

Doubly Rebellious: Swashbuckling Women in the Golden Age of Piracy

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Abstract: Women in history are often forgotten and overlooked. Often women who challenged social norms were romanticized and turned into fanciful stories making finding out who these women really are a challenge. This fact was especially true for female pirates. My paper, Doubly Rebellious, attempts to shed light on these fascinating women so often lost and forgotten. Women engaging in piracy are taking more chances than male pirates. Not only are they challenging the law but social norms as well. The significance of this paper is to shed light on a forgotten aspect of early Atlantic history. Also I am seeking to correct the assumption that piracy was strictly a male occupation and at the same time demonstrating gender roles in the 17th and early 18th century were far more fluid and dynamic than as previously presented. My methodology is a combination of an extended literature review and qualitative research. This includes both primary and secondary sources. References come from books, essays, articles, and newspapers. Through the study of Anne Bonny, Mary Read, and Grace O'Malley, my research has shown how extraordinary these women really are and how they gained the respect and discipline over men in a world that sought to control female independence and roles. In conclusion, my research hopes to present these female pirates as pioneers in women's independence and how they challenged social norms in both for the time period as well as for pirating standards.

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