



## Book Provides New Look At Critical Contributions Of American Maritime History

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DURHAM, N.H. - Since 1820, domestic shipping on America's coasts, rivers, and lakes outweighed shipping overseas, driving the American economic engine and helping shape American history, according to a new book co-authored by W. Jeffrey Bolster, associate professor of history at the University of New Hampshire.

"The Way of the Ship: America's Maritime History Reenvisioned, 1600-2000" is a revisionist account of American maritime society. From Native Americans with birch bark canoes and inventive colonists who took fishing shallops and laid decks over them for coastal trading, to the rise of the automated mass carrier and ever-bigger passenger cruise ships, the book tells the story of 400 years of America's maritime history.

Oceanic shipping was important, especially in times of national crisis such as world wars, but it was never as important as domestic shipping on the coast, rivers and lakes, according to the authors. Unlike the previous view, the true picture of American maritime history, the authors show, must combine both brown water and blue water shipping.

Throughout the book, the authors explain the factors that influenced - and continue to influence - the shipping industry, from economics, government policy, and labor to the military and technology.

"The mainstays of the U.S. economy continue to move by water, even though few Americans know port from starboard, or a ship from a boat. At one time the maritime trades were, after agriculture, the second largest employer of American labor; today only a miniscule percentage of Americans work in the shipping industry. Though shipping is no longer as salient in people's lives as it was when Richard Henry Dana and Mark Twain transformed working on the water into unforgettable American literature, it is still an indispensable component of the world's largest economy," according to the authors.

The book is filled with images of ships such as the Mayflower, Savannah, Flying Cloud, Alabama, Sea-Land McLean and Exxon Valdez; ports, including Boston, New Orleans, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Salem; and people such as Joseph Peabody, Robert Fulton, Mark Twain, Donald McKay, Cornelius Vanderbilt, J.P. Morgan and Malcolm McLean.

Co-authored by historians Alex Roland at Duke University and Alexander Keyssar at Harvard

University, "The Way of the Ship" is part of a series sponsored by the American Maritime History Project and is published by John Wiley & Sons (2008).

W. Jeffrey Bolster teaches courses in early American social and cultural history, African-American history, Caribbean history, and maritime history. He is the author of "Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail" (Harvard University Press, 1997) and co-author of "Soldiers, Sailors, Slaves, and Ships: The Civil War Photographs of Henry P. Moore" (New Hampshire Historical Society, 1999). "Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail" was a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year.

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