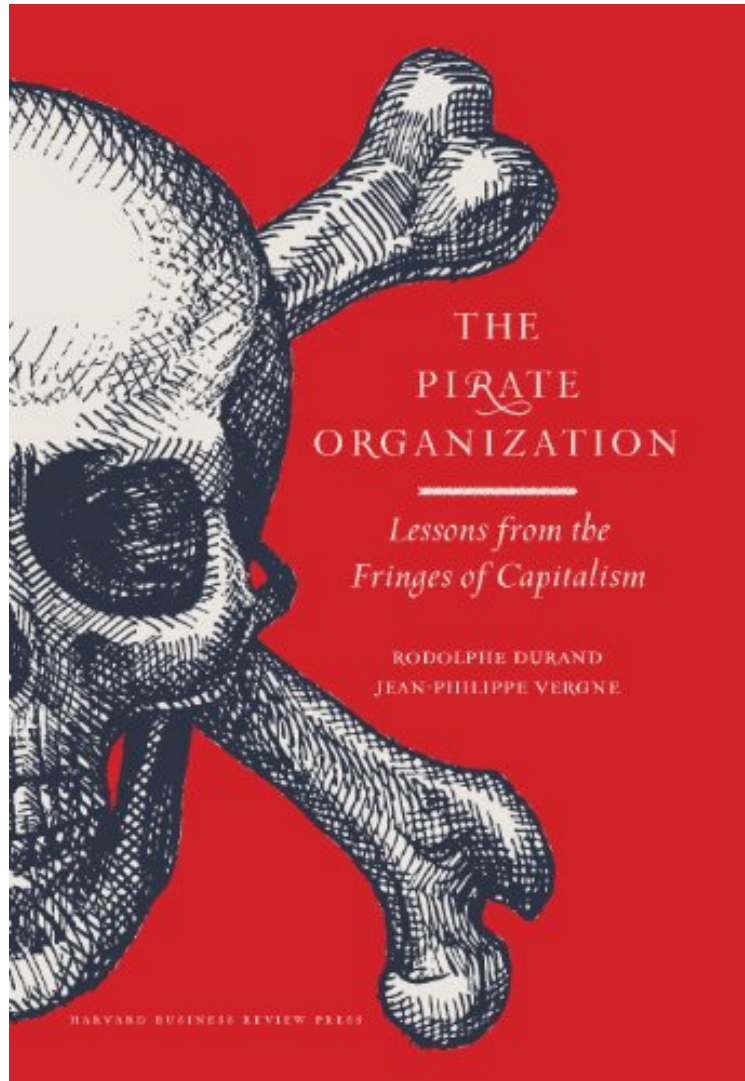


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## The Pirate Organization: Lessons from the Fringes of Capitalism

Rodolphe Durand, Jean-Philippe Vergne  
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**Rodolphe Durand, Jean-Philippe Vergne : The Pirate Organization: Lessons from the Fringes of Capitalism**  
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Pirate Organization: Lessons from the Fringes of Capitalism:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Confused and misleading. Avoid. By David Zetland I downloaded this 2012 book by Rodolphe Durand and Jean-Philippe Vergne after hearing Vergne give a talk about the "right price" for bitcoin in Amsterdam.\* I wanted to read the book (subtitled "Lessons from the Fringes of Capitalism") because it seemed a good way to understand how an idea or innovation might begin "at the pirate fringe" before normalizing into a valued part for the social and economic system. At first the book promises to explore this thesis, i.e., how capitalists have struggled with sovereigns over where and how to do business, with an implication that really valuable

innovations (bank drafts, partnerships, risk insurance, etc.) will eventually be recognized by a sovereign eager to get a piece of the action. This thesis is supported by the historic role of pirates (the word is derived from peirao, Greek for "put to the test"), which was connected with people and villages who refused to follow central rules and/or relied on their own rules to maintain order or advance themselves. And then the wheels fall off. I don't know if it's the French origins of this book or its authors' background, but the book just wanders off into long, tedious chapters on the origins of capitalism (I would put those origins much earlier than post-Enlightenment), the difference in perspective on what's legal or not, and (seemingly random) vignettes. It reads as if its two authors had dumped all the loose notes into the text (sometimes without coordinating their messages) in order to produce a book that reads more like a series of hyperlinks between wikipedia articles. \*\* I stopped reading it. The book, in other words, has a thesis but no strong structure and too many unsubstantiated statements (e.g., The Dutch East India Company was not state-controlled). I would have preferred a 20 page version that was clear and to the point, as it is now hard to see any logic emerge from a mass of tangential asides. Bottom Line: Pirate organizations, like the mafia, have their own rules for internal order and a business model (providing order for those who pay) that only works when the state is too weak to supply its own order. A strong state is the end of pirates and mafia but not exploitation, which depends on limits (checks and balances) to the sovereign's power. I give this book TWO STARS for its rambling, confused discourse over an interesting topic but recommend that you avoid it. =====\* He's doing well as a cryptoguru, but I found his analysis to be rather shallow. \*\* Here's an example from the end of a chapter: Organizations come together with an identity, a set of stated goals, and particular relationships with the normalizing state that give meaning to the development of capitalism. Understanding them avoids the simplifying image of capital as a self-devouring force without any other horizon than itself. Among the various organizational forms, one is essential for the constant evolution and recoding of capitalism. This form, perceived as irrational, abnormal, and dangerous by capitalist organizations from the legitimate milieu, appears both "necessary" and "renegade" -- the pirate organization. What does this mean? 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Timid and tame By Eric Traub I expected more of a book about piracy as pertains to economics and capitalism, especially with such a splashy cover, and supposedly embracing ideas from Deleuze, Guattari, and Sloterdijk. Instead, the authors seem to almost want to reassure State-run capitalism that any naughty pirates out there are actually a beneficial force and will soon be happily absorbed into the system. It's ironic that the spirit of the Outlaw is precisely what's missing from this book. A few nice ideas scattered amidst a whole lotta text. Intelligent writing for the most part, but timid and tame. This probably made for an interesting paper once (downloadable through their website) and became a book by adding useless filler. Too bad. Not the worst thing I've read recently, but nothing significant gained by the effort in this case. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fun Read with a Few Caveats.... By David S. Wellhauser This is a book for people who already have a firm grounding in the history of piracy. If you do, then you are in for a treat as the reader gets an enjoyable analysis of piracy past and present. This reading of piracy is from France so it has less to do with the objective world than it does the world of textuality and endlessly defining and re-defining this textuality. If you are familiar with post-structuralism the reader will get more out of the book than if they weren't. There is also a left of center reading of piracy and its relationship to capitalism. This part of the text is less convincing, but still fascinating. Rating: 3 out of 5 Stars. Worth a look if you are a critic of capitalism but still see a future for and if you enjoy late capitalist post-structural thought without the jargon.

A short history of piracy and capitalism When capitalism spread along the trade routes toward the Indies when radio opened an era of mass communication . . . when the Internet became part of the global economy pirates were there. And although most people see pirates as solitary anarchists out to destroy capitalism, it turns out the opposite is true. They are the ones who forge the path. In *The Pirate Organization*, Rodolphe Durand and Jean-Philippe Vergne argue that piracy drives capitalism's evolution and foreshadows the direction of the economy. Through a rigorous yet engaging analysis of the history and golden ages of piracy, the authors show how pirates form complex and sophisticated organizations that change the course of capitalism. Surprisingly, pirate organizations also behave in predictable ways: challenging widespread norms; controlling resources, communication, and transportation; maintaining trade relationships with other communities; and formulating strategies favoring speed and surprise. We could learn a lot from them if only we paid more attention. Durand and Vergne recommend that rather than trying to stamp out piracy, savvy entrepreneurs and organizations should keep a sharp eye on the pirate space to stay successful as the game changes and it always does. First published in French to great critical acclaim and commercial success as *L'Organisation Pirate: Essai sur l'évolution du capitalisme*, this book shows that piracy is not random. It's predictable, it cannot be separated from capitalism, and it likely will be the source of capitalism's continuing evolution. Pirates, surprisingly, also behave in predictable ways: challenging widespread norms; controlling resources, communication, and transportation; maintaining trade relationships with other communities; and formulating strategies favoring speed and surprise. And we can learn from them. Durand and Vergne recommend that rather than trying to stamp out piracy, savvy companies should keep a sharp eye on the pirate space. Only then can they detect how capitalism's rules of engagement are changing and then revise their business practices to remain

successful in the new game.

this is a stimulating book filled with new ideas. Philosophically minded land-lubbers will enjoy it just as much as barnacle-backs. The Economist All this economic theory is paired with engaging analysis of the history and golden ages of piracy. Financial Times An interesting and thought-provoking read. The book debunks popular myths about piracy being random and suggests instead that it is predictable, cannot be separated from capitalism and will be the source of capitalism's continuing evolution. The Irish Times Rather than try to stamp out piracy, entrepreneurs and businesses should watch how pirates behave in order to stay successful. Telegraph.co.uk This is an important book that adds to our understanding of the transition between different phases of capitalism... We recommend it. Compass, the magazine of the Association of Professional Futurists Turns out piracy is not just opportunist brigandry, but a driver of capitalist evolution and a pointer to economic direction. So watch the pirates and stay ahead of the game. Yo, ho, ho and hoist the Jolly Roger! The Australian Way (Qantas Airlines inflight magazine) Praise for the French Edition of The Pirate Organization (L'organisation pirate) When laws and technologies change, piracy . . . tends to arise. This was true when the age of navigation led sailors into waters where no one was ruler, and it is true on the frontiers of the information age today. Christopher Caldwell, Financial Times A stimulating piece to savor. Le Monde Daring, challenging, stimulating. Technikart Inspiring ideas that push further the boundaries of reflection. Les Echos A remarkable essay. Les Influences