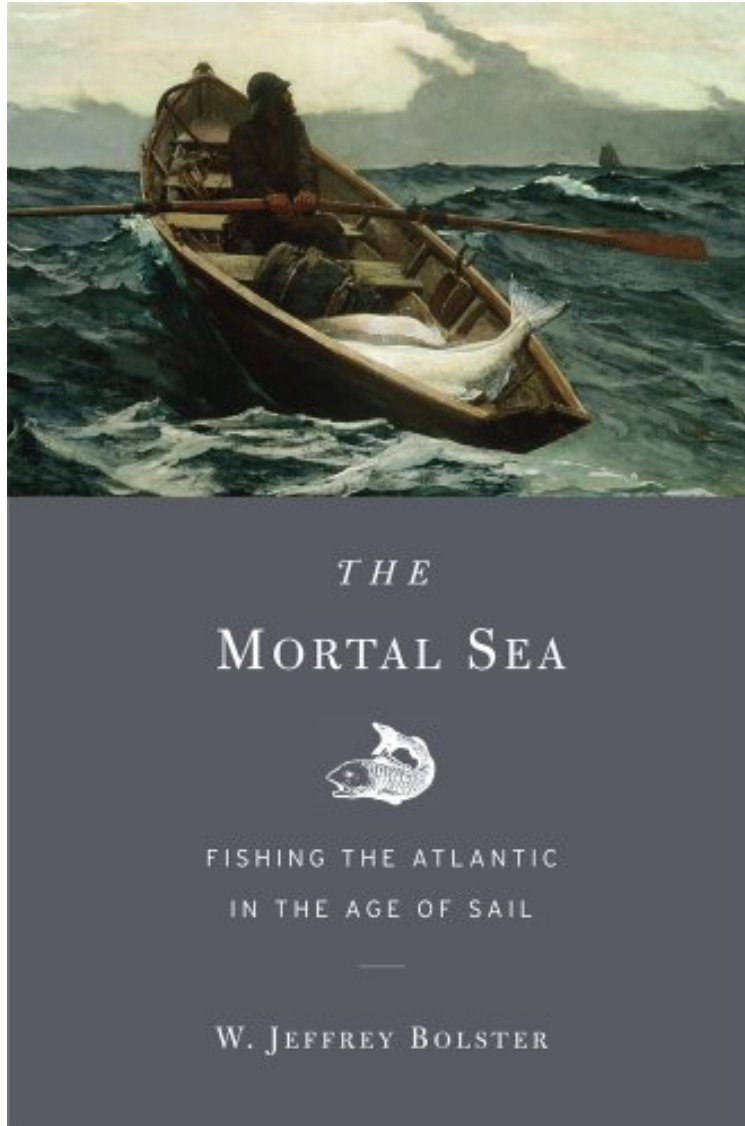


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## The Mortal Sea: Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail

*W. Jeffrey Bolster*

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#668298 in Books Bolster W Jeffrey 2014-05-05 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.10 x 1.10 x 6.10l, .84 #File Name: 0674283961416 pages The Mortal Sea Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail | File size: 38.Mb

**W. Jeffrey Bolster : The Mortal Sea: Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mortal Sea: Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail:

19 of 20 people found the following review helpful. taking history offshore By jjohn the seafarer Jeff Bolster writes about the sea as few know how to do. He demolishes the myth of the eternal sea, showing how much the North Atlantic has changed over hundreds of years of human exploitation. He knows his fish, but he also knows the fishers. This is environmental and social history of the highest order, a decisive intervention in the current debates about our future relationship to the oceans. It takes history offshore, and returns it richer for the voyage into this largely unknown past. 0

of 0 people found the following review helpful. Obligatory to environmental managers  
By Marcio L. Silva Gama  
We usually think that we humans have the capacity to learn from mistakes and look forward to set up better living conditions at long term timescales. This book shows us that we overrate ourselves. Fishing management is a classical example of mismanagement and conflicts between science and politics, where short term interests, maximizing profits, are always more important than provide limits to exploitation of resources former known as renewables. Unfortunately this is not a book that makes hopes arise. Well funded in historical statistics and strong evidences of collective blindness, it confirms a tendency to oceans' death in few decades. Can we humans learn from history?  
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An incredibly comprehensive story our impact on the Atlantic.  
By Mostyn  
I bought this book because it looked like it would have some interesting tales of shipping on the Atlantic. However it gives an incredibly detailed history of how successive generations have been destroying the fisheries of the Atlantic ocean. The book makes it clear how as far back as the first generations to migrate to America, the oceans have been deteriorating. Each generation has looked back at its early years as a baseline and lamented the destruction of the oceans. But the cumulative effect of generation upon generation of losses is unimaginable. I found the book heavy going. It tends to go on and on about the same point. But still, it makes a very important point about the degradation of marine environments and makes clear the need to do more to improve the state of our oceans.

Since the Viking ascendancy in the Middle Ages, the Atlantic has shaped the lives of people who depend upon it for survival. And just as surely, people have shaped the Atlantic. In his innovative account of this interdependency, W. Jeffrey Bolster, a historian and professional seafarer, takes us through a millennium-long environmental history of our impact on one of the largest ecosystems in the world. While overfishing is often thought of as a contemporary problem, Bolster reveals that humans were transforming the sea long before factory trawlers turned fishing from a handliner's art into an industrial enterprise. The western Atlantic's legendary fishing banks, stretching from Cape Cod to Newfoundland, have attracted fishermen for more than five hundred years. Bolster follows the effects of this siren's song from its medieval European origins to the advent of industrialized fishing in American waters at the beginning of the twentieth century. Blending marine biology, ecological insight, and a remarkable cast of characters, from notable explorers to scientists to an army of unknown fishermen, Bolster tells a story that is both ecological and human: the prelude to an environmental disaster. Over generations, harvesters created a quiet catastrophe as the sea could no longer renew itself. Bolster writes in the hope that the intimate relationship humans have long had with the ocean, and the species that live within it, can be restored for future generations.

Bolster gives a fascinating account of the devastating impact of the sail-driven machinery that was unleashed on the North Atlantic since the early Middle Ages, which now appears like a trial run for the coup de coup de grace in the twentieth century.--Daniel Pauly, Author Of "5 Easy Pieces: The Impact Of Fisheries On Marine Ecosystems"  
All hands on deck! Bolster makes an all-too-convincing case that the northwest Atlantic has been overfished for centuries and that we must act now to avert catastrophe.--Joyce E. Chaplin, Author Of "the First Scientific American: Benjamin Franklin And The Pursuit Of Genius"  
"The Mortal Sea" looks at the North Atlantic and reveals how the marine stocks of the world arrived at the desperate pass they are in. This is a work of stunning importance.--Daniel Vickers, University Of British Columbia  
This remarkable book will forever change our understanding of the human tragedy of overfishing that has fueled the downward spiral of ecological destruction of the oceans. It is a story of hubris, greed, and a stubborn failure to learn from experience that continues unabated to this day.--Jeremy Jackson, Coeditor Of "shifting Baselines: The Past And The Future Of Ocean Fisheries"  
"The Mortal Sea" is highly pertinent to urgent matters before us now. If in the late 1800s the men who worked the sea for their livelihoods could see that creatures were being fished to extinction, while scientists in the employ of business interests argued that the seas were endlessly replenishable, today it is the other way around. Scientists argue that human activity has placed the planet in uncertain but potentially calamitous peril, while ordinary people shrug at the evidence and go on misusing the Earth's resources, abetted by governments too cowardly and businesses too self-interested to take that evidence seriously..."The Mortal Sea" should be read as a cautionary tale...Anyone who thinks...this book is only about fish is living in a fool's paradise.--Jonathan Yardley  
"Washington Post" (10/28/2012)  
[A] well-documented and fascinating chronicle of New England's interdependence with the sea from the 16th century to the World War I era. In "The Mortal Sea", Bolster skillfully weaves material from historical documents and newspaper and scientific reports with tales of fishermen to demonstrate how the activities of individuals have affected the northwest Atlantic, for better and worse.--Michael Kenney  
"Boston Globe" (11/07/2012)  
"The Mortal Sea" chronicles the history of the fishing industry in the North West Atlantic over the past 500 years. Based on a comprehensive set of original sources, it charts the fascinating and ultimately disastrous story of how successive waves of European seafarers arrived to take advantage of the fishing opportunities that had become distant memories in their own more circumscribed and heavily exploited home waters...Such is the complexity of marine ecosystems that the recovery of severely depleted cod populations is taking decades longer than simple theory would suggest. "The Mortal Sea" is a beautifully written chronicle of what lay before this latest catastrophe and much earlier dire outcomes of poorly regulated fishing. As an authoritatively written

natural history of the developing fishing communities of the North West Atlantic, it makes an important contribution to fishery science as well as to social history.--Richard Shelton"Times Literary Supplement" (03/22/2013)Bolster has mined evidence from a wide range of contemporary sources that convincingly demonstrates the widespread overfishing and sequential depletion of bird, fish, and marine mammal stocks before the advent of steamships and modern trawlers...Essential reading for anyone interested in the sea and its resources.--G. C. Jensen"Choice" (05/01/2013)About the AuthorW. Jeffrey Bolster is Professor of History at the University of New Hampshire.