

Atlantic Canada in an Atlantic World? Northeastern North America in the Long 18th Century

JERRY BANNISTER

Cet article examine les études récentes sur l'histoire du nord-est de l'Amérique du Nord des débuts de la modernité, et les grandes tendances de l'histoire du monde atlantique, de celle de l'empire britannique et de l'histoire canadienne. Il explore la transformation du nord-est de l'Amérique du Nord au fil du 18^e siècle et soutient que les conflits qui éclatèrent en 1744 (ce que j'appelle la « guerre de Quarante Ans ») ont servi de creuset de l'histoire régionale. Il affirme que les territoires qui sont devenus le Canada atlantique partagent, du point de vue historique, des caractéristiques distinctives qui diffèrent des tendances dominantes des débuts de l'histoire américaine. De plus, il fait valoir qu'il faut se méfier des cadres d'analyse qui se moquent de l'histoire régionale et qui privilégient les perspectives transnationales.

This article discusses recent studies of early modern northeastern North America and broader trends in Atlantic world, British imperial, and Canadian history. It explores the transformation of northeastern North America during the 18th century, and suggests that the conflicts that started in 1744 (what I call the “Forty Years’ War”) were a crucible in regional history. It suggests that the histories of the territories that became Atlantic Canada share distinguishing features that differ from the dominant patterns in early American history. And it argues that we should be wary of analytical frameworks that deride regional history and privilege transnational perspectives.

OVER THE PAST DECADE, A NEW WAVE OF SCHOLARSHIP has swept the early history of Atlantic Canada. Many of these studies have drawn on, and contributed to, international trends in the history of the Atlantic world. They remain conceptually divided in some respects but, with few exceptions, they reject the stereotype of northeastern North America as an isolated backwater. Historians of Atlantic Canada working in 2014 do not lack for excellent regional studies by thoughtful scholars; neither is there a lack of attention from mainstream Canadian historians. No reasonable observer today can complain that our history is not being written or that we are being ignored by the rest of Canada. Lacunae and regional stereotypes certainly persist, but they are far less prevalent and much less potent within Canada than they were a generation ago. The problem now is twofold. First, there remains a tendency among historians working outside Canada – whether Atlantic world, imperial, American, or globalist in orientation – to dismiss British

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North America generally and the northeastern region particularly as a backward and marginal place. Second, the benefits of adopting international frameworks come with the potential costs of distorting the early history of Atlantic Canada, particularly the impact of 18th-century warfare, and isolating it from Canadian history. If, as Tina Loo has recently argued, Canadian history has become a “species at risk,” there is a need to reassess the history of Atlantic Canada and its place within the ongoing debate over national history.¹

What follows is a hybrid essay that combines aspects of a bibliographic review, historiographic discussion, and historical interpretation. While I try to cover as many of the regional studies of the early modern period as possible, significant gaps remain and my essay does not comprise an exhaustive, up-to-date bibliography. I examine primarily the long 18th century and the studies that chart the ways in which northeastern North America transformed during a period of sustained inter- and intra-imperial conflict. And although I offer assessments of the impact of this scholarship, my essay offers neither a systematic nor a critical assessment of the extant historiography. This is, in part, because I want to avoid focusing only on the high-profile monographs that have attracted attention outside Canada, and also because I want to make connections among diverse studies without descending into serial book reviews. My essay also slips back and forth between varying definitions of northeastern North America and the territory that eventually became Atlantic Canada. This reflects the overlapping nature of the definitions themselves and the ways that historians have deployed them, as well as my own uncertainties over where and how the geographic and temporal lines of inquiry should be drawn. Finally, my essay considers patterns in the recent historiography of early modern northeastern North America and their relationship to broader trends in Atlantic world, British imperial, and Canadian history. I suggest that the histories of the territories that eventually became Atlantic Canada share important distinguishing features, and I argue that the period of warfare that started in 1744 (what I call the “Forty Years’ War”) was a crucible in the history of northeastern North America.

The challenges facing historians today are, in many ways, similar to those addressed by the “new” history of Atlantic Canada as chronicled at the turn of the 21st century. As the special issue of *Acadiensis* in 2000 put it, historians face a case of “back to the future.”² From the 1970s through to the 1990s, the “*Acadiensis* generation” of historians – led by T.W. Acheson, David Alexander, Phillip Buckner, Gail Campbell, Margaret Conrad, Ernest Forbes, David Frank, James Hiller, Colin Howell, John Reid, et al. – worked to establish the study of Atlantic Canada as a viable field in its own right. Their goal was to study the region on its own terms and to

1 Tina Loo, “Species at Risk,” *Canada’s History* (October–November 2013), <http://www.canadashistory.ca/Magazine/Tina-Loo/October-2013/Species-at-risk>. For an overview of the current debates over national history, see Mark Sholdice, “The History Wars in Canada,” *Toronto Review of Books* (May 2013), <http://www.torontoreviewofbooks.com/2013/05/the-history-wars-in-canada/>. For comments on earlier versions of this paper, I thank Phillip Buckner, Emily Burton, Ed Cavanagh, Jack Crowley, Chris Dummitt, Stephen Hornsby, Jeffers Lennox, Tina Loo, Elizabeth Mancke, Jeff McNairn, Justin Roberts, Hillary MacKinley, and Liam Riordan.

2 Special Issue, “Back to the Future: The New History of Atlantic Canada,” *Acadiensis* XXX, no. 1 (Autumn 2000).

counter the prevailing dominance of central Canadian perspectives.³ They were passionately committed to promoting regional history and debating political issues – whether regional identities, outmigration, or economic underdevelopment – and they tended to adopt a comparative perspective that measured the Atlantic provinces against their continental neighbours to the west and south. After the heyday of the *Acadiensis* generation, which culminated in the two-volume synthesis published over 1993-94, the field divided as historians searched for new ways to conceptualize the histories of its four provinces.⁴ New research in areas such as Aboriginal, labour, gender, and women's history complicated the master-narratives of regional development. While the borderlands approach emerged as a possible alternative framework, historians disagreed over its applicability to Atlantic Canada and they worried over the future of the field.⁵ Such worries prompted Margaret Conrad and James Hiller to call for a perspective that encompassed the imagining and re-imagining of the region over time, in order to ensure that Atlantic Canadian history remained a viable subject.⁶ Other historians, notably Ian McKay, expressed scepticism of whether the field in its current form could be saved. "Why even have a field of Atlantic Canadian history," McKay asked in *Acadiensis*, "if Atlantic Canada is an empty space upon which we multiply our incompatible and incommensurate stories?"⁷ As the recent *Shaping an Agenda for Atlantic Canada* collection demonstrates, scholars remain divided on the question of whether there is, or even should be, an Atlantic Canada to study.⁸

As historians of Atlantic Canada debated the future of their field, their counterparts working on the Atlantic world steadily expanded the depth and scope of their research. With strong institutional support from Ivy League universities, Atlantic world historians over the past generation have produced dozens of influential books on topics that crisscross Europe, the British Isles, Colonial America, West Africa, the South Atlantic, and the Caribbean.⁹ The dominant

3 See Peter Oliver, "Redressing the Balance – the Prairie West, Atlantic Canada and the Historiography of Canadian Regionalism," *Acadiensis* IX, no. 1 (Autumn 1979): 113-20; Carman Miller, "The Atlantic Provinces and the Problem of 'Regionalism,'" *Acadiensis* XI, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 130-4; Ramsay Cook, "Regionalism Unmasked," *Acadiensis* VIII, no. 1 (Autumn 1983): 137-42; and Phillip Buckner, "'Limited Identities' and Canadian Historical Scholarship: An Atlantic Provinces Perspective," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 23 (1988): 177-98. For a recent assessment, see Phillip Buckner, "Defining Identities in Canada: Regional, Imperial, National," *Canadian Historical Review* 94, no. 2 (June 2013): 289-311.

4 Phillip Buckner and John Reid, eds., *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History* (Toronto and Fredericton: University of Toronto Press and Acadiensis Press, 1994); E.R. Forbes and D.A. Muise, eds., *The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation* (Toronto and Fredericton: University of Toronto Press and Acadiensis Press, 1993).

5 Stephen Hornsby, Victor Konrad, and James Herlan, eds., *The Northeastern Borderlands: Four Centuries of Interaction* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1989).

6 Margaret Conrad and James Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Region in the Making*, Illustrated History of Canada (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2001); Margaret Conrad, et al., "Forum: Reimagining Regions," *Acadiensis* XXXV, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 127-63.

7 Ian McKay, "A Note on 'Region' in Writing the History of Atlantic Canada," *Acadiensis* XXIX, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 89-101.

8 Donald Savoie and John Reid, eds., *Shaping an Agenda for Atlantic Canada* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2011).

9 There is not space here to give even a partial list of the major publications, but for influential assessments of the historiography, see Peter Coclanis, "*Drang nach Osten*:" Bernard Bailyn, the

characteristic of this research has been its ambitious emphasis on forging an inclusive account of the diverse peoples and cultures of the Atlantic rim. This has produced an intellectual rainbow encompassing everything from a Black, Red, White, or Green Atlantic to an English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, or Catholic Atlantic – and even a criminal Atlantic. Despite this diversity, studies by Atlantic world historians generally share two common traits: they are oriented outwards towards the sea, rather than inwards towards the continent, and they view the Atlantic Ocean as a type of highway that linked peoples together rather than a barrier that kept them apart. Although historians have disagreed sharply over the scope of Atlantic world history, they generally agree on its basic premise: the imperative to transcend national and regional perspectives. In doing so, they have benefitted from the concomitant internationalization of scholarship across the humanities and social sciences in North American universities. While globalization remains contentious as a geopolitical phenomenon, it has swept historical scholarship as an analytical framework.¹⁰ Evidence of the globalization of history can be seen across the academic landscape in North America – from trends in undergraduate curricula to faculty hiring – and the Atlantic world framework is part of a much larger movement towards internationalization that has reshaped Canadian history and Canadian universities.¹¹

Like most intellectual fashions, the Atlanticist turn was neither as new nor as radical as it appeared to be. Two generations ago, J.H. Parry had explored the formation of the Atlantic world in his classic study *The Age of Reconnaissance*. Parry and other maritime historians were writing transnational history well before the term became popular. He used the term “reconnaissance” to convey the highly tentative and contested nature of European expansion: the creation of empires was a multifaceted process, not a singular event.¹² The process through which Europeans voyaged across the seas and forged empires – part of which, of course, would become Atlantic Canada – was rooted in a much larger history of negotiation and conflict. From this perspective, 1492 is not only the year of Columbus’s voyage but also the culmination of the *Reconquista*, when Christian forces conquered the last Muslim region of the Iberian Peninsula. Closer to home, W.S. MacNutt’s

World-Island, and the Idea of Atlantic History,” *Journal of World History* 13 (Spring 2002): 169-82; Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Jack Greene and Philip Morgan, eds., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault, eds., *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

10 For a recent discussion of how this international comparative perspective applies to the early modern period, see H.V. Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke, and John G. Reid, “Introduction: Britain’s oceanic empire,” in *Britain’s Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds, c. 1550-1850*, ed. H.V. Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke, and John G. Reid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-11.

11 For an account of how this perspective has become the dominant framework in Canadian history, see Christopher Dummitt, “After Inclusiveness: The Future of Canadian History,” in *Contesting Clio’s Craft: New Directions and Debates in Canadian History*, ed. Christopher Dummitt and Michael Dawson (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, 2009), 98-122.

12 J.H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance: Discovery, Exploration, and Settlement, 1450-1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

contribution to the Canadian Centenary series marked the first serious attempt to integrate the early histories of the four Atlantic provinces and to place them in their imperial contexts.¹³ MacNutt's study was limited by the extant published research on which he could draw, but it showed the possibilities for conceptualizing history outside of conventional provincial or national models.¹⁴ Still, if Atlantic world history is not as novel as its proponents claim, it has changed the way we view North American history in general and the study of Atlantic Canada in particular. First, it adopts a de-centered approach that rejects privileging Anglo-centric narratives or perspectives. It stresses the agency of non-European peoples, particularly Aboriginals and Africans, who play far larger and more powerful roles than they did in previous accounts. And it emphasizes the highly contested and contingent nature of imperial history. This has produced a welcome move away from structuralist history and a refreshing return to narrative tools and micro-history. Emphasizing contingency and agency is particularly important for studying the pre-Confederation period, because it mitigates the distortion of viewing the region's early history through a 21st-century prism.

Accompanying the rise of Atlantic world history has been what many have called a "new" imperial history. Imperial history, in this sense, differs considerably from Carl Berger's classic formulation of the political link between the British Empire and English-Canadian nationalism.¹⁵ It offers the opportunity, as Kathleen Wilson argues, "to rethink the genealogies and historiographies of national belonging and exclusion."¹⁶ Viewed from this vantage point, migration, settlement, and state formation were never purely domestic phenomena cut off from the imperial politics of ethnicity, religion, and war.¹⁷ According to Douglas R. Owrn, "The historiography of Empire in Canada, therefore, is in reality only partly about the Empire. It is instead the story of Canada and her main link to the wider world."¹⁸ Like Atlantic world history, the new imperial history favours inclusive perspectives that

13 W.S. MacNutt, *The Atlantic Provinces: The Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1965).

14 On the debate over agency as an analytical tool, see Robin Jarvis Brownlie and Mary-Ellen Kelm, "Desperately Seeking Absolution: Native Agency as Colonialist Alibi?" *Canadian Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (December 1994): 543-56, and Douglas Cole and J.R. Miller, "Desperately Seeking Absolution: Responses and a Reply," *Canadian Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (December 1995): 628-43.

15 Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

16 Kathleen Wilson, "Histories, Empires, Modernities," in *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840*, ed. Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3. See also Elizabeth Mancke, "Early Modern Imperial Governance and the Origins of Canadian Political Culture," *The Canadian Journal of Political Science* 32 (March 1999): 3-20.

17 On this interpretation of state formation, see Michael Braddick, "State Formation and Social Change in Early Modern England: A Problem Stated and Approaches Suggested," *Social History* 16 (January 1991): 1-17, and John Brewer, "The Eighteenth-Century British State: Contexts and Issues," in *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, ed. Lawrence Stone (New York: Routledge, 1994), 54.

18 Douglas R. Owrn, "Canada and the Empire," in *Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume 5: Historiography*, ed. Robin Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 146-8.

consider culture and ideology alongside formal political and legal institutions. Its impact can be seen in the recent Oxford University Press volume devoted to Canada, which features separate chapters dedicated to Aboriginal history, women and gender, global processes, and French Canada.¹⁹ The best of this scholarship, as Phillip Buckner points out, rejects seeing Britain as the centre and the rest as merely a series of peripheries, preferring instead to examine the different ways through which power was negotiated and contested at the colonial and community levels.²⁰ This perspective has implications for regional history because, as John Reid has shown, British authority did not become dominant in the Maritimes until the late 18th century. Reid argues that we should consider regional history through the concurrent processes of colonial habitation, imperial exchange, and Aboriginal engagement. Seeing northeastern North America this way is important, Reid asserts, because it offers “a counterweight to two common but flawed notions of colonization: the idea of the colony as an essentially institutional phenomenon, the creature of the imperial state; and the Whiggish belief that small-scale communities must necessarily, unless they should fail, be the prelude to the growth of larger ones and thus form part of the ineluctable process by which North America became a colonized space.”²¹

While Reid and others have promoted new ways of rethinking the history of the northeast, they have also debated how to apply an Atlantic world framework to Canadian history. As an exchange between John Reid and Luca Codignola in *Acadiensis* put it, how wide is the Atlantic Ocean? Can Atlantic Canada be placed in a global context without becoming marginalized?²² How far can our historical canvas be stretched before it tears apart? In a forum on whether there was a “Canadian Atlantic,” historians expressed their reservations toward the Atlantic world approach and its applicability to Canadian history.²³ To speak of a pre-Confederation “Canadian Atlantic” in any literal sense is anachronistic, of course, and the notion of a modern nation state would have been alien to the peoples living in the region in the mid-18th century. While contributors to the forum discussed the merits of adopting transnational and global perspectives, their colleagues in Britain, the United States, and other countries debated the viability of the Atlantic world framework itself. What has been perhaps most striking about the Atlantic world scholarship over the past decade is, in fact, its lack of stability and cohesion. From almost the moment of David Armitage’s now-famous (and rather facetious) comment “We are all Atlanticists now,” historians have disagreed over what Atlantic world history should encompass.²⁴ Some critics of the Atlantic world approach have

19 Phillip Buckner, ed., *Canada and the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

20 Phillip Buckner, “Introduction: Canada and the British Empire,” in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 1-20.

21 John G. Reid, with contributions from Emerson W. Baker, *Essays on Northeastern North America: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 15-16.

22 Luca Codignola and John G. Reid, “Forum: How Wide is the Atlantic Ocean?” *Acadiensis* XXXIV, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 74-87.

23 John G. Reid with H.V. Bowen and Elizabeth Mancke, eds., “Is there a ‘Canadian’ Atlantic World?” *International Journal of Maritime History* 21, no. 1 (June 2009): 263-95.

24 David Armitage, “Three Concepts of Atlantic History,” in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 11.

argued that it is merely a stalking horse for American national history or British imperial history, others have derided it as a poor substitute for global history, and Armitage himself has recently declared Pacific world history to be the next frontier.²⁵ Yet, at its best, Atlantic world history is an inclusive tool that enables scholars to transcend national boundaries (both temporal and spatial) and to place their own work in a meaningful comparative framework. The real value of the Atlantic world approach lies not in its literal application but in its use as a heuristic device to place disparate geographies and peoples in a larger context. The challenge is how to explore trans- and circum-Atlantic connections without losing sight of regional variations. As with most conceptual frameworks, the devil is in the details.

One solution, offered by Stephen Hornsby, is to view the Atlantic world through the lens of geographic spheres based on patterns of socioeconomic development. Hornsby argues that British America can be divided schematically into three types of spaces: a British Atlantic, which included Newfoundland, the West Indies, and Hudson Bay; an American frontier, which covered the settled colonies from Massachusetts to Georgia; and an intermediate space, which comprised port towns and areas dominated by continental staples. The splits between these spaces of power formed the structural faults that eventually divided the Thirteen Colonies from the rest of the British Empire. On the one hand, the British Atlantic, which encompassed much of present-day Atlantic Canada, formed a type of oceanically oriented marine empire marked by staples trade, naval force, and metropolitan authority. The extreme specialization of the cod fishery, the sugar islands, and the fur trade inhibited the emergence of alternative economic enterprises, leaving mercantile elites with little local competition for power. The continued dominance of metropolitan capital and political influence meant that these Atlantic territories remained tightly wedded to Britain. On the other hand, the American frontier comprised an agriculturally oriented settler empire marked by population growth, capital accumulation, and local autonomy. The socio-economic diversification of these agricultural settlements produced colonial elites comprised of merchants and planters who were less dependent on metropolitan power. Whereas American expansion was internal and landward, British expansion remained external and seaward. The French territories that Britain acquired following the Seven Years' War fit uneasily with the settled American colonies, contributing to the political friction that precipitated the American Revolution.²⁶

Another approach has been to conceptualize northeastern North America as primarily Aboriginal space. John G. Reid has argued that we need to move beyond the narrative of inexorable imperial expansion and colonial settlement. Reid has

25 See James Epstein, Rafe Blaufarb, Eliga H. Gould, and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, "AHR Forum: Entangled Histories in the Atlantic World," *American Historical Review* 112, no. 3 (June 2007): 710-99; Karen Wigen et al., "Forum: Oceans of History," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (June 2006): 717-80; Alison Games et al., "Forum: Beyond the Atlantic," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 63, no. 4 (October 2006): 675-743; and especially Martine van Ittersum and Jaap Jacobs, "Are We All Global Historians Now? An Interview with David Armitage," *Itinerario* 36, no. 2 (August 2012): 25.

26 Stephen J. Hornsby, *British Atlantic, American Frontier: Spaces of Power in Early Modern British America* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2005).

stressed the protracted and complex negotiations between European and Aboriginal peoples generally and the importance of Mi'kmaw strategies particularly in the development of northeastern North America. Focusing on the variable of colonial residency rather than formal colonization mitigates the prevailing scholarly bias toward large, permanent settlements peopled by Europeans. Reid argues that the history of the northeast prior to 1775 should be seen as Aboriginal history, because the British were unable to exert effective control over this territory until after the arrival of the Loyalists.²⁷ Along with his fellow contributors to the “*Conquest*” of 1710 collection, Reid emphasizes the centrality of Aboriginal agency, the vibrancy of Acadian communal life, and the relative impotence of imperial rule. The authors challenge what they see as the bankrupt notion that we should see the early 18th century as a “colonial era,” because this fails to take into account how Aboriginal and Acadian communities prospered after the Treaty of Utrecht.²⁸ Unable to contain the Mi'kmaq militarily, British officials negotiated treaties at Boston in 1725 and at Annapolis Royal the following year, in which they promised not to interfere with Aboriginal people's hunting, fishing, or agriculture. The legacies of these and subsequent treaties negotiated in 1752 and 1760-61 are still being felt today, as William Wicken has demonstrated, which is why comparisons across time remain as important as comparisons across geography.²⁹ The regional ineffectiveness of British military power contributed to the viability of Acadian neutrality and ensured that imperial rule remained markedly hollow prior to the founding of Halifax. And Thomas Peace has recently shown how, after the conquest of 1710, most Mi'kmaq moved away from European strongholds and maintained autonomy from British authority.³⁰

If northeastern North America was in many respects a predominantly Aboriginal space in the 18th century, recent scholarship has also demonstrated the ways in which it was shaped by the Black Atlantic world. Building on the foundational work of James Walker, scholars such as Kenneth Donovan, Harvey Amani Whitfield, Barry Cahill, and Catherine Cottreau-Robins have deepened our understanding of the role of slavery in areas claimed by both the French and the English.³¹ Drawing on the extensive

27 Reid, *Essays on Northeastern North America*.

28 John G. Reid et al., *The “Conquest” of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

29 William Wicken, *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land and Donald Marshall Junior* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); William Wicken, *The Colonization of Mi'kmaw Memory and History, 1794-1928: The King v. Gabriel Sylliboy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

30 Thomas Peace, “Two Conquests: Aboriginal Experiences of the Fall of New France and Acadia” (PhD diss., York University, 2011); Thomas Peace, “The Slow Process of Conquest: Huron-Wendat Responses to the Conquest of Quebec, 1697-1791,” in *1759 Revisited: The Conquest of Canada in Historical Perspective*, ed. Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 115-40.

31 James W. Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone*. 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); Kenneth Donovan, “Slaves and Their Owners in Ile Royale, 1713-1760,” *Acadiensis* XXV, no. 1 (Autumn 1995): 3-32; Harvey Amani Whitfield and Barry Cahill, “Slave Life and Slave Law in Colonial Prince Edward Island, 1769-1825,” *Acadiensis* XXXVIII, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2009): 29-51; Catherine Cottreau-Robins, “A Loyalist Plantation in Nova Scotia, 1784-1800” (PhD diss., Dalhousie University, 2012).

international literature on the African slave trade, they have overturned the popular myth that slavery was largely absent from Atlantic Canada. Although the number of slaves in the Maritimes was relatively low compared to the southern American colonies or the Caribbean, their presence shaped the region culturally, politically, and legally. While Barry Cahill and James Walker have debated how we should define the Black Loyalists (and whether we should even use the term),³² Harvey Amani Whitfield has expanded the field further to encompass the Black refugees who arrived after the War of 1812. In *Blacks on the Border*, Whitfield demonstrates how the refugees confronted harsh local conditions, worked to forge communities, and developed a distinctive cultural identity. Whitfield employs a primarily continental rather than transatlantic comparative perspective, but his emphasis on agency and transnational patterns fits well with the broader intellectual trends over the past decade.³³

As historians challenged traditional notions of colonization in the northeast, they also reconsidered the English Atlantic. Following the path blazed a generation ago by Ian Steele, historians have re-examined English economic activity and settlement patterns in the North Atlantic world.³⁴ In *Fish into Wine*, Peter Pope explains how the Newfoundland cod fishery acted as a massive transatlantic pump through which thousands of men and women (and tens of thousands of pounds in capital) circulated annually around the Atlantic rim.³⁵ Pope illustrates how the cod fishery was tied economically and culturally to other commodities, particularly alcohol and tobacco, in a nascent capitalist system of production and exchange. In doing so, he successfully challenges long-standing misconceptions about the dearth of local settlement and commerce in 17th-century Newfoundland. Far from being on the periphery of the English Atlantic, Newfoundland was the heart of a consumer economy through which staples such as saltfish were traded for wine and other luxuries. Powerful transatlantic connections affected state formation and colonial politics as well as patterns of trade and commerce. Merchants in Newfoundland participated in international commercial networks that linked the cod fishery to the Mediterranean world and beyond.³⁶ Equally important, Newfoundland was also, as

32 Barry Cahill, "The Black Loyalist Myth in Atlantic Canada," *Acadiensis* XXIX, no. 1 (Autumn 1999): 76-87; James W. St.G. Walker, "Myth, History and Revisionism: The Black Loyalists Revisited," *Acadiensis* XXIX, no. 1 (Autumn 1999): 88-105.

33 Harvey Amani Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border: The Black Refugees in British North America, 1815-1860* (Lebanon, VT: University of Vermont Press, 2006).

34 Ian Steele, *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

35 Peter Pope, *Fish into Wine: The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

36 The extensive literature on transatlantic mercantile networks includes John Mannion, "Irish Merchants Abroad: The Newfoundland Experience, 1750-1850," *Newfoundland Studies* 2, no. 2 (1986): 127-90; Gordon Handcock, *Soe Long as There Comes no Women: English Migration and Settlement in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1989); Olaf Janzen, "'They are not such great Rogues as some of their Neighbours': A Scottish Supercargo in the Newfoundland Fish Trade, 1726," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 17, no. 2 (2001): 294-309; Terry McDonald, "The One in Newfoundland, the Other in England: Ledgard, Gosse and Chancey, or Gosse, Chancey and Ledgard?" *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 20, no. 2 (2005): 209-31; and Allan Dwyer, "Fogo Island and the French in Italy: A Letter from the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 21, no. 2 (2006): 309-18.

Willeen Keough has shown in *The Slender Thread*, part of a vibrant Irish Atlantic world that shaped the development of fishing communities well into the 19th century.³⁷ Within this Irish Atlantic world, plebeian women were “not engulfed by the constraints of separate sphere ideology or constructions of passivity, fragility and dependence.”³⁸ They played a crucial role in community formation and exerted a strong influence over regional culture and religion.

Like their counterparts working in Newfoundland history, historians of the Maritimes have confronted entrenched myths about regional development. While Peter Pope’s book overturns myths concerning 17th-century economic development, Julian Gwyn’s *Excessive Expectations* tackles the popular belief that early Nova Scotia experienced a golden age of prosperity.³⁹ Where Pope emphasizes 17th-century Newfoundland’s economic strengths, Gwyn stresses 18th-century Nova Scotia’s weaknesses. The expulsion of the Acadians undermined the development of agriculture in Nova Scotia, and the colonial economy remained highly vulnerable to outside pressures. In *The Spirit of Industry and Improvement*, Daniel Samson broadens the scope of Nova Scotia’s economic history to encompass liberal transatlantic movements in the 19th century.⁴⁰ Whereas other historians moved Atlantic Canada from the margins of empire, Samson moves rural society to the heart of colonial development. The theme of rural agency is extended into the Saint John River Valley in Béatrice Craig’s *Backwoods Consumers and Homespun Capitalists*, which considers how labouring Madawaskans constructed an economic hub that straddled Lower Canada, New Brunswick, and New England. Debunking myths of regional backwardness, Craig shows how local people made rational choices to limit their exposure to volatile export industries by focusing instead on agricultural strategies that offered economic diversification and mitigated risk. Weaving, for example, was not an example of rural stagnation but rather of women taking advantage of market opportunities as they arose.⁴¹ Like Keough, Craig challenges conventional presumptions of cultural backwardness and social isolation.

Recent studies of the French Atlantic world also explore the issues of regional development and marginality. In *Plaisance, Terre-Neuve*, Nicolas Landry applies a methodology similar to the framework employed by Peter Pope. Like Pope, Landry provides an intensive analysis of settlement patterns and mercantile networks.⁴² Unlike the English fishing outports in Newfoundland, Plaisance represented an official attempt by France to establish a formal colony: authorities encouraged the settlement of entire families, and established a functioning local government in

37 Willeen Keough, *The Slender Thread: Irish Women on the Southern Avalon, 1750-1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

38 Willeen Keough, “The Riddle of Peggy Mountain: Regulation of Irish Women’s Sexuality on the Southern Avalon, 1750-1860,” *Acadiensis* XXXI, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 53.

39 Julian Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations: Maritime Commerce and the Economic Development of Nova Scotia, 1740-1870* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998).

40 Daniel Samson, *The Spirit of Industry and Improvement: Liberal Government and Rural-Industrial Society, Nova Scotia, 1790-1862* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2008).

41 Béatrice Craig, *Backwoods Consumers and Homespun Capitalists: The Rise of a Market Culture in Eastern Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

42 Nicolas Landry, *Plaisance, Terre-Neuve, 1650-1713 : Une colonie française en Amérique* (Sillery, QC: Septentrion, 2008).

1689. The population of Plaisance remained relatively small, however, and the colony was ceded to Britain in the Treaty of Utrecht. The fate of Plaisance appears to confirm James Pritchard's thesis that there never really existed a cohesive French Empire in the Atlantic world.⁴³ Pritchard argues that local geographic and economic conditions, rather than imperial governance, fuelled the development of New France. Royal ministers adopted mercantilist policies, but they never enforced them effectively at the colonial level. New France, like the Thirteen Colonies, benefitted from salutary neglect, particularly during the period of peace from 1713 to 1744. In Pritchard's view, French colonies fared best when they were free of the constraints of absolutism to forge links with different territories across the Atlantic world. In *Chasing Empire Across the Sea*, Kenneth Banks pursues the theme of imperial weakness through the conceptual framework of communication. Viewing communication through a wide spectrum – from mapping and hydrography to roads and bridges – Banks finds an imperium without a dominium. It was, he argues, “always in the making but never made.”⁴⁴ Banks's analysis echoes a currently prevalent historiographic trend that emphasizes the collaborative rather than coercive nature of imperial authority.⁴⁵

Making and unmaking empire remains a central theme in research on the British Atlantic world. In *The Fault Lines of Empire*, Elizabeth Mancke compares the development of Liverpool (Nova Scotia) and Machias (Maine), from 1760 to 1830, to uncover the roots of the political differentiation between the United States and Canada.⁴⁶ Mancke, like Craig and Keough, employs intensive case studies to explore community formation, but in particular she investigates how institutional and legal structures shaped colonial political cultures. Whereas Craig and Keough are interested in the ties that bound communities across political boundaries, Mancke is interested in the divisions that rent them apart. For Mancke, the fault that separated Liverpool from Machias – and, by extension, loyal from rebellious colonies – was the divide between the tradition of local self-government in Massachusetts and the newer form of centralized government established in Nova Scotia after 1749. Mancke's framework has influenced other historians working on what has been termed the “Loyal Atlantic.”⁴⁷ This renewed interest in loyalism is part of a larger wave of international scholarship on the impact of revolutions and counter-revolutions in the Atlantic world.⁴⁸ One of the problems facing Canadian historians is that loyalism is

43 James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

44 Kenneth Banks, *Chasing Empire Across the Sea: Communications and the State in the French Atlantic, 1713-1763* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 7.

45 Henry Kamen, *Spain's Road to Empire: The Making of a World Power, 1492-1763* (London: Penguin, 2002).

46 Elizabeth Mancke, *The Fault Lines of Empire: Political Differentiation in Massachusetts and Nova Scotia, 1760-1830* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

47 Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, eds., *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

48 Eliga Gould, “Revolution and Counter-Revolution,” in Armitage and Braddick, *British Atlantic World*, 196-213; Alan Taylor, “The Late Loyalists: Northern Reflections of the Early American Republic,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 1-34; Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

too often assumed to refer solely to the actual Loyalists who fled the American Revolution. Loyalism was not the exclusive preserve of British Tories who used it to combat American Whigs; it encompassed a wide range of diverse peoples across the Atlantic world, such as Quakers, Mohawks, and African slaves, as well as most white colonists in the British Caribbean.⁴⁹ As Maya Jasanoff argues, the vast majority of these people cannot be described as Tory in any literal sense.⁵⁰ While a borderland perspective helps us to understand the regional relationship between Nova Scotia and New England, we need a wider vista to understand the choices of rebellion, loyalty, and neutrality that different peoples made across the Atlantic world.⁵¹

For the Acadians, the impact of conflicts over loyalty and neutrality was felt a generation before the American Revolution. As Naomi Griffiths chronicles in *From Migrant to Acadian*, the early history of the northeast is in large part a story of its peoples navigating between the external and internal pressures of Algonkian and European interests.⁵² Despite Acadia's becoming a royal colony in 1670, imperial authority there was comparatively weaker than it was in Quebec, or even Plaisance, and the seigneurial system was never deeply planted.⁵³ Acadians forged not only productive trading relations with New England but also successful alliances with Aboriginal peoples, especially the Mi'kmaq. Recent archaeological research by Jonathan Fowler and others has charted how the Acadians took advantage of regional opportunities to build communities that were often better fed and healthier than towns in contemporary France.⁵⁴ Griffiths's work illustrates the contingent nature of Acadian agency: on the one hand, their population boomed in a "golden age" under titular British rule, and by 1730 they had won recognition of a type of neutral status; on the other hand, the guerilla conflict in the early 18th century (such as the Deerfield raid of 1704 and the violent reprisals by New Englanders the

49 Robert M. Calhoun, "Loyalism and Neutrality," in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*, ed. Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 247-59; Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

50 Maya Jasanoff, "The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 65, no. 2 (April 2008): 205-32.

51 On the debate over the borderlands framework, see Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History," *American Historical Review* 104, no. 3 (June 1999): 814-41; Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid, "Introduction," in *New England and the Maritime Provinces: Connections and Comparisons*, ed. Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 3-14; and Cañizares-Esguerra, "Entangled Histories: Borderland Historiographies in New Clothes?" *American Historical Review* 112, no. 3 (June 2007): 787-99.

52 N.E.S. Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604-1755* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).

53 For a revisionist perspective on the seigneurial system in Acadia, see Gregory Kennedy, *Something of a Peasant Paradise? Comparing Rural Societies in Acadie and the Loudunais, 1604-1755* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University, 2014).

54 Jonathan Fowler, "From Acadians to Planters in the Grand-Pré Area: An Archaeological Perspective," in *The Nova Scotia Planters in the Atlantic World, 1759-1830*, ed. Stephen Henderson and Wendy Robicheau (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2012), 37-61.

following year) foreshadowed how vulnerable Acadians remained to shifts in regional power.⁵⁵

Guerilla warfare, ethnic conflict, and deportation affected Newfoundland as well. Peter Pope has argued that the D'Iberville Raid of 1696-97 – in which a group of Canadien and Acadian militiamen and Mi'kmaq and Abenaki warriors laid waste to Newfoundland's English shore – constituted a form of ethnic cleansing.⁵⁶ According to Margaret Conrad and James Hiller, it was, "in effect, an English *dérangement*."⁵⁷ And while British authorities complained after the Peace of Utrecht about the lack of fealty from their new subjects in Nova Scotia, they also worried incessantly about the loyalty of Irish Catholics in Newfoundland and discussed expelling them from the island. Echoing his counterpart in Halifax, Governor Drake warned London in 1750 that the Irish in Newfoundland were "notoriously disaffected to the Government, all of them refusing to take the Oaths of Allegiance when tendered to them."⁵⁸ Five years later, on the eve of the expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia, British forces deported French inhabitants from southwestern Newfoundland. Calling the incident "un petit *dérangement*," Olaf Janzen asks whether it should be seen as a dry run for the larger operation unleashed at Grand Pré.⁵⁹ Proposals by colonial officials to restrict or expel the island's resident population continued to circulate after the Seven Years' War, and the Royal Navy tried to discourage the Mi'kmaq from migrating to Newfoundland. Commenting on a proposal by Governor William Waldegrave to send half of the settlers in Newfoundland to Nova Scotia or Upper Canada in 1799, Patrick O'Flaherty notes "the century ended with notions of expulsion still lingering in the British brain."⁶⁰

Imperial intentions and colonial outcomes need to be considered in the larger context of the shifting balance of Aboriginal and European power. Negotiations over sovereignty and authority – through friendship, treaties, oaths, and other means – had been part of the northeastern region's development since the early 17th century, and this continued into the 19th century.⁶¹ But the dynamics of this negotiation changed radically in the mid-18th century. What the Atlantic world looks like depends on *when* you look as much as where you look: for Atlantic Canadian history, timing is everything.⁶² As Geoffrey Plank argues in *Rebellion and Savagery*, the crushing of

55 N.E.S. Griffiths, "The Golden Age: Acadian Life, 1713-1748," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 17, no. 33 (May 1984): 21-34; Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts, 2003).

56 Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 408.

57 Margaret Conrad and James Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2010), 62.

58 Jerry Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals: Law, Custom, and Naval Government in Newfoundland, 1699-1832* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 10.

59 Olaf U. Janzen, *War and Trade in Eighteenth-Century Newfoundland*, Research in Maritime History, no. 52. (St. John's: International Maritime Economic History Association, 2013), 119-28.

60 Patrick O'Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland: A History to 1843* (St. John's: Long Beach Press, 1999), 113.

61 John G. Reid, "Imperial-Aboriginal Friendship in Eighteenth-Century Mi'kma'ki/Wulstukwik," in Bannister and Riordan, *Loyal Atlantic*, 75-102.

62 See Elizabeth Mancke, "Empire and State," in *British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, 175-95, and John G. Reid and Elizabeth Mancke, "From Global Processes to Continental Strategies: The Emergence of British North America to 1783," in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip Buckner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 22-41.

the Jacobite rebellion in Scotland in 1746 changed the British imperial state, and it adopted a much more aggressive policy towards its North American territories. As the veterans of the brutal war in the Scottish Highlands took up new appointments in British America, they brought with them a commitment to see the conflict with France through to the end.⁶³ By 1749 British authorities had unprecedented resources with which to enforce loyalty to the Crown. This changed the balance of regional power that affected a variety of peoples, from the Mi'kmaq and Acadians in Nova Scotia to Irish settlers in Newfoundland. We have tended to see the major developments of this period (e.g. conflicts between the Mi'kmaq and the British in Nova Scotia, sectarian clashes in Newfoundland, the deportation of the Acadians, and Loyalist migrations) as discrete events, but they were each part of a larger struggle over loyalty and the limits to neutrality.⁶⁴ They were elements of a process that stretched across the British Atlantic world, whereby migration (whether enslaved, coerced, or free) formed a tool of imperial policy. From Nova Scotia to Georgia, two jurisdictions which saw the first significant government-subsidized settlement project in North America, British authorities sought to use Protestant settlers to serve imperial goals. While one aim in Georgia was to create a zone of Protestant white settlers as a buffer between African slaves and Spanish regional power, the focus in Nova Scotia was on containing Catholic Acadians and French regional power; yet in both colonies British authorities viewed demography as important as armies or navies in achieving imperial goals.⁶⁵

This brings us back to the question of chronology. As Roger Marsters has recently pointed out, the Walker Expedition of 1711 demonstrated two important things: the military limitations of the British, in large part due to their inability to navigate the Saint Lawrence River, and the expansiveness of British imperial strategy, which envisaged the conquest of New France nearly 50 years before it happened.⁶⁶ What changed between 1711 and 1759 was the ability of the British government to enforce its authority militarily and to project its power strategically. Although historians continue to quarrel over the nature of the first British Empire (and even whether there was an empire prior to 1763), powerful changes began in the 1740s with the reform movement that swept both domestic and imperial politics in England.⁶⁷ The end of salutary neglect

63 Geoffrey Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery: The Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

64 On the legacy of 18th-century conflicts, see Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, and Indian Allies* (New York: Knopf, 2010), and Michel Ducharme, *Le concept de liberté au Canada à l'époque des Révolutions atlantiques (1776-1838)* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010).

65 Winthrop Pickard Bell, *The "Foreign Protestants" and the Settlement of Nova Scotia: The History of a Piece of Arrested British Colonial Policy in the Eighteenth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961). On Georgia's development, see Steven Sarson, *British America, 1500-1800: Creating Colonies, Imagining an Empire* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2005), 178-80.

66 Roger Marsters, "Approaches to Empire: Hydrographic Knowledge and British State Activity in Northeastern North America, 1711-1783." (PhD diss., Dalhousie University, 2012).

67 Nicholas Rogers, "Confronting the Crime Wave: The Debate over Social Reform and Regulation, 1749-1753," in *Stilling the Grumbling Hive: The Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689-1750*, ed. Lee Davison et al. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 155-62.

and the tightening of imperial administration *preceded* the outbreak of war in North America 1754, rather than following the Peace of Paris.⁶⁸ The focus of British and American history is still largely on the Seven Years' War, but war came to the northeast earlier and harder than it did to the older American colonies. The effects of the capture of Louisbourg in 1745 and the violent raid at Grand Pré two years later were recasting the political and cultural landscapes of the northeast well before George Washington's defeat at Fort Mifflin. In September 1746, for example, the Governor's Council at Annapolis Royal discussed reports that "the French Inhabitants of Nova Scotia were uneasy least [*sic*] the English should remove them from their Estates and transport them and their Families to France or Elsewhere"⁶⁹ Although the council took pains to reassure Acadians that rumours of an impending mass deportation were untrue, in a session two months later it reminded the Acadians "that the Estates Real and Personal of all such his Majesties Subjects as shall hold a Voluntary Correspondence with and retire to the Enemy shall be confiscated for his Majesties use."⁷⁰ For British subjects, liberty and property rights depended first and foremost on loyalty.

In 1749 British authorities suspected that the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was merely a temporary truce. They took two major initiatives in northeastern North America: first, their command over the lucrative cod fishery was strengthened through the establishment of an effective naval government in Newfoundland led by Governor George Rodney; second, they established an imperial outpost in Nova Scotia under Governor Edward Cornwallis to provide a strategic base for their North American operations and to compensate for the return of Louisbourg. This was, as Jeffers Lennox explains, a departure from the historic patterns of British imperial governance: for the first time in northeastern North America, a major settlement was planned and publicly funded to further imperial rather than commercial goals. The British government spent well over £500,000 on the founding of Halifax and even more on the larger naval and military operations to protect their Atlantic possessions.⁷¹ The Acadian boundary negotiations, which ran from 1750 to 1755, also reflected a larger transition in imperial relations, as British and French officials tried to solve the problems bequeathed by the Treaty of Utrecht.⁷² During the Seven Years' War, the North Atlantic cod fishery loomed especially large in British strategic thinking because of both its commercial value – the French market for

68 Doron Ben-Atar, "The American Revolution," in *Oxford History of the British Empire*, 5:98-9; Elizabeth Mancke, "Colonial and Imperial Contexts," in *The Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, 1754-2004*, ed. Philip Girard, Jim Phillips, and Barry Cahill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Osgoode Society, 2004), 44-6; John G. Reid and Elizabeth Mancke, "From Global Processes to Continental Strategies: The Emergence of British North America to 1783," in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 22-41.

69 Charles Bruce Fergusson, ed., Minutes for 29 September 1746, *Minutes of His Majesty's Council at Annapolis Royal, 1736-1749* (Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 1967), 90-1.

70 Fergusson, Minutes for 14 November 1746, *Minutes of His Majesty's Council at Annapolis Royal*, 94-5.

71 Jeffers Lennox, "An Empire on Paper: The Founding of Halifax and Conceptions of Imperial Space, 1744-55," *Canadian Historical Review* 88, no. 3 (September 2007): 373-412.

72 Jeffers Lennox, "Nova Scotia Lost and Found: The Acadian Boundary Negotiation and Imperial Envisioning, 1750-1755," *Acadiensis* XL, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2011): 3-31.

saltfish was larger economically than the total fur production in Canada – and its military importance as a “nursery of seamen” for the Royal Navy. In 1761 William Pitt refused to negotiate peace until the French government surrendered its claim to the cod fishery.⁷³

Recent scholarship highlights the regional impact of imperial militarization. The transformation of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia was one of many by-products of the expansion of British naval power. Its impact was initially felt in the expansion of the Royal Navy and the British government’s war on piracy, in which roughly 500 suspected pirates were executed from 1715 to 1730.⁷⁴ As Julian Gwyn explains, the establishment of the North American squadron in 1745 altered the regional balance of power. The squadron may have been relatively small by the standards of the Royal Navy, but it and the Newfoundland squadron were large enough to project British authority into the bays and harbours across the northeast.⁷⁵ Both French and British officials prized the cod fishery as a critically important source of trained sailors for their navies, but until recently historians, myself included, had falsely assumed that the notion that the North Atlantic was a “nursery for seamen” was largely a mercantilist myth. Studies by Keith Mercer and Martin Hubley have shown that the Royal Navy did, in fact, impress many thousands of sailors from ports throughout the Atlantic region.⁷⁶ As Mercer explains, press gangs were a clear and present danger for many communities in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, fuelling resentment that eventually boiled over into riots.⁷⁷ Accompanying the expanded naval presence were more than 2,500 British soldiers and settlers who landed on the Chebucto Peninsula in 1749, followed over the next four years by another 2,000 Protestant settlers recruited from Europe. Their presence destabilized the region, and the Mi’kmaq harassed Halifax and rejected Governor Cornwallis’s call to sign a new peace treaty. Cornwallis ordered attacks on the Mi’kmaq and placed a bounty on scalps, while French authorities at Louisbourg and Quebec offered similar bounties for British scalps. Cornwallis’s actions continue to reverberate today – the renaming of Cornwallis Junior High attracted national media attention in 2011 – and Daniel Paul and others continue to petition for the removal of Cornwallis’s statue and his

73 Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Random House, 2000), 483.

74 Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), chap. 6 (283-5).

75 Julian Gwyn, *Frigates and Foremasts: The North American Squadron in Nova Scotia Waters, 1745-1815* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003); Julian Gwyn, *Ashore And Afloat: The British Navy And the Halifax Naval Yard Before 1820* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2004).

76 Keith Mercer, “Sailors and Citizens: Press Gangs and Naval-Civilian Relations in Nova Scotia, 1756-1815,” *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society* 10 (2007): 87-113; Keith Mercer, “Planters and Press Gangs: A Social History of Naval Impressment in Liverpool, Nova Scotia, 1759-1815,” in Henderson and Robicheau, *Nova Scotia Planters in the Atlantic World*, 205-42; Martin Hubley, “Desertion, Identity and the Experience of Authority in the North American Squadron of the Royal Navy, 1745-1812” (PhD diss., University of Ottawa, 2009).

77 Keith Mercer, “Northern Exposure: Resistance to Naval Impressment in British North America, 1775-1815,” *Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 2 (June 2010): 199-232; Keith Mercer, “The Murder of Lieutenant Lawry: A Case Study of British Naval Impressment in Newfoundland, 1794,” *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 21, no. 2 (Fall 2006): 255-89.

name from a city street and park.⁷⁸ Geoffrey Plank captures the troubled legacy of Cornwallis's actions: "If the proclamations of 1749 were our only source of information about political thought in Nova Scotia during the war that followed, we would be justified in assuming that the combatants understood their conflict in starkly simple terms, that everyone involved understood the conflict as a race war, and that the Micmac and the British were single-mindedly determined to drive each other from the peninsula of Nova Scotia."⁷⁹ Plank argues that British attitudes towards the Mi'kmaq and the Acadians were neither simple nor static – Cornwallis's successor, Peregrine Thompson Hopson, concluded a treaty of friendship with a group of Mi'kmaq east of Halifax – and the tragic events such as the expulsion of the Acadians were not inevitable. It was not until the second conquest of Louisbourg in 1758 that the last regional bastion of French military power was removed.⁸⁰

As the recent designation of Grand Pré as a UNESCO World Heritage Site indicates, there exists tremendous public and scholarly interest in Acadian history in general and the deportation in particular. While Canadian historians still focus far more on the conquest of New France, the ongoing renaissance in Acadian scholarship has helped to correct this imbalance. As a number of scholars have explained, the deportation of the Acadians cannot be understood as merely a historical event.⁸¹ It remains, like the Aboriginal treaties of the mid-18th century and the conquest of 1760, a process that is still being felt, understood, and reinterpreted.⁸² In 2003, when the federal government on behalf of the Queen acknowledged the expulsion, Heritage Minister Sheila Copps asserted "We are turning the page on one of the darkest moments of our collective history." Euclide Chiasson, leader of the Société Nationale des Acadiens, stated "I think this recognition, this proclamation is very important for our people."⁸³ In *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie*, Ronald Rudin describes how Aboriginal and Acadian groups "used the interest in the past generated by a significant anniversary to begin

78 "Halifax founder's name to disappear from school: First Nations representative pushed for change," CBC News, 23 June 2011, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/story/2011/06/23/ns-halifax-cornwallis-school-rename.html>. See also Daniel Paul, *We Were Not the Savages: Collision Between European and Native American Civilizations*, 3rd ed. (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2006).

79 Geoffrey Plank, "The Two Majors Cope: The Boundaries of Nationality in Mid-18th Century Nova Scotia," *Acadiensis* XXV, no. 2 (Spring 1996): 34.

80 A.J.B. Johnston, *Endgame 1758: The Promise, the Glory, and the Despair of Louisbourg's Last Decade* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2008).

81 Robert Viau, "L'épée et la plume : La persistance du thème de la Déportation acadienne en littérature," *Acadiensis* XXXVI, no. 1 (Automne 2006): 51-68; Chantal Richard, "Le récit de la Déportation comme mythe de création dans l'idéologie des Conventions nationales acadiennes (1881-1937)," *Acadiensis* XXXVI, no. 1 (Automne 2006): 69-81; Marc Robichaud, "L'histoire de l'Acadie telle que racontée par les jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick : construction et déconstruction d'un récit historique," *Acadiensis* XL, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2011): 33-69; Maurice Basque, "Atlantic Realities, Acadian Identities, Arcadian Dreams," in *Shaping an Agenda for Atlantic Canada*, ed. Donald Savoie and John Reid (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2011).

82 Phillip Buckner and John Reid, eds., *Remembering 1759: The Conquest of Canada in Historical Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012); Wicken, *Colonization of Mi'kmaq Memory and History*.

83 CBC News, "After 248 years, Acadian expulsion acknowledged," 10 December 2003, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2003/12/10/acadian031210.html>. Ibid.

a long-term project designed to generate hope among people who had long felt powerless.”⁸⁴ Yet, despite this interest, there remains the question of how, or even whether, Acadian history should be integrated into the history of Atlantic Canada. P.D. Clarke has argued that Acadian historiography “sits uncomfortably straddled between two intellectual traditions. Maritime by virtue of its object, it is no less defined by its insistence on the unique place Acadie occupies within French America.” While Acadian history does not fit within the national history of modern Quebec, it does not fit into Maritime history without affirming, according to Clarke’s interpretation, “the legitimacy of its ethnicization.”⁸⁵

The evolution over the past decade in our understanding of the expulsion of the Acadians reflects historians’ efforts to grapple with tangled questions of identity, authority, and loyalty. Naomi Griffiths’s pioneering scholarship has emphasized the need to avoid not only seeing Acadians as passive victims, but also looking for simple causal explanations that assign guilt to a single group or person. Rather than focusing on the proximate causes of the deportation, Griffiths stresses the resiliency of Acadian culture to endure and even prosper after 1764.⁸⁶ While Griffiths considers imperial and Atlantic factors, Geoffrey Plank extends his analysis further to identify a key turning point in the 1740s – when British authorities in London and New England decided to isolate the Acadians from the Mi’kmaq and to assimilate them into a Protestant colonial polity.⁸⁷ Like Fred Anderson, who invoked the term “ethnic cleansing” in his landmark narrative of the Seven Years’ War,⁸⁸ Plank is hesitant to identify causes and allocate blame. He argues that the deportation of the Acadians and the treatment of the Mi’kmaq were manifestations of two broader changes in the mid-18th century: first, many British officials and soldiers who had been directly involved in the brutal suppression of the Jacobite uprising of 1745 brought to North America the belief that “culturally distinct communities residing within the nominal boundaries of the empire were inherently subversive”; second, in the wake of failed diplomacy and years of conflict, British and colonial American officials increasingly embraced a view that “villainized native peoples and authorized the use of almost indiscriminate violence against them.”⁸⁹ For Plank, the Acadians were casualties of a war and a changing strategic world in which neutrality was no longer viable. Instead of focusing on internal developments within Acadian or Mi’kmaq communities, this perspective stresses how external pressures pushed regional history. Christopher Hodson’s recent study of the Acadian diaspora takes this approach further by adopting an international framework that de-emphasizes the agency and resiliency of local Acadian communities. Challenging Griffiths’s

84 Ronald Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie: A Historian’s Journey Through Public Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 277.

85 P.D. Clarke, “L’Acadie perdue; Or, Maritime History’s Other,” *Acadiensis* XXX, no. 1 (Autumn 2000): 85.

86 N.E.S. Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History, 1686-1784* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992).

87 Geoffrey Plank, *An Unsettled Conquest: The British Campaign against the Peoples of Acadia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

88 Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 114.

89 Plank, *Unsettled Conquest*, 160-1.

interpretation, Hodson rejects histories of the Grand Dérangement that “have emphasized continuity, persistence, and a happy ending.”⁹⁰

No other historian has taken this trend as far as John Mack Faragher. In his provocative book, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, Faragher claims that the expulsion of the Acadians marked the first episode of state-sponsored ethnic cleansing in North American history. Citing a 1992 United Nations definition of ethnic cleansing, Faragher argues that the events of 1755 were the results of neither the fog of war nor the actions by the Mi’kmaq or Acadians but rather of colonial officials coldly and systematically deciding to execute a conspiracy many years in the making. What was different for officials in Halifax and Boston in 1755 was the military opportunity before them, not their enmity towards French Catholics. For Faragher, the deportation is a fundamentally American saga with important lessons for today: “It has not been easy for Americans. It requires recognizing the wider realms of our history and acknowledging the dark side of our past, the evil means men used to pursue the end of continental expansion.” He concludes: “The Acadian story tells us a story of America. A story of frontiers and borderlands at the founding moment of American history, of a people born *on the margins of empire* who sought a way to live with two masters, of those who attempted to foster peace, and of those who out of hatred and fear, jealousy and greed, pursued the ways of war.”⁹¹

A counter-balance to this US-centric perspective is provided by *Du Grand Dérangement à la Déportation*, edited by Ronnie-Gilles LeBlanc, which illustrates the different ways in which the deportation can be understood intellectually and culturally. The collection considers issues such as genealogy, historical demography, French attitudes, and family history.⁹² Like Faragher, LeBlanc sees the deportation as a tragedy with wider national implications, but he sees it through a different cultural lens that rejects the premise of marginality: “Aussi, l’histoire acadienne c’est finalement l’histoire du Canada à ses débuts. Souvent, on est porté à, du moins quand moi j’étais à l’école, l’histoire du Canada se limitait essentiellement à l’histoire du Québec, de la Nouvelle-France, et l’Acadie on en parlait comme ça. Alors, je pense qu’il est grand temps qu’on récupère l’Acadie et puis faire connaître le passé tragique. On a souvent l’impression qu’au Canada tout a marché comme sur des roulettes, qu’il n’y a pas trop de drames.”⁹³ The results of this approach can be seen in the *1755: L’Histoire et Les Histories* website, created in 2007 by the Centre d’études acadiennes at the Université de Moncton. Citing recent research in Acadian history, the website distinguishes between the actual deportations that occurred in 1755-64 and the larger Grand Dérangement that began in 1749 and stretched to 1816. It considers both remote and proximate causes, and traces events and peoples

90 Christopher Hodson, *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 6.

91 John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from Their American Homeland* (New York: Norton, 2005), 479-80 (emphasis added).

92 Ronnie-Gilles LeBlanc, ed., *Du Grand Dérangement à la Déportation : nouvelles perspectives historiques* (Moncton: Chaire d’études acadiennes, Université de Moncton, 2005).

93 Transcript of online presentation given by Ronnie-Gilles LeBlanc, “Apprendre et enseigner l’histoire acadienne,” Champlain en Acadie website, <http://www.histori.ca/champlain/perspective.do;jsessionid=ECE041779256D0F1CB9A7CB9D6FB4539.tomcat1?perspectiveID=346&size=S>.

from the early development of Acadie through the decisions and actions of 1755 to the resistance and re-formation of Acadian identity. Like the heritage website sponsored by Memorial University, or the *Remembering Black Loyalists* website developed by the Nova Scotia Museum, the *1755 : L'Histoire et Les Histoires* website connects scholarship, teaching, and public history.⁹⁴

As the growing array of regional online resources attests, the early history of Atlantic Canada is now as vibrant as any field in Canadian history. In many respects, the field has progressed significantly since John McCusker and Russell Menard, in their influential economic history, called for more research on the northeast because it had not received the scholarly attention it deserved.⁹⁵ Yet the inclusion of a strong chapter on Atlantic Canada, by Peter Pope, in the *Blackwell Companion to Colonial America* remains the exception rather than the rule in American and British imperial history.⁹⁶ Much more typical are two collections – *Colonial America in an Atlantic World* and *Atlantic Lives: A Comparative Approach to Early America* – that lavish attention southwards towards colonies in the Caribbean and Spanish Empire but restrict their northern attention to a New France that does not extend to Acadie.⁹⁷ Globally oriented volumes have been equally selective. Three popular Atlantic world volumes – *The Atlantic World in the Age of Empire*, *The Atlantic World*, and *The Atlantic in Global History* – cover a wealth of topics, from Jewish culture to Atlantic liberation theology, but the closest they come to northeastern North America is to offer a chapter on Boston.⁹⁸

As historians of British imperialism have looked increasingly to the Iberian empires and the South Atlantic for their points of reference, recent scholarship has emphasized the entangled nature of Atlantic history.⁹⁹ Commenting on the impact of John Elliott's comparative study, Bernard Bailyn observes: "Gradually, as once 'submerged' transnational structures and large-scale patterns are perceived, the outlines of an immensely complex but cohesive multicultural region come into view."¹⁰⁰ If such

94 "1755: L'Histoire et Les Histoires," Centre d'études acadiennes website, <http://139.103.17.56/1755-html/entreee68f.html?lang=fr>. See also "Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Web Site," Memorial University, <http://www.heritage.nf.ca/>, and "Remembering Black Loyalists, Black Communities in Nova Scotia," Nova Scotia Museum website, <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/blackloyalists/>.

95 John McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 112-13.

96 Peter Pope, "Comparisons: Atlantic Canada," in *A Companion to Colonial America*, ed. Daniel Vickers (New York: Blackwell, 2003).

97 T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall, eds., *Colonial America in an Atlantic World* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004); Timothy Shannon, *Atlantic Lives: A Comparative Approach to Early America* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004).

98 Thomas Benjamin, Timothy Hall, and David Rutherford, eds., *The Atlantic World in the Age of Empire* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001); Wim Klooster and Alfred Padula, eds., *The Atlantic World: Essays on Slavery, Migration, and Imagination* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005); Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Erik Seeman, eds., *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000* (New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007).

99 J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

100 Bernard Bailyn, "Introduction: Reflections on Some Major Themes," in *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and Patricia Denault (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 3.

perspectives free us from parochialism and help us to forge new meta-narratives, they also squeeze out scholarly space for demographically smaller regions such as Atlantic Canada. Even in sophisticated recent studies, such as Thomas Benjamin's *Atlantic World* synthesis, or Jack Greene and Philip Morgan's *Atlantic History: A Critical Reappraisal* collection, substantive coverage of northeastern North America is hard to find.¹⁰¹ The single best survey of pre-1800 North America – Alan Taylor's *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* – devotes separate chapters to every colonial region except the territory that comprises Atlantic Canada.¹⁰²

The reason for this lack of attention is largely a question of scale. The histories of demographically smaller regions, in any broader transnational survey, are bound to get lost in larger narratives, especially when the historians themselves mostly live and work in large American and British cities. If the *Acadiensis* generation had difficulty challenging the region's marginality within mainstream Canadian history, putting Atlantic Canada on the international map is even harder. The problem, however, is that with the lack of serious attention come two distortions of the history of Atlantic Canada: one produced by British imperial history, the other produced by American colonial history. The first distortion is particularly evident in the *Oxford History of the British Empire*. As Phillip Buckner argues, in embracing aspects of the new imperial history, such as the role of informal empire, the Oxford volumes ended up replacing some of the old scholarly errors with new ones.¹⁰³ If the older imperial scholarship had focused too much on North America and formal institutions, the new perspective writes the settler colonies largely out of the imperial narrative. This was due partly to scholarly networks – Buckner points out that only one of the forty-four authors in the first two volumes is based in Canada and has written extensively on Canadian history – but it was due also to the prevailing intellectual ethos that divides the British Empire geo-ethnically: nascent liberalism, economic opportunism, and civilian governance for the colonies where settlers of British and European origin formed the majority; and backward authoritarianism, economic clientelism, and military autocracy for the territories where minority colonial elites ruled over non-European peoples.

As a region where Aboriginal, French, and Irish peoples formed the majority of the population prior to 1755, northeastern North America fits uneasily within analytical frameworks that divide imperial history neatly along lines of whiteness. According to John Shy's essay in the *Oxford History of the British Empire*, "The white population of the American colonies was arguably the most gently governed, lightly taxed, least oppressed people in the eighteenth-century Western world."¹⁰⁴ In the wake of the American Revolution, P.J. Marshall asserts, "the contrast between local self-rule for white societies and autocracy for the rest that marked the

101 Greene and Morgan, *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Thomas Benjamin, *The Atlantic World: Europeans, Africans, Indians and Their Shared History, 1400-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

102 Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Penguin, 2001).

103 Phillip A. Buckner, "Was there a 'British' Empire? *The Oxford History of the British Empire* from a Canadian Perspective," *Acadiensis* XXXII, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 110-28.

104 John Shy, "The American Colonies in War and Revolution, 1748-1783," in Marshall, *Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume II: The Eighteenth Century*, 308.

nineteenth-century Empire was coming into being.”¹⁰⁵ By identifying whiteness and liberty as mutually reinforcing, this model distorts the history of the northeast because it largely overlooks how British authorities used authoritarian measures to regulate the public lives of Irish and Acadian Catholics as well as peoples of African descent and Aboriginal peoples. The “white population” of northeastern North America, moreover, was not gently governed after the wars that began in 1744, nor would they attain responsible government until more than a century had passed. Ireland may have lost its own Parliament in the Act of Union, but at least propertied Irishmen could elect Protestant members of Parliament to London (and Catholic MPs after 1829); their counterparts in British North America had to content themselves with variants of representative government prior to 1848. Equally important, French subjects of the Crown have received considerably less attention in British imperial history.¹⁰⁶ For imperial authorities, French Canadians posed significant problems because of their Roman Catholicism, their suspected republicanism, and their ethnic identity.¹⁰⁷ Even colonies with Anglophone majorities were viewed warily. In Halifax, arguably the most British of possessions in the Atlantic world, English travelers reacted ambiguously to a place they perceived as both alien and familiar.¹⁰⁸

If Acadie has been the “other” in the historiography of the Maritimes, then British North America is perhaps the “other” in British imperial historiography. Though geographically large, it was demographically and economically small – “governed largely by default,” according to Peter Marshall. He concludes: “The role played by North America in the Empire long remained a *marginal* one. For all the attention given to them, furs and fish did not make essential contributions to the British economy, and certainly did not justify the costs of colonial defence.” The problem is not just scale but also deviance. “If independence depended on material growth,” Marshall claims, “there was no realistic prospect of its achievement.”¹⁰⁹ According to this perspective, British North America was a double failure: its colonies failed to get out of the empire when the American Revolution came and then failed to pull their weight in it afterwards. As Phillip Buckner demonstrates, such a perspective itself fails to account for the continued importance of North Atlantic territories in imperial governance.¹¹⁰ Marshall’s

105 P.J. Marshall, “Britain Without America – A Second Empire?” in *Oxford History of the British Empire*, II:590.

106 Colin Coates, “French Canadians’ Ambivalence to the British Empire,” in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip Buckner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 181-99; Serge Courville, “Part of the British Empire, Too: French Canada and Colonization Propaganda,” in *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 129-41.

107 Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Louis-Georges Harvey, *Le printemps de l’Amérique française : américanité, anticolonialisme et républicanisme dans le discours politique québécois, 1805-1837* (Montréal : Éditions du Boréal, 2005).

108 Jeffrey L. McNairn, “‘Everything was new, yet familiar’: British Travellers, Halifax and the Ambiguities of Empire,” *Acadiensis* XXXVI, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 28-54.

109 Peter Marshall, “British North America, 1760-1815,” in *Oxford History of the British Empire*, II:386, 392 (emphasis added). It should be noted that Peter Marshall and P.J. Marshall are different people.

110 Buckner, “Was There a British Empire?” 110-28.

simple message – that we should pay less attention to fish and fur – is clear enough, but there is a more subtle insinuation here that bears directly on the historiography of Atlantic Canada. Like the entrenched central Canadian attitudes against which the *Acadiensis* generation struggled in the 1970s and 1980s, this imperial vision measures value according to the metropole. In this view, a province's or a colony's history is important insofar as it relates to perceptions of national or imperial interests. Marginality is taken for granted according to the relative distance from those interests.

A second distortion emanates from attempts to impose a framework from the colonial history of the United States. This problem is a vestige of the American exceptionalism that still infects British Atlantic world history. The most influential proponent for reorienting American colonial history has been Jack Greene, who argues that historians have laboured under the false assumption that the southern colonies were deviant and the New England colonies were normative.¹¹¹ Greene claims that it was New England that was exceptional, as nearly every other territory lacked a unified social vision, common political purpose, or sophisticated economic organization. Only in the years leading up to the American Revolution did the development of the Thirteen Colonies begin to converge as their societies became increasingly complex. Despite Greene's calls for a more inclusive approach, there remains a common presumption among Atlantic historians that decentralized economic opportunism and advantageous political neglect were normative throughout the British Empire until 1763. This perspective can be seen in the recent revival of scholarly interest in political concepts of liberty. In *Exclusionary Empire* Greene argues that the capacity for preserving liberty rested primarily on two institutions – juries and parliament – recreated in the Thirteen Colonies, which became functionally republican before they became anti-monarchical. Greene concludes: "These conditions explain why, during the North American settler revolt that began in 1774-1776, the transition from monarchy to republican government was so easy in those polities that had the wherewithal to participate in the revolt."¹¹² In this view, the British colonies that remained loyal – including the ones that later formed the basis of Atlantic Canada – are developmentally delayed. Greene's framework is part of a larger trend in Atlantic world history that focuses on the "age of revolutions" and the intellectual traditions, especially republicanism, employed in toppling European empires in the Americas. Research on the revolutionary, or red, Atlantic spans a variety of different approaches – from the meta-narrative of *The Many-Headed Hydra* to detailed local studies of maritime communities – but they share a common emphasis on the agency of colonial peoples in challenging colonial rule.¹¹³ From the war against the Maroons through the slave revolts that culminated

111 Jack Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607-1788* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986); Jack Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

112 Jack P. Greene, "Introduction: Empire and Liberty," in *Exclusionary Empire: English Liberty Overseas, 1600-1900*, ed. Jack P. Greene (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 13.

113 Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000); Paul Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia:

in the Haitian Revolution, historians have given us a remarkably rich picture of how Atlantic peoples created their own cultural worlds.¹¹⁴ The problem for Atlantic Canadian historians is how to engage with this literature without falling into the trap of seeing British North America as deviant because it witnessed neither salutary neglect nor revolution and national independence between 1744 and 1867.

The answer to this problem is to apply international scholarship carefully and selectively to Atlantic Canadian history. As Adele Perry explains, Canadian historians have increasingly oriented their research in transnational and global frameworks.¹¹⁵ Perry's argument echoes the point made earlier by John Reid that scholars need to transcend nationalist frameworks that impose anachronistic teleologies and homogenize the diverse historical experiences of the peoples who happen to have lived in a particular area. Similarly, Michel Ducharme has argued that we need to place Canadian history in the broader Atlantic context of the revolutionary era. For Ducharme, the intellectual and political debates over liberty in British North America are crucial because they enable us to move beyond what he terms "the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary binary" and the divide between French Canadian and English Canadian historiography. "The Atlantic framework, imported from outside Canada," according to Ducharme, "could help the historians of Canada's 'Two Solitudes' engage in dialogue on neutral ground."¹¹⁶ Both Perry's broad celebration of transnational history and Ducharme's narrower call for "Atlantic and Atlantic-revolutionary frameworks" are laudable but not essential goals: their value is contingent on the specific context, the skill of the historian, and the goal of the research. As Christopher Dummitt has pointed out, the dominant trend in Canada towards inclusiveness contains its own dangers of exclusion. Placing too much faith in scholarly trends (whether global, imperial, transnational, or Atlantic world history) risks packaging fields into neat labelling that distorts both the history and the historiography. If taken too far, these labels can produce harmful heuristics in which we judge an entire field according to which category we slot the historians working in it. In other words, as Dummitt puts it, "The category becomes the history."¹¹⁷

While many research questions and contexts lend themselves to transnational approaches, others do not. Variations across time matter every bit as much as variations across geography and culture: a comparative methodology that works in one period may not work in another. One drawback of transnational and global frameworks is that they privilege comparisons across geography over comparisons

University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Christopher P. Magra, *The Fishermen's Cause: Atlantic Commerce and Maritime Dimensions of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

114 David Geggus, ed., *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Charleston, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2002); Nathalie Dessens and Jean-Pierre Le Glaunec, eds., *Haïti : regards croisés* (Paris : Manuscrits de l'Université, 2007); Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

115 Adele Perry, "Nation, Empire and the Writing of History in Canada in English," in Dummitt and Dawson, *Contesting Clío's Craft*, 123-40.

116 Michel Ducharme, "Canada in the Age of Revolutions: Rethinking Canadian Intellectual History in an Atlantic Perspective," in Dummitt and Dawson, *Contesting Clío's Craft*, 174.

117 Dummitt, "After Inclusiveness," in Dummitt and Dawson, *Contesting Clío's Craft*, 113.

across time.¹¹⁸ It is unquestionably desirable to identify and study broad connections across different peoples, cultures, and polities; however, it is equally imperative to understand how a region like Atlantic Canada changed over time and to avoid dismissing the distinctive features of its history because they do not fit the dominant narrative of British imperial history or American national history. The first law of history is the law of selection: no matter what framework a historian chooses, she or he will still end up making choices of inclusion and exclusion. All historical perspectives are, one way or another, constructions that historians make temporally and geographically, and none has an essential claim to superiority. Whereas the “Acadiensis generation” struggled against an English Canadian nationalist agenda that disdained regional history, the current generation faces transnational, imperial, Atlanticist perspectives that disdain parochialism. The problem, of course, is how we define “parochialism.” As Laurel Thatcher Ulrich demonstrated in her award-winning book, *A Midwife’s Tale*, it is indeed possible to write micro-history that is deeply rooted in a specific region yet widely resonant across boundaries and cultures.¹¹⁹ In a seemingly quotidian biography of a midwife living in Maine, Ulrich combined analytical breadth with evidentiary depth in a way that was anything but parochial. The choices Ulrich made in crafting her remarkable book speak to the importance of placing broad scholarly questions firmly in their local contexts. Such choices strike at the heart of understanding the early history of Atlantic Canada.

A central fact of that history is that the northeast was not predominantly British in culture or demography prior to 1784. The idea of “Atlantic Canada” is of course a construct open to all sorts of objections, but it is viable because the histories of its four component provinces have more in common than they have differences. As Cole Harris’s recent synthesis makes clear, the Maritimes and Newfoundland shared similar environments and reliance on staple industries.¹²⁰ The dominant frameworks for British Atlantic world history, British imperial history, and American history – which emphasize colonial autonomy and decentralized opportunism prior to 1763, and revolutionary and liberal movements thereafter – fail to explain the contested process through which northeastern North America transformed into a space dominated by Protestant Anglophones. The colonial polities that formed the basis of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador were each forged during the Forty Years’ War. Spanning the outbreak of war in 1744 through the aftermath of the Revolutionary War, this period witnessed the demographic and political origins of Atlantic Canada. Like William Keylor’s use of the Thirty Years’ War to explain the period from 1914 to 1945, my argument is that the major events of this era need to be considered together as parts of a larger conflict.¹²¹ Each of the five

118 For an example of how such comparisons across time can be fruitfully made, see Peter E. Pope, “The English and the Irish in Newfoundland: Historical Archaeology and the Myth of Illegal Settlement,” in *Ireland and Britain in the Atlantic World*, ed. Audrey Horning and Nick Brannon (Dublin: Wordwell Books, 2010), 217-34.

119 Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife’s Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard Based on her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Knopf, 1990).

120 Cole Harris, *The Reluctant Land: Society, Space, and Environment in Canada before Confederation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), chaps. 6-7.

121 William R. Keylor and Jerry Bannister, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*. 1st Canadian ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2005), Pt. One.

colonies (counting Cape Breton, from 1784 to 1820) were either founded or thoroughly reorganized as a direct consequence of the warfare that swept the region between King George's War and the arrival of the Loyalists: the establishment of naval government in Newfoundland in 1749, the founding of Halifax also in 1749 and introduction of representative government in 1758, the establishment of St. John's Island (renamed Prince Edward Island in 1799) via proprietary land grants in 1767 and colonial status in 1769, and the founding of New Brunswick and Cape Breton in 1784. The large-scale demographic shifts in the region during this period of warfare – the sponsoring of the “Foreign Protestants,” the expulsion of the Acadians, the immigration of the New England Planters, and the arrival of refugees from the American Revolutionary war (including the Black Loyalists) – tipped the balance of regional power away from the Mi'kmaq and the French and towards the British.¹²²

At the same time that authorities in Halifax were ordering the deportation of the Acadians, their counterparts in St. John's were overseeing the repression of the religious liberties of Irish Roman Catholics, who were forbidden to attend Mass. Naval governors in St. John's never ordered the mass deportation of Irish settlers in Newfoundland, but they considered it and they worried incessantly about sedition and rebellion. While British officials established a system of naval government in Newfoundland very different from the popular rhetoric of British justice and liberty, they instituted a system of proprietary land grants for St. John's Island that diverged sharply from the legal regimes established in most of the Thirteen Colonies. The watershed treaties of peace and friendship between the British and the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet in 1760-61 – which were at the heart of the *Marshall* case in 1999 – were negotiated in the context of strategic shifts in power due to warfare, migration, and deportation. The official founding ideal of New Brunswick, as expressed in Edward Winslow's notion of arousing “the envy of the American states,” conflicts with the conventional “age of revolutions” framework. The Loyalists were far from a homogenous group and, as David Bell reminds us, once they arrived in New Brunswick they were often not particularly “loyal” in the narrow sense of local politics.¹²³ They brought a variety of backgrounds and political views that included a mixture of republican and monarchist doctrines, but also a broadly shared opposition to revolution.¹²⁴ Most Loyalists opposed not the idea of America itself but the belief in rebellion against the Crown as an acceptable political choice. Even in Newfoundland, which received few refugees from the Thirteen Colonies, efforts to secure loyalty among British subjects were felt. The relaxation of the penal laws and the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland in 1784 were by-products of British concerns to secure the loyalty of the Irish following the American Revolution. Protestant fears of a popular insurrection by Irish Catholics in

122 The events described in this and the following paragraph are covered well in Conrad and Hiller, *Atlantic Canada*, chaps. 6-8.

123 David G. Bell, *Early Loyalist Saint John: The Origins of New Brunswick Politics, 1783-1786* (Fredericton: New Ireland Press, 1983); David G. Bell, *Loyalist Rebellion in New Brunswick: A Defining Conflict for Canada's Political Culture* (Halifax: Formac Publishing, 2013).

124 On Loyalist culture, see Bonnie Huskins, “‘Remarks and Rough Memorandums’: Social Sets, Sociability, and Community in the Journal of William Booth, Shelburne, 1787 and 1789,” *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society* 13 (2010): 103-32.

Newfoundland were never realized, despite the uprising in 1800 in St. John's,¹²⁵ but these fears formed links in a chain of memory that bound the island's political culture for generations. Up until the eve of the grant of representative government in 1832, officials in London maintained that Newfoundland was too underdeveloped socially to sustain a local assembly – one of the most basic of English liberties.

The legacies of the Forty Years' War were, and still are, felt throughout the region that became Atlantic Canada. They contrast with the current scholarly trend that emphasizes liberalism as the defining ethos of Canada. Ian McKay and Janet Ajzenstat advocate starkly different interpretations of liberalism and its impact on Canada, but they both share a faith that its rise in the 19th century largely explains Canadian history.¹²⁶ Bringing the history of Atlantic Canada more fully into the national debate over liberalism in Canadian history would help to deepen our understanding of how factors such as warfare, migration, and loyalism shaped the development of British North America. Liberalism and radicalism played major roles in the public life of British North America, as Rusty Bittermann explains in his history of the Escheat Movement on Prince Edward Island, but it is important to recognize that this came a generation *after* warfare had already transformed it.¹²⁷ For the Thirteen Colonies, by contrast, the crucible of war meant something very different. Recently, Jack Greene has argued that historians have placed too much emphasis on warfare and too little on the impact of the period of peace from 1713 to 1739. For Greene, the "wages of peace" enjoyed by American colonies paid dividends in the form of economic expansion and political independence. This view may fit the Thirteen Colonies, but it fails to account for the large territory northeast of Massachusetts, where the French and the Mi'kmaq reaped most of the benefits of peacetime expansion.¹²⁸ For this territory, the outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession brought a generation of upheaval that would, by 1784, bind it more closely to Great Britain.

Geographic marginality is in the eye of the beholder. While nearly all of the historians of Atlantic Canada make creative connections beyond the region, whether across oceans or borders, none of them view the geography or the people as peripheral. Their studies demonstrate that a region's history should not be valued only insofar as it is valued elsewhere, and there are important differences between

125 John Mannion, "' . . . Notoriously disaffected to the Government . . . ' British allegations of Irish disloyalty in eighteenth-century Newfoundland," *Newfoundland Studies* 16, no. 1 (2000): 1-29.

126 Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (September 2000): 617-46; Janet Ajzenstat, *The Canadian Founding: John Locke and Parliament* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007); Michel Ducharme and Jean-François Constant, eds., *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

127 Rusty Bittermann, *Rural Protest on Prince Edward Island: From British Colonization to the Escheat Movement* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006); Rusty Bittermann, *Sailor's Hope: The Life and Times of William Cooper, Agrarian Radical in an Age of Revolutions* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010).

128 Jack Greene, "The Wages of Peace in the Construction of Empire in the Eighteenth Century: The British Experience as a Case Study" (keynote address given to the annual conference of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Halifax, June 2014).

national and nationalist perspectives.¹²⁹ Like people living anywhere, those of us living in Atlantic Canada need and deserve a history that engages with the present to explain the past. As important as it is to situate the early history of northeastern North America in its transnational contexts, it is equally imperative to contribute to the ongoing debates over the future of Canadian history.¹³⁰ In assessing the historiography of Atlantic Canada, we also need to recognize the remarkable strides made since the turn of the 21st century. Like the achievements of the *Acadiensis* generation, this accomplishment took place both because of and despite intellectual trends outside the region.

129 On the link between regional and national history, see Buckner, "Defining Identities in Canada," 311.

130 On the recent debates over national history, see Tom Peace, "The Return of the History Wars," *Active History* (11 October 2011), <http://activehistory.ca/2011/10/the-return-of-the-history-wars/>.