

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

The Man Who Saved Henry Morgan by Robert Hough

1. Do you think this book is historically accurate? What (if anything) strikes you as inaccurate or anachronistic?
2. Is the title of the book appropriate? Does Benny "save" Henry Morgan?
3. How does Robert Hough use humour in the novel? What effect do you think the author's use of humour has on your perception of the narrative?
4. What do you think of Henry's justifications for the brutality of his raids against the Spanish? How does his explanation compare to justifications for other historical attacks against nonmilitary targets; for example, the reasons given by Allied commanders for the firebombing of [Dresden](#) and [Tokyo](#) during World War II?
5. In a review of Hough's previous novel *Dr. Brinkley's Tower* in *The National Post*, [Michael Hingston](#) notes that Hough's fiction is "possessed with a vibrant moral heartbeat." How do Benny's morals differ from Henry's? Does Henry's morality change throughout the book? What about John Morris's?
6. One school of critical thought suggests that science fiction is fundamentally about the present. For instance, a typical argument might suggest that the alien attack narratives of the 1950s reflect the xenophobia of the time. To what degree do you think the same holds true for historical fiction? Do you think the author is attempting to comment on current economic, cultural, or geopolitical situation(s) through his historical narrative? Which ones? Why do you think he uses this approach?
7. Narratives set in colonial outposts can't help but explore race, whether consciously or not. What does *The Man Who Saved Henry Morgan* have to say about race and, more specifically, about Aboriginal peoples?
8. Port Royal is referred to as "the wickedest city on earth" (p. 311). How do his descriptions of Port Royal reflect the city's wickedness?

9. Are there any books or films that may have inspired the way Hough tells this story? Does he use any imagery or plot points you recognize from other male adventure narratives? Does the novel defy your expectations for the genre in any way?
10. Tessie's snakelike split tongue is just one of the many biblical references in *The Man Who Saved Henry Morgan*. What other biblical references did you pick up on? Beyond the biblical references, how else does Hough use religion in the novel?
11. Why do you think Hough chooses to use language that is nearly modern in the book's dialogue? How might your reading experience be different if he had used language that was more faithful to 1664, or, conversely, if he had used even more contemporary language?
12. Much attention is paid to food and drink in the novel. What function do meals and drinking sessions serve in the narrative?
13. What function does chess serve in the story?
14. How does the relationship between Henry and Benny change over the course of the novel?
15. Which plot twists were the most surprising to you? Which betrayal was the most emotionally affecting? Why?