelele ?i legile (facultative ?i modificabile). Sunt prezentate evenimentele care au marcat pirateria ?i figurile legendare, cum ar fi Kidd sau Barb? Neagr?. Mi-a pl?cut foarte mult ?i o g?sesc instructiv?.

Andrew says

Informative enough but so full of information that at times it gets a bit tiresome....I saw mention in another review ..and it's a fair point that this info isn't really sourced with a bibliography neither. That said throughout the author will mention some sources and there is a section of suggested further reading which are likely the sources. Certain sections of the book are decent enough..the case studies of certain pirates..the big names so to speak...and also life at sea explained but the politics of piracy can be a tad dry.

Claire says

Instead of a riveting, informative narrative, "History of Pirates" is a disorganized and barely readable clump of anecdotes. Some topics are better fleshed out than others, but the overall book suffers from poor writing, an inattention to detail and an unbelievable number of typos. Now I know why it was relegated to the bargain bin where I found it in Greenwich, England a few years ago. Useful as a reference, but a disappointing read.

Holly says

This is a good history of pirates book, although a little random in it's facts. Nigel Cawthorne is an expert in the subject, but not always great at stringing his sentences in a completely coherent manner.

Lexie Gorjanc says

Lots of spelling and grammatical errors - but otherwise a good book :)

Christopher says

An interesting read. The author focuses mainly on the French and English privateers of the Caribbean, the ones who operated with letters of marque from their government's officials against the Spanish. I find it intriguing that these pirates operated in a very democratic manner, and that "the pirate life" was in many cases preferred to the life at sea normally offered. Being a Floridian and somewhat versed in the Spanish history of the state, I did not know that there was originally a fort (Fort Caroline) founded by French pirate Jean Ribault in what is now Jacksonville, or that Ribault and 350 pirates and settlers were captured and executed near Fort Matanzas by Pedro Menendez de Aviles (the founder of St. Augustine).

This editon of the book, while interesting, is fraught with editorial, spelling, and grammar errors, as well as continuity errors. It feels like the book was thrown together by the publisher quickly and badly, with some portions of the original text possibly missing. It appears to have been licensed from the original British publisher.
