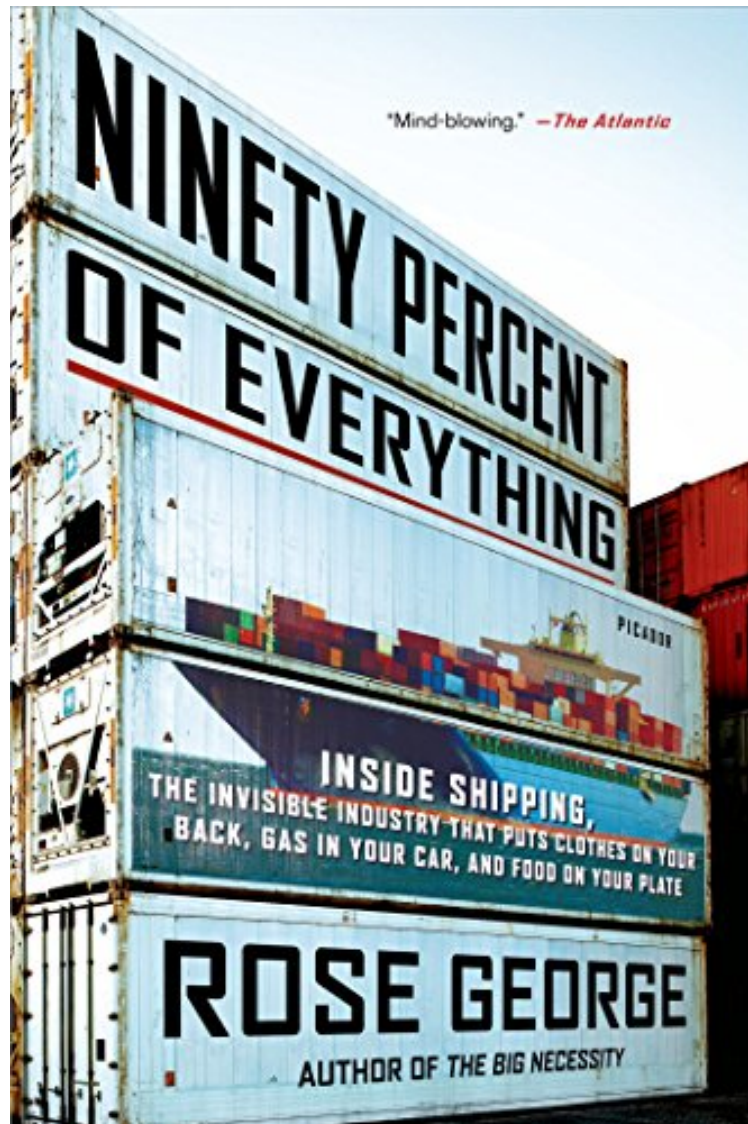


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Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry That Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate

Rose George

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Rose George : Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry That Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry That Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate*:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Insightful views into the invisible world that delivers all our stuff
By Karen L. Shumway
Ninety percent of everything we use comes from overseas; this isn't new information. But the realities of pirate waters, flag states, and working conditions were shockingly so. The author does a good job of weaving together the differences between the merchant navies of the early twentieth century and the life of a modern seafarer. I had no idea just how wild the sea still is, how free from regulation and responsibility shipowners now are. The book is long and the transitions between some of its elements seem awkward, but I'm not sure there's a better way to accomplish her goals in this narrative. Using a nearly retired sea captain's reminiscences to tie together past and present humanize what could otherwise be a mountain of dry facts.
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating
By Paige R. Penland
Fantastic book, easy to read, very informative, arguably important. I bought this after catching the author's Ted Talk, and it was better than I dared to hope. Her voyage on container ships is the fascinating narrative holding her research into the industry together, so you get a real feel for the magnitude of each ship, and shipping and general, as well as the effects of loneliness, cost-cutting, and piracy on the brave men and women who accompany each precisely engineered container around the world. Just about every purchase you've ever made relies on the systems and people described in this book. Click if you're at all curious about how it works.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating Account of what goes on in the Shipping Industry!
By Arthur Robinson
Rose George has written a most enjoyable and educational book. There are no dull moments in this work and her accounts of the piracy that is rampant in the Indian Ocean is truly amazing. You will be outraged at some unscrupulous ship owners who are protected behind layers upon layers of secrecy when they fail to ensure the most basic human rights and for the safety of the crews that man their ships. I was dumbfounded to learn that there are currently over 500 hostages in the hands of Somali pirates. These poor souls have been abandoned by the ship owners and their home nations as expendable because they are so easily replaced. In the event of an environmental disaster resulting from a ship wreck it is sometimes impossible to bring negligent ship owners to justice due to "flags of convenience" and the aforementioned layers of secrecy. This leaves the captains and crew out in the open to take the full force of the legal system and and outrage of public opinion, when very often they are least responsible for the catastrophe. The only reason that I became aware of "90%" is through the recommendation of a CBC radio news anchor and I'm very glad that I followed up and purchased the book. Buy it; You won't regret the purchase!

Eye-opening and compelling, the overlooked world of freight shipping, revealed as the foundation of our civilization
On ship-tracking websites, the waters are black with dots. Each dot is a ship; each ship is laden with boxes; each box is laden with goods. In postindustrial economies, we no longer produce but buy. We buy, so we must ship. Without shipping there would be no clothes, food, paper, or fuel. Without all those dots, the world would not work. Freight shipping has been no less revolutionary than the printing press or the Internet, yet it is all but invisible. Away from public scrutiny, shipping revels in suspect practices, dubious operators, and a shady system of "flags of convenience." Infesting our waters, poisoning our air, and a prime culprit of acoustic pollution, shipping is environmentally indefensible. And then there are the pirates.
Rose George, acclaimed chronicler of what we would rather ignore, sails from Rotterdam to Suez to Singapore on ships the length of football fields and the height of Niagara Falls; she patrols the Indian Ocean with an anti-piracy task force; she joins seafaring chaplains, and investigates the harm that ships inflict on endangered whales. Sharply informative and entertaining, *Ninety Percent of Everything* reveals the workings and perils of an unseen world that holds the key to our economy, our environment, and our very civilization.

From Publishers Weekly
Though the romance is gone from seafaring life, journalist George's (*The Big Necessity: The Unmentionable World of Human Waste and Why It Matters*) multifaceted exploration of the global shipping industry gamely reintroduces an element of wonder. Nearly all goods sold worldwide are transported by container ship, which make workaday passage through the Straits of Malacca, the Suez Canal, and other channels kept in constant motion by an expanding global economy. One of George's main points is that freight shipping remains largely behind the scenes, leading to a byzantine system of concealed ownership structures, convoluted regulations, a labor force largely drawn from developing nations, and inhumane working conditions. In a lengthy, thoughtful section, George takes to sea on the *Kendal*, a container ship of the Maersk shipping line, and explores these issues, and the very real threat of piracy along the Somali coast. George's work unfortunately suffers from a civilian's perspective on a closed professional fraternity. She searches for the poetry and elevated thought that informs literary accounts of a life at sea, but as one of the pragmatic crewmen notes: "For us, it is just work." 10 bw illus. (Aug.)
From Booklist
In her debut work of nonfiction, *The Big Necessity* (2008), George profiled the generally unmentionable topic of human waste. In a similar vein, her latest work plumbs the ins and outs of the shipping industry, a subject that can more easily be discussed in polite company but somehow rarely is. It turns out shipping's virtual invisibility has as much to do with deliberate attempts by industry magnates to deflect scrutiny of unsafe working conditions and shady business dealings as it does with public indifference. In between chapters describing the voyage she took on the massive, 20-story freighter *Maersk Kendal* to research her book, George provides a wealth of detail about shipping's inner

workings, from statistics on the amount and types of ships crossing our oceans to snapshots of the unheralded crew members who keep them running. She is also unsparing in exposing the hazards of contemporary seafaring life, including often unreported but rampant acts of piracy. George provides an engaging, much-needed, and in-depth tribute to shipping's essential role in providing worldwide goods and services. --Carl Hays Consistently absorbing . . . Timely as well as deft . . . George's spirited book cracks open a vast, treacherous and largely ignored world. ---New York Times