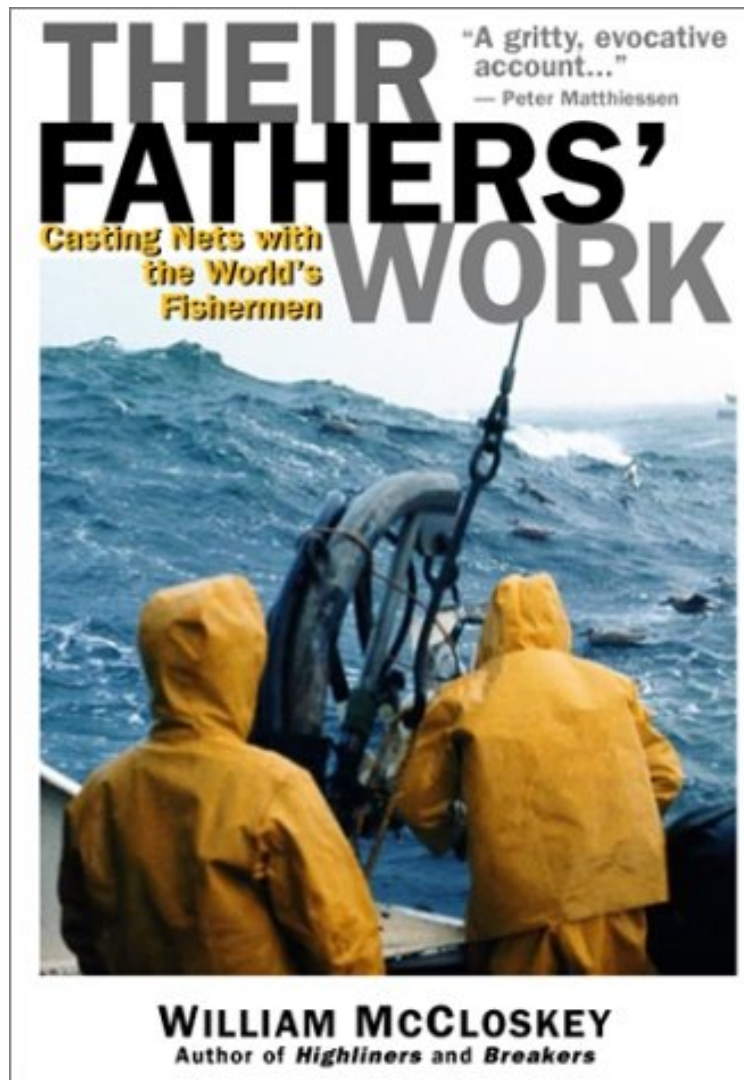


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## Their Fathers' Work: Casting Nets with the World's Fishermen

William B. McCloskey

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**William B. McCloskey : Their Fathers' Work: Casting Nets with the World's Fishermen** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Their Fathers' Work: Casting Nets with the World's Fishermen:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy john g egertonThank you7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. If you have ever eaten a fish or crab, then read this book!By Angus Wilson (wilsoa02@popmail.med.nyu.edu)This is a superb book. McCloskey writes from such a deep base of personal experience, that within a few lines we are transported to the heaving, noisy and often foul-smelling deck of a rusty trawler pitching in a cold northern sea or the cramped camaraderie of the galley on a Japanese squid boat. You feel the

shudder of the steel deck as the boat pitches into a steep swell, taste the salt in the air and gag on the stench of diesel fumes and dead fish. The book is a collection of essays, exploring the challenges that face commercial fishermen in various parts of the globe. We hear lots of languages - Russian, English, Spanish, Norwegian, Japanese and more - and experience very different cultures, each united by the sea and the grueling task of pulling food from its depths. Gradually, the similarities grow much larger than the differences. No matter where he is, McCloskey can rapidly blend into the crew becoming just one more figure shrouded in foul weather gear pulling in the nets. This remarkable desire to muck-in with the deckhands no matter how hard the work or how severe the conditions, is the secret to his vivid and exciting writing. I can never look at a piece of sushi or a bag of fish and chips in quite the same way.<sup>3</sup> of 4 people found the following review helpful. McCloskey tells the raw truth about commercial fishing. By A Customer For twenty-years now, Bill McCloskey has been living and working with Alaska fishermen from Prince William Sound to the Bering Sea. He has many friends among them in Cordova, Kodiak, Chignik, Dutch Harbor and Seattle, Washington. He knows us and writes about us better than anyone else. Because he's been straight with fishermen from Day One, I think many men and women have felt comfortable confiding in Bill. I remember being with him in Chignik several years ago when he was doing research for the chapter in *THEIR FATHERS' WORK* on the Alaska salmon fisheries. He was welcomed with open arms by some of that fleet's top highliners: David Anderson, Ernie Carlson, Maurie Pedersen and others. They took him out on their seiners, up in their planes and into their homes, in my opinion, because they judged him to be a straight-shooter and a good shipmate. If you ask Captain Leif Locklinghom, a long-time Bering Sea king crab highliner, he'll tell you the same. So won't Chuck Bu! ndrant and Bart Eaton, highliners themselves and currently owners of Alaska's largest seafood processing company, Trident Seafoods. Reading *THEIR FATHERS' WORK*, especially the Alaska chapters, will put you in the shoes of the fishermen who work Alaskan waters daily trying to squeeze a living out of elusive fish and shellfish stocks, rough seas, high winds and cold temperatures. Alaska is an adventure-of-a-lifetime every person should experience at least once. McCloskey is the the right guy to take you on your first trip to the wild-side of Alaska, without even leaving your living room. Give *THEIR FATHERS' WORK* a summer read. It's authentic, visceral and exciting, which is why I gave it Five Stars.

"A gritty, evocative account of commercial fishermen at work in a hard profession." Peter Matthiessen, author of *In The Spirit of Crazy Horse* and *The Snow Leopard* "His achievement has been to write a paean for a way of life." *Smithsonian* magazine. Those who put to sea for a dangerous and chancy living could ask for no better chronicler than William McCloskey. McCloskey has sailed with fishermen and women in all the seas of the world, from Indonesian village fishermen, to a Japanese squid boat in the North Pacific, to cod fishermen on the Grand Banks and gill netters in Alaska, working alongside them as he went. Fishing is the last of the hunting occupations, a hard but fiercely independent life. In *Their Father's Work*, McCloskey's vivid prose puts you right on deck, working through pain, discomfort, and exhaustion as the decks roll, the spray flies, and the nets are hauled. His love of the boats, the fishermen, and the sea shines through this moving, fascinating tribute to a way of life. "If I've delivered nothing but a lament for those of a dying culture, we'll be the poorer for it." William McCloskey.

From *Kirkus* a splendid, subtle portrait of the fisherman's life from Hokkaido to Norway, Chile to the Java Seaby McCloskey (*Highliners*, 1978, etc.). After a stint in the Coast Guard, McCloskey shipped out on his first fishing vessel 20 years ago, and he has evidently been keeping notes on every voyage since, detailing the days and nights of those who pursue one of the most dangerous jobs on Earth fishing. He has fished for king crab in the Bering Sea in winter, when the crabs are at their plump and the sea its nastiest; he has chased cod on the 1,000-year-old foggy and doomed Grand Banks fishery; he experienced the industrial-scale sardine fishery of Chile and the artisan fishing of Indonesia from small wooden boats (no radar here; fish are tracked at night by their phosphorescent wakes). He has spent a good amount of time with the Japanese fleet and shares with them a lust for the delicacies of the deep. And he has served on patrol boats enforcing compliance with the welter of maritime laws. Thus, as McCloskey explains the taking of shrimp and cod and squid, he is also able to speak knowledgeably about ship machinery, fishing ports, trawling and purse seining, the grand Law of the sea and the lesser laws governing salmon catches and whale harvesting, and the continuing havoc wreaked by the Exxon Valdez (ten years later, the herring have not returned, nor have the harlequin duck and pigeon guillemot). And best of all, McCloskey feels and conveys the atavism inherent in hunting the ocean, which he balances with deflating counterpoints. Says one old hand, "It's a livin', b'y, but it ain't much of a life now, is it?" Tales of fishermen at peril in high seas are hugely gripping. What makes McCloskey's book so memorable is that it invests in the everyday lives of fishermen the same compulsive readability. (color photos, not seen) -- Copyright 1998, *Kirkus Associates, LP*. All rights reserved. "McCloskey writes with first-hand knowledge and passion about the sea and the men and women who fish it, survive it, sometimes drown in it." (*Audubon Naturalist News* 1998-12-14) "The book is an eloquent statement about the poor health of the world's fisheries, as well as the lives of the world's fishermen. Few recent books have told their story in such epic proportions. (*The Telegram* 1998-11-30) From the Author My book "*Their Fathers' Work, Casting Nets With the World's Fishermen*," sums up more than twenty years spent at times with commercial fishermen throughout the world. I've worked as a fisherman in the States

and turned-to on many other fishing decks, happy to be with the men, boats, and gear of this vigorous, sometimes dangerous calling. And a calling it is, not just a job, pursued voluntarily by many who might work ashore in greater comfort and safety. "Fathers' Work" takes a broad view of the fishing occupation and, besides sea tales, attempts to make sense of the ecological and political pressures bedeviling those who work the sea for a living. As for myself, I still like being on the water, and especially aboard a small enough craft to get my face wet. These days when not hitching rides aboard fishing boats I row a twelve-foot skiff around the Chesapeake Bay in most weather. In writing "Their Fathers' Work," fishing experiences with crewmates fell quickly into place, although it was a triage selecting the best from memory and from dozens of handwritten notebooks (some pages blurred with seawater, and/or scrawled by frozen hands just in from working nets). And selecting twenty each photographs for color and black white from among my thousands of fishing images required hard decisions. But the real labor came with making sure of facts. While a writer can be as subjective with impression as he dares and expect his reader to roll with it -- that's the salt of a book -- he has a duty not to jiggle the facts. Sometimes a single line of information -- specs of a boat or gear, a political decision twenty years ago, the history or update of a controversial issue -- required hours of long-distance calls, library research, letters. Many pages went to the people quoted or otherwise involved, to be checked. Fishing is a harsh, dangerous, sometimes joyful occupation. It is now endangered just as are some of fishermen's targets. The old abundance on some fishing grounds may be gone in our time. Fishermen are partially at fault, but also fish farmers, single- cause environmentalists, and polluters ranging from heavy industry to the man fertilizing his lawn. It doesn't mean that all has been destroyed, and alarmists should be heard selectively. The work now is to pick up the pieces and prevent further depletion. The ocean is astonishingly resilient. Under tough, intelligent management many areas have stayed productive or been restored, and more can be made so as long as we stay intelligently alarmed. Governments and nations must cooperate on the size of their fishing fleets and what they harvest. Of necessity this will mean fewer boats, but should never be engineered to eliminate small-boat fishermen. Fishermen and their boats are a national resource to any coastal nation -- in normal times for producing food and income, in crisis for defense. There is no easy solution to keep fish and fishermen from being endangered, but there is a positive direction in which to work knowing the importance of both.