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Our reviewer says *The Lost Pirate Kingdom* is a mix of genres that fails to gel.

Submitted photo

# Netflix pirate doc is (AAARRGH) painful

By TJ REID  
 For the Keizertimes

When the Disney World first opened in 1971, there was one Disneyland attraction that was conspicuously missing: Pirates of the Caribbean. According to park lore, this was done because it was initially believed that Floridians would be less charmed by pirates thanks to their proximity to the Caribbean itself. This turned out to be a miscalculation as one thing became clearer over the years: that everyone loves pirates. Disney World would get its Pirates ride in 1973, and nearly five decades later it and its brethren in Anaheim, Paris, and Shanghai remain some of the most popular attractions Disney has to offer. There is something undeniably appealing about the adventurous lifestyle that these rogues lead, but who were they as people? What is the truth behind the legends? Netflix's new docuseries *The Lost Pirate Kingdom* wants desperately to give viewers these answers, but just might end up making them seasick instead thanks to its laughable reenactments, mind numbing repetitiveness, and lack of good history.

An ugly hybrid between documentary and historical drama, *The Lost Pirate Kingdom* is an absolute chore. The talking heads are periodically interrupted here by bad actors in bad costumes who try their darndest to conjure up the high seas excitement of a *Pirates of the Caribbean* film, all the while accompanied by a score that sounds like discount Hans Zimmer. These reenactments are not entertaining, nor are they necessary, as everything the actors do and say is just a repeat of what the historians themselves said five seconds before. And speaking of unnecessary, this documentary is R-rated. As in, there are multiple f-bombs and more than one topless prostitute. Why? Because this is Netflix, and our documentary is going to be spicy, dammit! If *The Lost*



*Pirate Kingdom* would have worried less about being a gritty, low-budget *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie then it would have had more time to show some actual historical depth, but as it is the information conveyed is shockingly shallow. What was the War of Spanish Succession and what did it have to do with the rise of piracy in the eighteenth century? Don't worry about it! Here's a love scene between Sam Bellamy and a woman that may have not even existed!

This leads me to the other gripe that I had with *The Lost Pirate Kingdom* — the passing off of speculation and hearsay as fact. If there is one thing I have learned about the pirates of the Golden Age in my reading throughout the years, it's that their history is often very difficult to nail down because men like Blackbeard and Benjamin Hornigold were not exactly the diary-keeping types. Historians have to fill in a lot of blanks, and this series does a very poor job of acknowledging that. If you do not have some prior knowledge of these people and events already then it will be impossible to know what is historical fact and what is historical speculation.

Skip this one and get your pirate fix elsewhere. I personally recommend *The Republic of Pirates: Being the True and Surprising Story of the Caribbean Pirates and the Man Who Brought Them Down* by Colin Woodard (who happened to be one of the talking heads in this series). Here in *The Lost Pirate Kingdom*, there be only monsters.

*The Lost Pirate Kingdom* is now available on Netflix.



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