

Enemy of All Mankind: A True Story of Piracy, Power, and History's First Global Manhunt. Steven Johnson. New York: Riverhead Books, 2020. 304 pp. \$28. Hardcover ISBN 9780735211605.

In *Enemy of all Mankind: A True Story of Piracy, Power, and History's First Global Manhunt*, Steven Johnson examines world events, social organization, new media platforms, and institutions by zeroing in on the actions of one pirate ship, the *Fancy*, led by Henry Every. Steven Johnson is a bestselling nonfiction author; he has published thirteen books which grapple with historical events, modern technology, disease, popular press, innovation, and the future. His fascinating work delves into maritime history, seventeenth-century piracy, English-Mughal trading relationships, print culture, and the growing power of the East India Trading Company. Johnson argues that Every's actions, while violent and destructive, elevated him to the level of folk hero in England and beyond because his tale hit a special note within society: "the deeply populist vision of a society where the stratifications of wealth and privilege could be replaced by a much more equitable form of social organization" (247). To create his narrative, Johnson pulls from historic accounts of piracy and violence, ancient and classical Greek historians, Van Broeck's account of Every, historic legal codes, state papers, trial transcripts, ballads, pamphlets, letters, and royal proclamations. He engages with historians working on pirate history such as Joel Baer, Arne Bialuschewski, Lee A. Casey, Mark G. Hanna, Marucs Rediker, Bradley Nutting, and Gregory O'Malley. He also delves into a rich historiography on the Mughal Empire and Indian trade, citing historians Ian S. John, Iftikhar Ahmad Khan, Soma Mukherjee, Aditi Govil, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, and others.

Johnson's creative organization in *Enemy of Mankind* facilitates reader engagement. Johnson employs an hourglass shaped narrative. He opens his work with the attack of an English pirate ship on an Indian vessel. He states, "At the waist of the hourglass – its center point – are those few seconds on the Indian Ocean in 1695: the exploding cannon, the destroyed mainmast. Before the waist is the layered history of events that made those extraordinary seconds possible. After the waist is the sweeping – truly global – chain of events those seconds unleashed" (7). Johnson uses his first few chapters to add important historical context for his readers. At the beginning of his narrative, Johnson sketches out the origin stories around the man who would become Henry Every, the economic advantages to a life at sea, piracy throughout antiquity, the sensational nature of print media, and uses of terror. He lays the foundation for later discussions of global trade networks, the rise of the East India Company, and the development of the joint stock offerings. After setting the scene, Johnson moves into the formation of the Spanish Expedition Shipping venture, a group of sailors who had been promised regular wages with a month's advance to sail a squadron of ships to the West Indies to trade arms with Spaniards and loot sunken ships. He adds urgency and interest to his narrative by stating that Every would "end the journey with an elevated rank, from first mate to captain, from an anonymous sailor to the world's most notorious criminal" while five of his crew members would be hanged (61). As he moves further through the narrative, Johnson sheds light on Mughal succession rights and customs,

trade, and living conditions at sea. He sets up maritime work as “the one viable path to changing your station. All the risk of disease and shipwreck and starvation were worth the potential reward, given the limited opportunities at home” (75). Part II of his narrative covers the mutiny of Every on board the *Charles*, the emergence of song and poetry in England about the mutiny (and emergence of Every as a folk hero), and the growing power of the East India Company. At the end of Part II, Johnson sets the scene by depicting Every’s decision to join forces with several different pirate ships and by discussing the grandeur and importance of the Mughal ship, the *Gunsway*.

Part III covers Every’s attack on the *Gunsway*, the impact of the attack on relations between India and the East India Company (and by extension, England), and the manhunt for Every. One of the most compelling parts of his narrative is his analysis of the differing accounts of Every’s treatment of the women aboard the *Gunsway*. He discusses how one contemporary account, largely sympathetic to Every, had created an “Indian Ocean rendition of the Pocahontas story,” complete with Every proposing to a Muslim princess who had been found aboard and later marrying her in front of a Muslim clerk (152-153). However, Johnson poses this narrative against the account written by Khafi Khan, an Indian historian who had interviewed witnesses who had been passengers on the *Gunsway* when Every’s crew boarded. Khan’s account detailed the days of sexual violence to which the passengers of the *Gunsway*, including relatives of Aurangzeb the Grand Mughal, had been subjected. Johnson effectively demonstrates the impact of this attack on history. According to Johnson, by promising to compensate the Grand Mughal for his losses aboard the *Gunsway* and by assuming the responsibility for protecting Mughal ships, the East India Company gained “a new power that would come to define their relationship to the subcontinent: the force of law” (202). Part IV covers the trial against eight of Every’s pirate companions. In order to engage in trade with the global network, England had to fiercely and definitively condemn piracy. Johnson states, “the spectacle of Every’s men dangling on Execution Dock would send an unequivocal message to the world that England had no tolerance for the international criminals behind the *Gunsway* attack” (240).

Ultimately, Johnson’s organizational tactic is very successful. As a trade book, *Enemy of Mankind* is readable, engaging, and demonstrates the uses of contingency in historical writing. Though only 286 pages, Johnson has managed to pack a remarkable amount of content and historical context into *Enemy of All Mankind* in a dynamic and widely enjoyable work.

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