

On the whole this is a useful collection, with contributions by leading and emerging scholars, that can serve as a good introduction to the field and to recent historiography. The topics and approaches are generally traditional, with the balance largely weighted towards nonconformity and towards well-known intellectuals and theologians. This is not necessarily a criticism; indeed in many ways these foci serve to reinforce the collection's introductory bent. On the other hand, that does not mean there are not missed opportunities. There is little consideration of different types of popular conformity and nonconformity in the 1660s and beyond. The ways in which ordinary men and women responded to uniformity, and how their responses compared to more elite forms of action and engagement explored elsewhere in the collection, is thus unclear. It also should be noted that women do not make much of an appearance at all in this volume. These omissions are particularly noticeable given the tremendous amount of recent scholarship in these areas for the 1630s, 1640s, and 1650s. Readers are left to wonder about or try to extrapolate reasons for these exclusions since the introduction does not explain the process of article selection or the wider aims of the collection as a whole. If the intent is to offer some grounding in the field and to present an array of recent approaches to traditional events and familiar figures, this is certainly successful. If the hope is to energize scholarly conversation on uniformity in the 1660s more broadly, the collection also offers rich platforms upon which to build.

Margarette Lincoln. *British Pirates and Society, 1680–1730*. Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. Xiv–271 pp. +22 Illus. Review by LARRY BONDS, McMURRAY UNIVERSITY.

Margarette Lincoln's *British Pirates and Society, 1680–1730* is a rich, thoroughly researched, and well-written cultural history of the so-called "Golden Age of Piracy." Although the book deals with pirates from the late Seventeenth to early Eighteenth century, Lincoln opens her book with an anecdote drawn from a 2001 news story in London's *Metro*, whose front-page headline reads, "Saved from pirates by a message in a bottle" (1). The story reports how an attack by Somali

pirates, who had captured a cargo vessel near Cape Horn, was thwarted by the ship's crew who availed themselves of the old fashioned communication technique of tossing a bottle with a message in it from a porthole of their commandeered ship into the sea. The bottle was picked up by crewmembers of a NATO vessel who directed a British Special Forces unit to intercept and take the miscreants into custody. The relevance of the anecdote is that pirates and piracy still exert a strong appeal to the popular imagination. Present-day audiences still feel a profound fascination with the culture of piracy, and Lincoln's book is an excellent way for both scholars and general readers to satisfy that curiosity. Our present-day fascination with piracy is, of course, reflected in the tremendous popularity of *The Pirates of the Caribbean* movies and of the Starz cable television series, *Black Sails*.

As its title suggests, the book focuses specifically on British piracy and very little on the piratical practices of crews from other nations. In particular, Lincoln is careful to note that her study does not deal with pirates from the Barbary Coast of North Africa. The focus on British piracy, however, seems justified and is not particularly narrow, for the fifty years with which Lincoln is concerned roughly coincides with the heyday of Britain's establishment of its vast overseas colonial and commercial empire. In addition, a sometimes blurry demarcation existed between criminal piracy and the acts of government-sponsored privateers. Privateers were non-governmental entrepreneurs who had been issued letters of marque by their governments during war time. Privateers, as their label implies, were civilians who were legally permitted to attack and capture the ships of Britain's official enemies. In return for a large share of the proceeds of their activities, privateers could engage in naval battle and help Britain with its wars. The issuing of letters of marque appealed to British governments that did not have to train, equip, and pay the civilian military crews of privateers, whose pirate-like activities enriched the royal treasury with little to no cost to the government.

Part of Lincoln's compelling analysis of British piracy is her tracing of the attractiveness of piracy to British subjects. For contemporary accounts of pirates and piracy, Lincoln studied widely in primary source materials in the British Library, The National Archives in Kew, London, Daniel Defoe's *A General History of the Pyrates of*

1724 (and many of Defoe's other works that touch on pirates and piracy; Defoe scholars will find much that is useful and entertaining in this book.), and the resources of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, where Lincoln was employed while writing. Lincoln's extensive research suggests that, for the urban and rural British poor of the era, stories of pirates and piracy were strongly appealing. Real, if rather romanticized, tales of the freedom, riches, and power of the pirate lifestyle had a wide appeal to readers of newspapers and books about the lives of famous pirates. Moreover, Lincoln shows that the crews of private merchant vessels were often poorly paid, overworked, and generally abused by their captains, and the temptation to "turn pirate" and overthrow abusive shipmasters and lead a buccaneering life was often overwhelming. Furthermore, a big part of the attraction of becoming a pirate was the often democratic manner in which many pirating ships conducted their business. Impoverished merchant crews who had been abused by their captains were naturally drawn to the alternative ship governance offered by the consensus-building with which pirate crews were often run.

Of course, if the rewards of piracy (wealth, political power, fame, and dignity) were potentially great, the punishment that awaited those men (and even some women) convicted of piracy were extraordinarily harsh—at least by present-day standards. Lincoln pays particular and fascinating attention to pirates and their treatment by the British criminal justice system of the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Centuries. Lincoln explores in great depth criminal trials of pirates, the prisons and gaols (jails) in which pirates were held while awaiting trial and execution, and the execution of those convicted of piracy.

The judicial mechanisms for trying those accused of piracy is a fascinating and important aspect of Lincoln's book. The legal requirement that pirates be returned to Britain for trial presented huge logistical challenges for British captains engaged in capturing and administering justice to accused pirates. Not only did the pirate have to be brought to London, but witnesses to the pirate's crimes had to make the arduous and many-months-long voyage across the ocean(s) to give testimony. After 1700, British lawmakers corrected this inefficiency and allowed captains and colonial governments to try pirates in overseas courts much closer to the scenes of their crimes. Famously, Captain William

Kidd was the last British pirate to be returned to London for trial, as Parliament under William III passed an act that allowed the Lord High Admiral to have trials conducted wherever he had jurisdiction. One efficiency of the Admiralty's new system of dealing with pirates permitted these trials to be civil-law procedures instead of common-law trials, which meant that these criminal trials could be conducted without affording the accused pirate the time-honored safeguard in English law of trial by jury of peers.

The book tells significant parts of the stories of more than forty such pirates including Anne Bonny, Bartholomew Roberts, Blackbeard (Edward Teach), Edward (Ned) Low(e), Henry Avery, Henry Morgan, James Mission, John ("Calico Jack") Rackham, John Bannister, John Gow, John Hopton (Aka Upton), Mary Read, Stede Bonnet, Thomas Carew, and Captain William Kidd. Of all of these famous pirates, perhaps the most interesting story is that of last in the previous partial catalogue of the pirates Lincoln deals with, Captain William Kidd (probably January 22, 1645 to May 23, 1701). The son of a Scottish sea captain named John Kidd, who was lost at sea, William Kidd probably served some of his early seagoing life on board a pirate vessel, for he "was a low-class mariner who [. . .] had emerged from a gang of buccaneers" (121). After apparently being elected in an egalitarian manner to the rank of Captain "by his privateering crew" (121), William Kidd was at one time actually officially commissioned himself to catch pirates. Much of Kidd's so-called piratical activities occurred in a legally ambiguous situation (evidently also experienced by a number of other pirates) in which colonial governors traded with him and approved of and profited from his behaviors. While he was trying to capture Kidd in the West Indies, for instance, Rear-Admiral John Benbow accused the Governor of the Virgin Islands of "trading with Kidd," which was a violation of "the law of nations" (58). Furthermore Kidd's imprisonment was much longer (April 1700 to May 1701) than the sixty-day span between assizes because his "was a special case that might implicate members of the House of Lords, so his trial was postponed until Parliament could be reconvened the following spring" (27). Besides his evident backing among members of the House of Lords, King William III himself, along with "a group of Whig aristocrats" (no doubt the very MPs whose connection to

Kidd required the postponement of his trial) countenanced Kidd's prize-taking ventures for a ten percent share of the profits (121). The deal with Kidd stipulated that King William "was to allow any booty that Kidd brought home to be processed independently of the Admiralty courts so that there would be no deductions for administration and sponsors would reap full benefit" (121). With sponsorship of important lords and the king himself, it is small wonder that Kidd felt licensed to take practically whatever ships he chose. Besides King William and his aristocratic cronies, Kidd also apparently had trade deals with American colonial governors of New York (which Kidd used as his home base for privateering operations) and New England until, Richard Coote, Earl of Bellomont, was appointed their governor. Bellomont had been given strict instructions to suppress piracy and did not want to be seen as accommodating pirate operations in his colony as his predecessors had been. Bellomont's immediate successor, by the way, the Tory Colonel Joseph Dudley, was accused by his political opponents of taking bribes from the pirate crew of John Quelch for letting the men exercise in the colony's prison yard. Piracy as well as its punishment was apparently good business in the colonies, too.

Kidd came to particular international notoriety for his prize-taking in the Indian Ocean that "seriously harmed Anglo-Indian trade" (97). Kidd and his crew took a ship named *Quedah Merchant*, an Indian trading vessel, in 1698, an action that inspired Indian officials to place British East India Company factors under house arrest. According to Lincoln, "Trade was suspended at Surat, and the Mogul Emperor Aurangzeb demanded hefty compensation" (97).

When finally apprehended in Boston, Kidd "was already infamous and known as 'the Wizard of the Seas' for his exploits" (41). The tone of this description of Kidd indicates that there was more than a little popular admiration for his abilities in England and her colonies. This admiration also suggests that Kidd would have a sympathetic court of public opinion—at least for some of the arguments he made in his defense at trial. For instance, members of Kidd's crew testified against him in exchange for pardon—rather similar to the tactics often prosecutors use in criminal trials to this day. Kidd asked his crewman who testified against him, "Are you not promised your Life, to take away mine?" (65-66). Many contemporary readers of this piece

of testimony would have found good reason to doubt the veracity of testimony given in order to save the lives of the criminal witnesses.

Kidd's imprisonment in Newgate before his trial was exceptionally long and harsh, and one of the most interesting aspects *British Piracy and Society* is the rich detail about life in British jails for those, such as Kidd, who were accused of piracy. Prisoners were required to pay for their incarcerations—including food, soap, clothing, bedding, and other items supplied at governmental expense nowadays. Well-to-do prisoners could pay for expensive food, drink, candles, and private cells, while poor prisoners were forced to drink filthy water and sleep more than one a bed or even on the prison floor without protection from the cold. Charities might provide food for prisoners, but the prisoners had to pay for it to be cooked. Prisoners could pay to have heavy chains replaced with lighter ones or removed entirely. Men and women were not segregated, and women, who would prostitute themselves in jail in order to survive, often became pregnant in prison and even gave birth there. Filled with disease-causing vermin, prisons were sinks of sickness—so much so that Typhus was known as “gaol fever” (28). Lincoln's scholarship on the condition of British prisons will be useful to students of the subject.

Captain Kidd's trial, like the trials of many accused of piracy during the period, was a media sensation. Kidd was tried at the Old Bailey, and *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey* gives printed lurid accounts of Kidd's trial as well as of the trials of many other pirates of the era. An important source of details about pirate trials was the Ordinary of Newgate's Accounts. The Ordinary was the prison Chaplain, and as such he had frequent and easy access to accused persons—from the time they were incarcerated in the prison to the precise moment of their executions. While it may seem ironic to modern readers that a minister would try to profit from publishing stories about the souls he was supposed to try to save, one of the points of the Ordinary's Accounts was “to show how his ministrations succeeded in bringing sinners to repentance” (40). The Accounts sold particularly well because the typical Ordinary's story about an inmate at Newgate provided “colourful detail for people to chew over at social gatherings” as well fanciful reporting (sometimes published even before sentence was carried out,

so the Accounts could capitalize on sales on the day of execution!) of the condemned person's final words from the gallows (40).

The drunken Captain Kidd (who was plied with spirits by spectators as he was carried by cart to the gallows) was hanged at execution dock on May 23, 1701. It was necessary to hang him twice as the short, weak rope used (the better to strangle him with instead of quickly and mercifully breaking his neck) snapped on the first attempt; the second attempt worked. Execution Dock was an actual Thames-side platform over which high tides would flow and submerge the bodies of convicted pirates such as Kidd. According to Lincoln,

Hangings were staged at low tide, within the tidemarks, to show that the pirate's crimes had been committed within the jurisdiction of the Lord High Admiral. The operation required careful measurement: the man had to be hanged so that his feet at least reached below the high water mark and would be covered when the tide rose. (35)

The body of the condemned pirate had to remain on the Execution Dock until the tide rose over the body at least three times. Kennedy states that the thinking behind this practice was that the rising water was "symbolically cleaning the pirate of his sins" after which the body could be cut down and disposed of (37). A hanged pirate's body might be buried in "an unmarked pauper's grave," claimed and buried by relatives, "sold to surgeons for dissection," or destined to be "gibbeted"—hanged beside the river for semi-permanent display to warn British sailors of one of the possible consequences for turning pirate (37). After his hanging, Captain Kidd was gibbeted. His body was wrapped in irons, painted with tar to preserve it, and left publicly hanging on the shore of the Thames (The common riverside places for this gruesome, cautionary display were Greenwich Marsh, Deptford, or Tilbury Point; Kidd's body was left at Tilbury in a hanging cage and wrapped in irons for over twenty years, where "[h]is remains would have been visible to passing shipping for an hour or more" (37–38). Lincoln reprints a copy of a fascinating nineteenth-century woodcut showing Kidd's chain-wrapped body on display by the Thames.

Apparently soon after his hanging, some of Captain Kidd's story entered the popular entertainment media in the form of a popular ballad, "Captain Kid's Farewel to the Seas; or, the Famous Pirate's

Lament” (13–14). The ballad was printed as a broadside for sale and apparently engages in class-conscious political discourse, for Lincoln says that Kidd’s crimes in the ballad

are not depicted in heinous terms. Verses recounting how Kidd plundered a series of prizes pointedly describe these ships as foreign-owned, often the property of rich merchants, and lower-class English audiences would not be unduly affected by such depredations. The chorus, joyfully emphasizing the treasure Kidd amassed does not seem at all condemnatory.... (14)

From that time to the present, Captain Kidd’s legend has served as the lucrative inspiration for fiction, films, bars and restaurants, and folk festivals—as a quick glance at online encyclopedia articles shows. Lincoln herself observes, “Piracy as a cultural theme has become highly marketable today” and points out that printed materials associated with the legends of the pirates Kidd and Avery have earned writers money from their days to ours (218). In other words the very idea if piracy has become “commodified as well as vilified” (218). Ironically, a remnant of Kidd’s ill-gotten booty apparently did an extraordinary amount of good, for an act of Parliament in 1705 permitted Queen Anne to donate the remainder of Kidd’s estate of £6,472 15s. to Greenwich Hospital. According to an internet currency converter, this amount is today worth a little over \$1.5 million (Eric W. Nye, “Pounds Sterling to Dollars: Historical Conversion of Currency” Web).

Margarette Lincoln’s *British Pirates and Society, 1680–1730* will be an excellent addition to any collection of works dealing with the topic piracy. I highly recommend this book.

Eric C. Brown. *Milton on Film*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2015. xii + 419 pp. + 17 illus. \$60.00. Review by SARAH ROCHE, SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY RIO GRANDE COLLEGE.

Eric C. Brown’s *Milton on Film* offers a readable and critically engaged historical analysis of the fascinating passage of Milton’s poetry into film, a dual passage marked by the gap between 300 years of Miltonic adaptations and a successful feature-length production of