



The Lobster Coast: Rebels, Rusticators, and the Struggle for a Forgotten Frontier

Colin Woodard

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“A thorough and engaging history of Maine’s rocky coast and its tough-minded people.”—*Boston Herald*

“[A] well-researched and well-written cultural and ecological history of stubborn perseverance.”—*USA Today*

For more than four hundred years the people of coastal Maine have clung to their rocky, wind-swept lands, resisting outsiders’ attempts to control them while harvesting the astonishing bounty of the Gulf of Maine. Today’s independent, self-sufficient lobstermen belong to the communities imbued with a European sense of ties between land and people, but threatened by the forces of homogenization spreading up the eastern seaboard.

In the tradition of William Warner’s *Beautiful Swimmers*, veteran journalist Colin Woodard (author of *American Character: A History of the Epic Struggle Between Individual Liberty and the Common Good*) traces the history of the rugged fishing communities that dot the coast of Maine and the prized crustacean that has long provided their livelihood. Through forgotten wars and rebellions, and with a deep tradition of resistance to interference by people “from away,” Maine’s lobstermen have defended an earlier vision of America while defying the “tragedy of the commons”—the notion that people always overexploit their shared property. Instead, these icons of American individualism represent a rare example of true communal values and collaboration through grit, courage, and hard-won wisdom.

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