

From the Editor in Chief

Mystic Seaport Museum is thrilled to launch our first issue of *Mainsheet: A Journal of Multidisciplinary Maritime Studies*, which fills a field gap in peer-reviewed scholarship that has been left by the dissolution of the marvelous *Atlantic Neptune* and other like-minded journals over the last twenty years. While several excellent journals still exist worldwide, what sets *Mainsheet* apart are its multidisciplinary perspectives; themed issues; its mission to attract, share, and inspire global diverse scholarship on issues past, present, and future; and its freshness of design and distribution. *Mainsheet* not only promotes scholarship but is visually arresting, and celebrates broader perspectives of maritime culture through poetry and the visual arts, photojournalism, and special features on the respective themes. The Editorial Board represents a national and international team of invited expert scholars from various fields and partner institutions, with guest editors for special issue themes.

While a beautifully produced print edition can be purchased individually or by subscription, *Mainsheet* is available online to provide open and equitable access to new and emerging scholarship in maritime studies. We have also chosen a model that does not require authors to pay for entry into academic journals, which can be a substantial burden for rising professionals. Continued support from our sponsors and subscribers will be critical for us to maintain this exceptional opportunity for maritime studies scholars and other contributors.

The ocean connects us all, and therefore the journal is globally focused and themes are chosen to inspire deeper multidisciplinary study of major topics influencing the field and society at large today. These topics will align with major projects at Mystic Seaport Museum and many of our partner institutions. For example, this inaugural issue features social maritime history and is launched in the year of our upcoming exhibition, *Entwined: Freedom, Sovereignty, and the Sea*, which centers maritime histories in Indigenous, African, and African American worldviews and experiences. From Vikings to Narragansetts to Atlantic Africans and others, this issue of *Mainsheet* represents stories and voices that will broaden and expand our collective conversations around maritime societies beyond how we have historically engaged in these narratives.

The second issue of *Mainsheet* will explore maritime economy and technology, as leaders in government and innovators in industry look toward the exponential rise in the pursuit of a sustainable “blue” economy. As Mystic Seaport Museum engages in global conversations about new and efficient ship design, propulsion fuel technologies, sustainable aquaculture, energy sources, and undersea robotics as part of a new blue economy, we also remember our own iconic ship *Charles W. Morgan*, which represents the height of blue economy and technology when it was launched in 1841, purpose-built for the exploitation of whales. The issue will consider the trajectory of maritime economics and related technologies globally and across time.

There are many people to thank for their part in the creation of this journal. I would like to recognize, first and foremost, our generous supporter of this inaugural issue, Mr. John Zittel, who believed from the start that *Mainsheet* could play an essential role in elevating maritime scholarship. Championing the effort are Museum Trustees Richard Clary and Richard Vietor and the rest of the Editorial Board members, all of whom have volunteered many hours in their busy schedules to advise on the evolution of this publication. We are deeply grateful to them all for their time and expertise. I am thankful to Mystic Seaport Museum President, Peter Armstrong, for supporting the idea for this journal two years ago when I suggested, with my usual earnestness, that this was an important project for the field and for the institution. And to our Chairman, Mike Hudner, and the rest of the Mystic Seaport Museum Trustees, thank you for the enthusiasm and dedication that made this possible.

We are so fortunate to have an excellent internal *Mainsheet* staff team to oversee every detail of *Mainsheet's* execution under the superb leadership of Managing Editor, Michelle Turner. Of course, to our expert contributors, reviewers, artists, and poets, thank you for producing such excellent and engaging content for our inaugural issue; you have set the bar very high for the next one. And to the global seafarers whose hard work at sea often goes unnoticed, thank you for allowing us to include your incredible photographs that tell your sea stories so eloquently, and to ITF Seafarers' Trust for all that you do for mariners worldwide.

Lakuna Design has crafted a stunning and elegant journal; thank you, Misi and Dave Narcizo for your vision and expertise. Naming a new journal is *almost* as challenging as naming a new boat, and I have to thank renowned interior designer and dear friend Leslie Banker for coming up with the winner! Finally, to all of those at Mystic Seaport Museum who have come before us, your legacy is and will always be part of all we do; thank you for your stewardship and devotion to excellence.

Maritime studies are the key to our shared experience. It is impossible to consider our cultural, scientific, economic, social, or even physiological development without consideration of the sea above and below the surface. It is also impossible to understand where we are and where we are going without understanding where we have been. We hope to elevate and broaden deeper insight into how maritime studies, past, present, and future are an essential part of our global heritage. We welcome all of our readers to join us in celebrating and supporting this new and exciting chapter in maritime studies.

Christina Connett Brophy, PhD
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