

4A—Re-theorizing the Library #2

“The Foundation of Naval Science”: Alfred Thayer Mahan’s *The Influence of Sea Power upon History and the Library of Congress Classification System*

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The presentation argues that the inclusion of naval science as a standalone class in the Library of Congress’ 1904 classification scheme resulted from the convergence of several historical trends, including the changing organization of knowledge, imperialist expansion, and the profit-seeking of the publishing industry. At the intersection of these trends stands a single book: Alfred Thayer Mahan’s *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, published in 1890. By laying out the multiple influences that served to create a single problematic class in a popular classification scheme, we hope to provide a framework to better understand the origins of such oppressive systems.