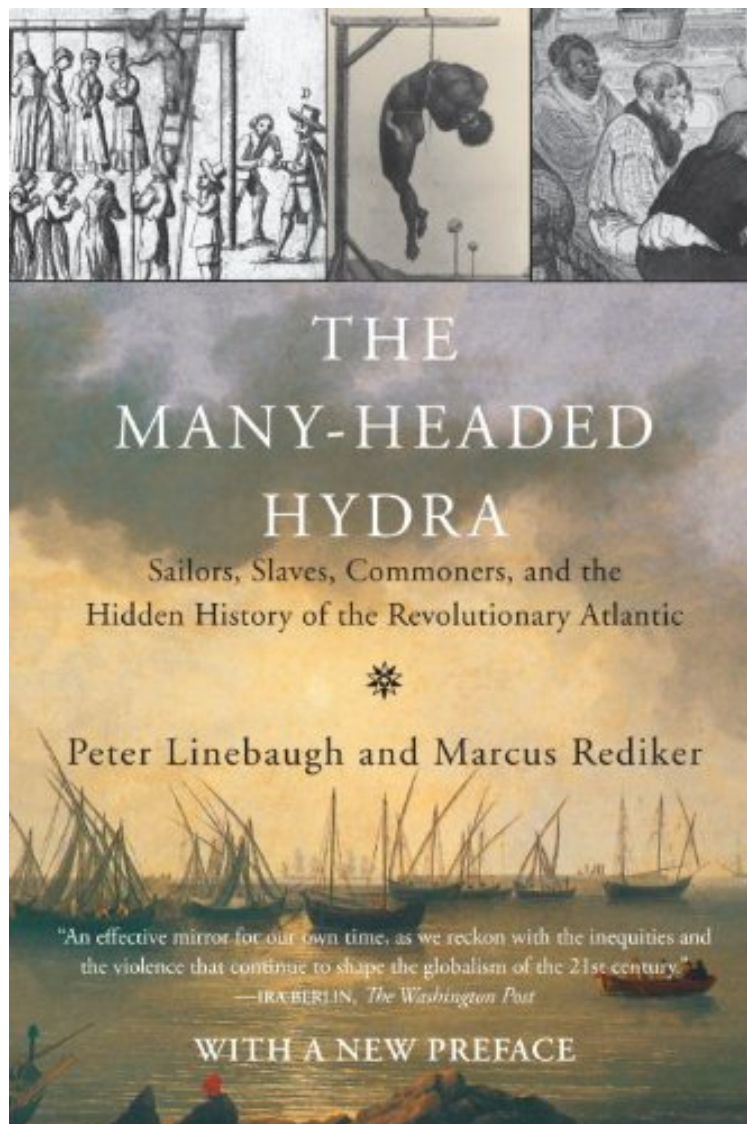


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## The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic

*Peter Linebaugh, Marcus Rediker*

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**Peter Linebaugh, Marcus Rediker : The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The other side of history not covered in most textbooks  
By Night-Gaunt  
It shows the inside out and ugly side of just how we came about. The use of slavery, where it became racialized (black, brown, red only eventually) how it was used. The philosophy of terror formulated by the likes of Sir Francis Bacon, to decapitate the hydra. What they called the multifarious groups against their enterprise of Capitalism (fledgling), empire, slavery and terror used to destroy the commons, separate and destroy those pockets and undercurrent of rebellion against all those notions promulgated by the powers including the Christian church and its concepts of dominion and slavery as being god given. How Hercules, who slain the hydra was picked as an example of their hero, the one that cut off the heads of the hydra and burned the necks to stop regeneration. How they were metaphorical symbols of their work to remake the wild lands of the Americans and at the same time drain their lands of the people and ideas they found so disagreeable. An excellent addition to any personal library on history and human rights and the foundations of imperial thinking still alive and well in places like the USA. Are you part of the Hydra or with Hercules?  
6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A bottom-up theory of resistance  
By Malvin  
"The Many Headed Hydra" by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker is an exceptionally well-written and enlightening history of early capitalism. The authors offer a bottom-up theory of resistance and describe the conditions by which the modern nation state was founded as a solution to the problem of proletariat self-rule. Short narratives, biographies and illustrations of key events and individuals are framed within a discussion of the historical forces of the era, making the book an interesting, thought provoking and entertaining read. Linebaugh and Rediker describe the brutal process of primitive accumulation where the poor were forced off the land to create the proletariat class. The newly-dispossessed were disciplined harshly and made to labor for the benefit of the investor class. However, the pervasive "culture of fear" that was "indispensible to the creation of labor-power as a commodity" eventually led to revolt, first with the English Civil War in the 1640s and later throughout the colonial system. The authors spotlight individuals who made the case for the rights of all people, including Edward Despard, James Naylor, Tom Paine, Thomas Spence and Robert Wedderburn. These voices articulated the desires of the masses to achieve equality and social justice. As these rights were consistently denied, the seeds of discontent and rebellion were planted. When not organizing resistance against empire, many chose piracy, formed their own renegade communities, or chose to live among the Native Americans. In this light, the authors present the American Revolution as a cooptation of the democratic movement. Capitalist property and wage relations were legislated in a manner that secured elitist privilege. Race, sex and class effectively served to split the proletariat into factions that could be politically controlled. The nation state thus was born as an instrument to empower the bourgeoisie and channel the energies of the masses towards capitalist accumulation. The unique value of this book is its convincing argument that the world we know may have turned out very differently. This tantalizing possibility is just one reason why "The Many-Headed Hydra" is an intriguing read. I highly recommend it to all.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Myth Buster  
By Richard  
Very well researched, this is the history they dare not teach in schools, or re-enact on the history channel.

Winner of the International Labor History Award  
Long before the American Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, a motley crew of sailors, slaves, pirates, laborers, market women, and indentured servants had ideas about freedom and equality that would forever change history. The Many Headed-Hydra recounts their stories in a sweeping history of the role of the dispossessed in the making of the modern world. When an unprecedented expansion of trade and colonization in the early seventeenth century launched the first global economy, a vast, diverse, and landless workforce was born. These workers crossed national, ethnic, and racial boundaries, as they circulated around the Atlantic world on trade ships and slave ships, from England to Virginia, from Africa to Barbados, and from the Americas back to Europe. Marshaling an impressive range of original research from archives in the Americas and Europe, the authors show how ordinary working people led dozens of rebellions on both sides of the North Atlantic. The rulers of the day called the multiethnic rebels a 'hydra' and brutally suppressed their risings, yet some of their ideas fueled the age of revolution. Others, hidden from history and recovered here, have much to teach us about our common humanity.