**Chapter 1**

**Business News in the early modern Atlantic World:**

**Contexts, Connections, and Methodologies**

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In February 1704 Daniel Peck, a merchant in Chester, Northwest England, wrote to Thomas and Michael Carbonnell, merchants in London, to report that ‘I had last post the good news of the Unicorn’. The news in question was the *Unicorn*’s safe arrival at Lisbon, ‘her corn in good order with lead &c’. Peck’s correspondence with the Carbonnells allows us a glimpse into the vessel’s journey: built in Warrington, the 40-ton burden ship first travelled to Kinsale, County Cork, before setting sail for Lisbon on a voyage which lasted for fifteen days. From his vantage point at Chester, on the banks of the River Dee, Peck was conveniently placed to learn news quickly of the *Unicorn*’s departure – and its subsequent successful arrival – from across the Irish Sea. With the *Unicorn* now ‘being bound home with wine and fruit’, Peck needed to insure the vessel and its cargo; something that he was not able to do without receiving prior approval from the Carbonnells. As Peck explained:

[I] have desire to insure £200 on said cargoe from Lisbon to this place [Chester] – cannot warrant convoy – because am not advised from thence whether any is there and she is ordered to proceed home without delay therefore must insure without convoy.

Unable to secure a convoy, Peck ideally sought permission to insure the cargo for £200, but recognised that the Carbonnells might object to such a high amount. With time being of the essence, Peck outlined his upper and lower limits to his correspondents, noting that ‘if too high will do only £100’, but asking them ‘as you can – if reasonable may direct more’.[[1]](#footnote-1)

In this correspondence Peck reveals some of the precarities of conducting business in the early modern Atlantic world, as well as some of the strategies employed by merchants to mitigate them. There were practical dangers associated with shipping in the north Atlantic: operating during the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1714), the merchant vessels carrying the cargo that Peck and his associates were trading were at risk of being seized by the enemy, including French and Spanish privateers. In order to alleviate such concerns, trading vessels were accompanied by convoys where possible to ensure their safety. Despatching the vessel from Kinsale was a shrewd business move: as an important supply base for the Royal Navy there were likely to be several available convoys to accompany the ship across the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, while enemy ships’ captains tended to avoid venturing into the Irish Sea, which was perceived to be dangerous without navigation.[[2]](#footnote-2) In instances such as that outlined by Peck, where convoy was not readily available in Lisbon, insurance offered an alternative means of security for merchants, making them eligible to receive financial recompense should their cargoes fail to reach their intended destination (and, subsequently, their intended recipients). Peck’s exchange with the Carbonnells provides us with a glance at how insurance was negotiated between merchants operating at some distance from each other during the early modern period, as demonstrated by Peck’s suggestion of upper and lower limits concerning the cargo’s value. Such sources are therefore useful not only for highlighting merchants’ activities, but for shedding light on mechanisms, like early marine insurance, which we still do not fully understand.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Significantly for this collection, Peck’s letter repeatedly highlights the importance of receiving accurate and timely information. Despite the inevitable time delays associated with letter-writing, and the perceived importance of printed information, merchants continued to rely on ‘news’ received from trusted associates to make business decisions. Peck emphasised that the news of the *Unicorn*’s safe arrival in Lisbon was received in the ‘last post’ and immediately conveyed to the Carbonnells. In turn, he urged the Carbonnells to approve both the purchase of insurance and its terms in a timely manner, to enable the vessel to return home ‘without delay’. Importantly, Peck is simultaneously a consumer, disseminator, and creator of business information within this exchange: these are the very themes with which this volume is concerned.

**Business News in the Early Modern Atlantic**

The concept of ‘news’ is a familiar one, and in today’s society it exists in many forms. These include analogue systems, such as printed media, radio, and televised news, as well as (most recently) digital forms of media, including social media. Despite their varying formats and intentions – the latter in particular giving rise to recent concerns regarding the integrity of news, the deliberate proliferation of misinformation, and so-called ‘Fake News’[[4]](#footnote-4) – collectively these varied forms of media share a common purpose of reporting or accounting recent events or occurrences, particularly those which are considered to be important or interesting for their respective audiences.[[5]](#footnote-5) ‘News’ as we recognise it began to emerge in the early modern period and the growth of ‘news’ and the importance of the spread of information in many early modern spheres is uncontroversial. Inevitably, it has attracted much scholarly attention. Looking first to Europe, Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham’s hefty 2016 collection of essays *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (emerging from their Leverhulme-funded research network of the same name) explores the circulation of news through a series of case studies.[[6]](#footnote-6) Andrew Pettegree’s *The Invention of News* (2014) investigates the development of the early modern European news market, while Simon F. Davies and Puck Fletcher’s edited volume *News in Early Modern Europe* (2012) considers the production and dissemination of news on the same continent.[[7]](#footnote-7) The Netherlands were

a vibrant centre of printing in early modern Europe and are the focus of both Paul Arblaster’s *From Ghent to Aix* (2014) and Joop W. Koopmans’s *Early Modern Media and the News in Europe* (2018), which, respectively, explore the production and dissemination of printed news in the Habsburg Netherlands and the Dutch Republic.[[8]](#footnote-8) Meanwhile, the contributors to Siv Gøril Brandtzæg *et. al*.'s edited collection *Travelling Chronicles* (2018) consider early modern printed news through a series of case studies spanning from Scandinavia to France.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Notable works which consider the creation and transmission of news in the early modern period in the British context include Raymond’s edited collections *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (1999) and *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe* (2006)*,* which trace the impact of printed periodicals on early-modern British culture and society and present a new history of newspapers.[[10]](#footnote-10) Shifting our gaze to North America, John J. McCusker’s influential 2005 essay argues the case for an ‘information revolution’ in the newly-independent United States, which he suggests negated the effects of distance in the spreading of information, while his earlier work with Cora Gravesteijn provides evidence of regularly-published printed price currents which were shared within early modern European networks.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Such studies have been instrumental in expanding our understanding of ‘news’, broadly defined, in the early modern period. Where business and commercial news has been included within these studies, however, it has tended to be examined as part of broader investigations of news, rather than receiving specific focus. One purpose of this volume is to contend that ‘business news’ is significant in its own right, and that its specificities make it worthy of focused research as a specific sub-type of information exchange. This collection of essays expands existing understandings of news in the early modern period in four distinct ways. First, in providing a novel insight into the creation and communication of a specific sub-type of early modern news, this volume both showcases the importance of considering the specificities of ‘business news’ and poses new questions for future investigation. Secondly, with some notable exceptions, scholarship on the spread of news and information in early modern period has largely focused upon Britain and continental Europe.[[12]](#footnote-12) However, the transatlantic expansion of European colonial empires had significant implications for contemporary news practices, as the essays in this collection show. North American and Caribbean mercantile agents were equally as instrumental as their European counterparts in shaping, disseminating, and consuming business information, as is shown in several essays in this collection. The spread of business information across the breadth of the Atlantic world is examined, which allows us to trace the development, maintenance, and operation of commercial news networks from Britain to Africa, North America, and the Caribbean. Thirdly, this volume explicitly considers the methodologies through which we might study this spread of information. In addition to presenting the outcomes of pioneering research, several of these essays provide readers with insights into the methodologies used, strategies that might be adopted, and pitfalls to be aware of.

 Fourthly, and arguably most pertinent, is this volume’s approach to print and manuscript. Previous studies of the history of news have, understandably, emphasised the ‘print revolution’ – the proliferation, availability, and affordability of print – as being essential in explaining the emergence of a variety of news conduits.[[13]](#footnote-13) Indeed, the spread of print had a significant impact on the development of all kinds of printed information used by commercial agents, including corantos, newspapers, and ephemera such as price currents and exchange rate currents. However, as Paul Dover rightly highlights, printed media did not eclipse manuscript forms of communication, which continued to be of central (and growing) importance to early modern commerce.[[14]](#footnote-14) We therefore call for re-consideration of the type of material that might be considered to be ‘business news’, which was much more wide-ranging. In addition to printed materials, manuscript newsletters continued to dispense business information, manuscript letters remained vital to business activities, and oral conversation remained central to the exchange of business news.[[15]](#footnote-15) Further, emphasis on the role of the ‘print revolution’ in bolstering production of printed news has encouraged focus on institutional issues – printers, licensing, censorship, and governmental control of print (including the Licensing of the Press Act in England, 1662-95) – but the agency of individuals in creating and sharing their own news and information (in both public and personal circles) remained hugely significant. While scholars know that commercial agents took advantage of the increasing availability of printed news to make decisions about their business activities, the circulation of information in manuscript form, in oral conversation, and through informal communications networks remained vital. As many essays in this volume demonstrate, the information that commercial agents relied upon was not created in a separate sphere to be consumed by them: these agents played a central role in the creation and dissemination of business news in a variety of forms.

 While we assert that ‘business news’ was a significant sub-type of information exchange, it is important to recognise that contemporaries did not separate their news into discrete categories. As the correspondence which informs several essays in this volume indicates, business news was disseminated alongside other types of news: political, familial, or personal. In addition to broadening definitions of what constituted ‘news’ in this period, it is essential to avoid the tendency to delineate ‘business’ and ‘personal’ correspondence. As the editors’ previous work has shown, personal connections were just as influential as business associations for the ways in which early modern commerce was conducted, yet the structure of archival collections encourages focus on only some relevant materials. ‘Business correspondence’ and ‘family papers’ are frequently separated, yet family papers reveal a hidden layer of business activity that is absent from the types of sources that commonly form the basis of business histories. Further, the naming of archival collections emphasises the activities of individual males and obscures the importance of female and junior family members, because trading firms and partnerships, and therefore archival collections, are invariably named for the patriarch. Close reading of these records, however, reveals that many of these networks did not and could not function in this way. By moving beyond the patriarch’s professional correspondence, personal letters can uncover a wealth of information regarding how business was executed in the early-modern Atlantic World.[[16]](#footnote-16) The ‘news’ exchanged within personal correspondence should, we argue, be seen as just as, if not more, important to the dissemination of ‘business news’ as ‘business correspondence’ and printed material.

 This volume develops further the recent upsurge of interest in the history of news by focusing specifically on business news in the Atlantic world as a specific sub-type of the wider news genre. Chronologically, the volume spans the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the earliest contribution coinciding with the first appearance of serial corantos in England, imported from Amsterdam in 1620. Several authors explicitly resist the temptation to move past the United States’ Declaration of Independence in 1776, recognising that the ‘Atlantic World’ – politically, economically, and culturally – changed markedly after this date.[[17]](#footnote-17) Owing to the volume’s chronological and geographical scope, an ‘Atlantic World’ that is more cosmopolitan in nature than that which typically features in scholarship of the Atlantic is presented here. In providing an insight into the creation and communication of ‘business news’ through a series of discrete case studies, this volume both showcases the importance of considering the specificities of ‘business news’ and poses new questions for future investigation. Bringing together scholars from a range of career stages with disparate scholarly interests and methodological approaches, the following essays employ a series of case studies drawn from across the vast temporal and geographical remit of the early modern Atlantic world to explore the various ways in which business news was created, disseminated, and used. They showcase a range of methodological and theoretical approaches to business and information history, exploring a variety of perspectives on information-sharing practices. Three central themes emerge as being of particular importance: the role of trust and credit in business news networks; information flows and the spaces they emerged from and penetrated; and the importance of considering business news beyond the North Atlantic. The volume is organised around these themes, and the remainder of this introduction will consider the significance of them.

**Trust, Credit, and Business News Networks**

Daniel Peck’s exchange with the Carbonnell brothers alludes to the significant practical challenges faced by businessmen and women operating in the early modern Atlantic World. As European empires – and, subsequently, the range of spaces and locales in which trading could potentially take place – expanded geographically and demographically, correspondents were increasingly separated by large distances, with many merchants maintaining important correspondences with individuals who they never had, and never would, meet. Letters were essential for sustaining mercantile (as well as social and familial) networks,[[18]](#footnote-18) yet the logistics involved in shipping handwritten letters across the Atlantic led to inevitable delays in receiving timely information upon which important business decisions rested. Early modern merchants employed a range of strategies to overcome such challenges, including the common practice of despatching junior family members to remote, yet strategic, markets where they provided personal representation for merchants as overseas agents.[[19]](#footnote-19) Such roles were especially pursued by younger sons (who did not stand to inherit the family firm) or other opportunists, creating what Jacob Price terms an ‘expatriate subculture’: those who were prepared to consider careers that would take them out of the home country in exchange for a comfortable return in later life.[[20]](#footnote-20) While some scholarship has seen partnerships between family members as safer than forging commercial relationships with new contacts, more recent studies have repeatedly confirmed that they were not always successful.[[21]](#footnote-21) As Douglas Hamilton notes, ‘things could still go spectacularly awry’ with family involved: kinship did not necessarily guarantee sufficient commercial acumen, while unscrupulous individuals could exploit the implicit trust placed upon them by their family members.[[22]](#footnote-22)

 Trust – as essential in familial as in non-familial networks – was not simply a matter of moral importance but was vital to the economic viability of early modern businesses. In the absence of large quantities of cash being shipped across the Atlantic to underpin the commercial transactions which occurred between colonial merchants and their suppliers in the British Isles (which carried its own risks), the British North American colonies functioned largely as a credit-based economy. In his chapter exploring the mercantile practices of extending and recalling credit in the eighteenth-century Atlantic, Kenneth Morgan highlights that while credit-based practices solved the problem of conducting business in a largely cashless society, it created additional concerns for merchants concerning the notion of ‘trust’. Specifically, it raises questions regarding the information used by merchants to reasonably assess the ability of their correspondents to repay credit that was extended. Akin to a modern-day credit search, Dover notes how merchants could present their manuscript account books in person as a means of demonstrating their trustworthiness and ability to settle debts.[[23]](#footnote-23) However, such approaches had little use when trading across the vast Atlantic Ocean.

The other essays in Part I of this volume, by Peter Buckles and Sarah Hall, support David Hancock’s assertion that merchants increasingly relied upon carefully cultivated networks to supply them with reputable and timely business intelligence.[[24]](#footnote-24) Historians of early modern trade agree that personal connections were extremely important for forming relationships with new correspondents. As businessmen and women operating in the early modern Atlantic became increasingly unlikely to meet all of their correspondents in person, they relied upon those with whom they did have prior interpersonal relationships to ask for character references regarding potential correspondents’ reputation and trustworthiness.[[25]](#footnote-25) It is important to note that while some scholarship holds that networks were cultivated based on a range of criteria held-in-common, including ethnicity, religion, nationality, or even membership of formal associations, several scholars have shown that in many contexts, merchants instead prioritised opportunities for financial gain when choosing who to engage with, and that common beliefs did not necessarily render an individual more trustworthy.[[26]](#footnote-26) By extension, decisions regarding what sources of information to trust were also far more complex.

 Innovative, blended research methodologies are being used to transform business history by illuminating which individual members of a given merchant’s network were of particular importance. Historical social network analysis (HSNA) provides one such methodological approach for scholars of early modern commerce, and has been convincingly used to reconstruct and re-examine early modern commercial networks, for example by John and Sheryllynne Haggerty.[[27]](#footnote-27) In his chapter, Buckles neatly outlines the origins and practices of HSNA, charting the growth of the field since its emergence in the late 1990s, before demonstrating the ways in which HSNA can be used to reconstruct historic business networks and measure the changing influence of individual members of the network within a given network over time. His focus is on two distinct case studies: the Bristol West India Association and a selection of known slave traders in eighteenth-century Liverpool. Buckles includes as an appendix to his chapter an introduction to using HSNA for readers interested in applying this approach to their own fields of research. Despite the benefits of quantitative approaches to business history, however, they do not eliminate the need for effective qualitative analysis. Hall skilfully combines quantitative and qualitative methods to demonstrate the importance of the English merchant William Peirce in maintaining seventeenth-century puritan communications networks in colonial New England, and through this case study explores how the possession of news transferred to social credit. Together, the three essays contained in Part I explore the strategies undertaken by communities operating within different areas of the early modern Atlantic to construct their business networks, investigate the circulation of ‘business news’ within those networks, and showcase some of the methodologies that may be used to recover them.

**Information Flows and Spaces**

In addition to highlighting issues of trust and the importance of networks to the circulation of business news, Daniel Peck’s letters to the Carbonells emphasise the precarious nature of conducting trade in the early modern Atlantic World. While the chronological scope of this volume pre-dates the era of the so-called ‘Age of Revolution’, which is concerned with the American, French, and Haitian revolutions and the Irish rebellion, through to the Napoleonic Wars, our period was also one of significant political and religious upheaval.[[28]](#footnote-28) The early modern world was marked by significant and extended periods of war, including the Thirty Years’ War and related conflicts (1618-48), the Anglo-Dutch Wars (1652-54; 1665-67; 1672-74), the Franco-Dutch War (1672-78), the Nine Years’ War (1688-97), the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-14), the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48), and the Seven Years’ War (1754-63), as well as civil wars in France and the British Kingdoms. Many conflicts were contested in both European and North American arenas by European colonists as well as indigenous peoples; several were global.[[29]](#footnote-29) In addition to having repercussions for international trade, wars threatened the timely transmission of news and information. Peck’s consideration of naval convoys highlights the risk that vessels and their cargoes, including letters and other information, faced from enemy warships and privateers. However, hostilities did not necessarily equate to the cessation of exchange. Both of the editors of this volume have demonstrated in other work that commodity exchange continued during conflict: Siobhan Talbott shows that trade continued in many wartime contexts, including between Scottish and Irish merchants and the French, which flourished during the Nine Years’ War and the War of the Spanish Succession despite its ostensible prohibition.[[30]](#footnote-30) Sophie Jones shows that this approach was shared by merchants elsewhere in the Atlantic World, with merchants in colonial North America consistently maintaining trade with French and Canadian merchants during the Seven Years’ War.[[31]](#footnote-31) Talbott concludes that ‘commercial concerns were often more important than national divisions’.[[32]](#footnote-32) In addition to the strategies that they adopted to continue commodity exchange, merchants were aware of the threat to communications too, and took steps to ensure that vital business news continued to circulate. During King George’s War (the North American sphere of the War of the Austrian Succession) the Philadelphia merchant Israel Pemberton wrote to John Stedman that ‘at these times the risque being great I desire to have duplicates sent for fear of miscarriage’.[[33]](#footnote-33)

 Although risky, war presented substantial commercial opportunities for savvy merchants through privateering, military contracts, and other forms of associated maritime work. Talbott has shown that some merchants ‘thrived through new opportunities’ during the Anglo-Dutch Wars: during the second war, for example, the Irish merchant George McCartney noted that ‘if the wars with Holland continiew may doe us good’.[[34]](#footnote-34) Cathy Matson, Gary Nash, and David Hancock have all argued that merchants in New York became so experienced at capitalising upon government contracts and other commercial opportunities that arose during wartime that, upon hearing the news that ‘war is declared in England’, there was ‘Universal Joy among the merchants’.[[35]](#footnote-35) While periods of war presented challenges for trade, merchants were adept at navigating these challenges.

 Flows of business news were thus shaped – though not stymied – by political contexts. In the opening chapter of Part II, Lena Liapi shows that merchants and their correspondents scattered across the Atlantic World took practical and deliberate strategies to mitigate the risks associated with war and to ensure the reliability of the information which they received from both their own networks and from unknown sources. Liapi illuminates the creative strategies implemented by merchants in the absence of verified information to assess the validity of news, focusing on the practice of betting on current affairs and political events. As she contends, the very practice of betting on news required accurate and timely information (a commodity continually sought after by merchants) while wagers themselves shaped public opinion and, in turn, business decisions.

The exchange of commercial information was also moulded by the exceptionally broad array of places, spaces, and institutions in which it was created, circulated, and utilised. These ranged from formal institutions which we traditionally associate with business (such as coffee houses, Exchanges, and professional associations) to informal spaces (such as taverns, marketplaces, and shops) to personal or private spaces (such as the home). While each of these arenas have individually received important scholarly attention, their role in *shaping* commercial information, rather than acting as a space in which *existing* information was shared, is surprisingly rarely considered.

 Of these spaces, the coffee house has arguably received the most attention. Merchants based in towns and cities across the North Atlantic World could meet with associates in coffee houses and access the day’s printed newspapers: often, thanks to the growth of the provincial press in the eighteenth century, both the local papers and international papers.[[36]](#footnote-36) As several scholars, including Markman Ellis, John Brewer, and Hannah Barker have shown, coffee houses were sociable spaces, where patrons read printed texts such as newspapers aloud to each other and discussed their contents.[[37]](#footnote-37) In Liverpool, the coffee house’s proximity to the town’s dock provided the additional benefit of allowing merchants to watch their ships arrive and depart from the port, the very act of which created new items of important business news. Indeed, Liverpool’s dock-side coffee house was known as ‘the Merchants’, as were several others in the North Atlantic, owing to its popularity and patronage by the merchant classes.[[38]](#footnote-38) In Bristol, the ‘Exchange Coffee House’ and ‘American Coffee House’ were presumably named both for their situation (the former was close to the Bristol Exchange) and their clientele.[[39]](#footnote-39)

[INSERT FIG. 1.1 HERE]

 However, obtaining commercial information was only one act in the flow of business news. Importantly, information flows were not one-way. They were messy, organic, and unstructured, as different methods of communication intersected and overlapped each other.[[40]](#footnote-40) Information obtained in formal settings (such as the Royal Exchange) or through printed media (such as the newspaper) was disseminated in a variety of forms throughout business networks, and conversely, printed forms of news gained their information from a variety of sources. The editorial to the first issue of the *Exchange Intelligencer*, published in 1645, explained the publication’s approach to re-circulating information: ‘the best of the French and Dutch corantos shall be imparted to you, besides many other things out of Marchants and Gentlemens letters’.[[41]](#footnote-41) Indeed, the first extant English coranto was a translation of a previously published Dutch coranto, rather than an original publication in its own right.[[42]](#footnote-42)

As Part II continues, Jeremy Land, Siobhan Talbott and Sophie Jones, and Hannah Knox Tucker demonstrate that business news was exchanged through a variety of mediums, including manuscript letters and oral conversations, and was transported by a broader array of people than has been previously considered, with transformative implications for how we define ‘business news’. Land illustrates how commercial information obtained from printed news sources – in this case, North American colonial newspapers – was shared by North American merchants with their correspondents elsewhere in the Atlantic world through the exchange of handwritten letters. The very act of committing printed information to manuscript form changed its nature and contents, as merchants selected relevant information and included their own opinions and commentary on the intelligence that they were circulating. Through these processes, printed information obtained in (semi-)public spaces was irreversibly altered as it continued its journey in another form.

 Of course, the creation and dissemination of business news was not confined to the physical spaces of coffee-houses and Exchanges, nor was it limited by the number of characters that printers could fit on a page. Business news was also not confined solely to wealthy merchants, who could afford to access the formal associations and other semi-private institutions in which it was discussed. Informal, public, open spaces such as quaysides and street corners were important touchpoints for the sharing of business news,[[43]](#footnote-43) but the lack of written record to uncover many of these essential exchanges has meant that they have been lost. In addition to business conversation that produced (directly or indirectly) a written record in the form of letters, accounts, commissions, and receipts, a letter from John Clerk to William Rires in May 1645 suggests that merchants expressed verbally matters that they did not want to commit to paper: ‘I will not give trust to peper and ink with that which I wold tell you if I wer as neir you as I wes 6 month ago’.[[44]](#footnote-44) With reputation being so important to establishing and sustaining long-distance relationships – as explored in Part I – letters from merchants attempting to preserve their reputation provide us with fragmentary glimpses into some of the conversations that circulated rumour or speculation about the character of mutual correspondents. In their co-authored chapter, Talbott and Jones explore these oral exchanges, enhancing our definition of ‘conversation’ in business culture, investigating the spaces in which these conversations took place, and suggesting methodologies that might be used to uncover spoken conversations believed to have been lost.

 Just as important as those who created and disseminated business news, and the spaces in which this took place, were the actors who facilitated its flow. Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker’s *The Many-Headed Hydra* shows the important roles played by sailors, labourers, and indentured servants in disseminating crucial political information from port to port.[[45]](#footnote-45) In tracing the role of previously overlooked actors in spreading revolutionary ideas in the Atlantic, Linebaugh and Rediker emphasise the importance of the mobility of such individuals in enabling them to rapidly communicate important information from foreign ports. Much of the political, social, and commercial information that they shared would have had important repercussions for those in business. Ships’ captains, as bearers of transatlantic post, were at the intersection of printed news, epistolary news, and oral information, and Tucker explores the role that these important, yet overlooked, agents played in collecting and delivering letters containing business news.

**Business News Beyond the North Atlantic**

The first academic use of the term ‘Atlantic World’ has been variously dated to the late 1960s and 1970s, but it was the 1990s and early 2000s that witnessed an ‘explosion’ of Atlantic scholarship, incorporating the histories of Europe, West Africa, and the Americas.[[46]](#footnote-46) It is arguably, however, only in the last two decades that the field has begun to mature, and there are many ways in which it might develop further.[[47]](#footnote-47) Many existing studies have focused on political and cultural conceptualisations of the Atlantic World, but there has been little exploration of information exchange or the realities of Atlantic World trade links (with the exception, of course, of the slave trade, which continues to receive a disproportionate amount of attention). As recently as 2022, ‘the history of the circulation of ideas, knowledge and products’ has been described as a ‘niche within current historiographical trends in Atlantic History’.[[48]](#footnote-48) In moving this approach from niche to mainstream, this collection responds to recent calls to ‘re-interpret and broaden [Atlantic Studies] in ways that keep it relevant beyond its own cocoon’.[[49]](#footnote-49)

 The third and final part of this collection takes our focus beyond mainland Europe and North America. Atlantic history has increasingly faced criticism for its Anglocentric approach, which, given Britain’s ‘extensive’ geographic reach by the mid-eighteenth century, has at times been synonymous with ‘British-Atlantic’ history.[[50]](#footnote-50) David Armitage and Michael Braddick’s seminal collection of essays, *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, with its focus on Britain and its colonies in North America and the Caribbean,provides one example.[[51]](#footnote-51) Such approaches have led scholars to ask whether we might talk instead about multiple, overlapping ‘Atlantic worlds’, including John Reid, Huw V. Bowen and Elizabeth Mancke’s call for a ‘Canadian-Atlantic’ World.[[52]](#footnote-52) As Robert DuPlessis rightly notes, despite the enduring tendency of Atlantic scholars to depict it as such, the northern Atlantic was not solely Anglophone in nature.[[53]](#footnote-53) In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century North America, French, Dutch, and Spanish colonists lived alongside English (later, British) colonists in vast expanses of land, stretching the entire breadth of the Eastern Atlantic seaboard from present-day Canada (then known as ‘New France’) to Mexico (then ‘New Spain’). Meanwhile in continental Europe, France, Spain, and Portugal all had Atlantic coasts, with other nations (the Netherlands, Italy, and the Ottoman Empire) able to access the Atlantic through well-established trading routes.

 These heterogeneous, multi-cultural communities of the Atlantic world were not only characterised by the political tensions discussed above, they were also divided by their conflicting religious beliefs. The early modern period was punctuated by substantial religious upheaval, as Europeans continued to navigate the long-reaching socio-cultural and political consequences of the Reformation, often with long term and far-reaching effects on their imperial possessions. In Britain, the ‘Glorious Revolution’ of 1688 witnessed the restoration of a Protestant monarch to the helm of the British Empire, while multiple Jacobite rebellions (in 1689, 1715, 1719, and 1745) contested the despoliation of the Catholic James II and VII and repeatedly sought to reinstate the Stuart dynasty following the accession of the House of Hanover in 1714. In France, meanwhile, persecution of the Protestant Huguenots endured for much of the seventeenth century, until Louis XIV’s Edict of Fontainebleau in 1685 forced either their conversion to Catholicism or their flight (often to the Americas) as refugees.[[54]](#footnote-54) Hall has already highlighted the plight of religious exiles to North America in the seventeenth century and the fragile and uncertain status of Puritan communities there in Part I, but this phenomenon was not distinct to New England. Looking beyond the North Atlantic to the British Caribbean, Eilish Gregory demonstrates in Part III that Catholic merchants and planters in the Leeward Islands, many of whom had resettled there to avoid the impact of anti-Catholic legislation passed in England, still found themselves under threat of sequestration. Through the case study of Attorney General Sir Edward Northey, who acted to safeguard Catholic estates from being forfeited, Gregory assesses how news regarding the confiscation of Catholic estates, along with information concerning wider business affairs, were communicated between Britain and the Leeward Islands in the early eighteenth century.

A further, and crucial, criticism of Atlantic history is its emphasis on western and European cultures. The trade of enslaved Africans in the seventeenth century brought West African commercial agents into the trading zone of the Atlantic, yet they are frequently absent from historical scholarship on the ‘Atlantic World’. Enslaved Africans, forcibly transported across the Atlantic to provide labour on plantations in mainland North America and the Caribbean, form another crucial Atlantic community, while North America and the Caribbean were home to an important and diverse range of indigenous peoples who played important roles in shaping the nature and character of European settlements. Not all of these communities have left written records and, as such, the nature and arrangement of archival material means that their voices are often structurally excluded from the historical narrative.[[55]](#footnote-55) It has not escaped the attention of the editors that many essays in this collection are based upon the surviving letters and correspondence left by male commercial actors, predominantly of European ancestry, and we acknowledge that there is more to be done to incorporate the full scope of such varied Atlantic communities into scholarship on the early modern Atlantic World.

Edmond Smith and David Brown take important steps to situate black voices in this scholarship in Part III. Through a reconstruction of the mercantile network of the East India Company (EIC) in West Africa, Smith identifies commercial actors including African merchant and leader John Cloyce as being central to the dissemination of business information. Brown’s study of the correspondence of the Royal African Company (RAC), which took over the EIC’s position in West Africa, similarly demonstrates the potential of the Company’s letters for recovering important figures such as Zachary Rogers Jr: a man of mixed European and West African ancestry who assumed the vacant position of RAC factor in Sierra Leone. As well as highlighting the value of inclusive approaches to Atlantic history, these chapters highlight the ways that specific regional and local contexts, rather than national milieus, directly influenced and shaped the manner in which business news was both produced and disseminated.

**Conclusion**

‘News’ as we recognise it today began to be formed in the early modern period and, as early modern business increasingly became a transoceanic affair, the dissemination of news was essential for facilitating commerce. Even the absence of news could be ‘news’ in itself: writing again to Thomas and Michael Carbonell in July 1704, Daniel Peck ‘hope[d] you have account of [the *Brotherhood*] being well in some port in England…so Insurance will be the more easier. Nevertheless if no news pray give orders for Insurance on her Cargoe for my Account’.[[56]](#footnote-56) Our understanding of the phenomenon of the growth of news has been significantly enhanced by a recent upsurge in scholarly attention. To date, however, these studies have had three things in common. One is their consideration of ‘news’ as a homogenous genre; another is a (largely) euro-centric focus on the creation, spread, and utilisation of news; the third is their emphasis on the importance and dominance of print. In this volume, the benefit of considering ‘business news’ as a distinct historical sub-genre of news is posited. By expanding our definition of what constitutes ‘news’ in early modern business, we suggest that the advent of print did not fundamentally alter – or necessarily even enhance – the methods by which business news was created and circulated. Of greater influence on methods of information exchange was the increasing distances over which trade was conducted, and thus over which business news travelled. Manuscript and oral circulation remained an essential news conduit for those involved in early modern business.

 Examining ‘business news’ through a series of case studies which span the breadth of the early modern Atlantic World allows for cultural comparison as well as a re-situation of previously overlooked voices in this story. The themes that this volume highlights – trust, credit, and risk mitigation; information flows and spaces; and an Atlantic perspective – not only allow us to explore the creation and transmission of business news, but integrate these findings firmly within the context within which this news was being circulated. The early modern Atlantic World was one fraught with risk: frequent wars, inconsistent insurance practices, and an increase in the distance over which ships, cargoes, and correspondence needed to travel all presented challenges for the exchange of business news. The merchants, captains, and other actors that feature in the chapters that follow were adept at navigating these challenges: in many ways a self-selecting group, the very fact that their business papers and correspondence survives at all is testament to their ability to successfully counter the difficulties associated with building and maintaining reliable information networks in the early modern Atlantic. Further, this volume showcases a range of approaches to the broader question of business news, with several chapters specifically highlighting innovative methodological approaches that promise to influence future work.

 Yet, there is more work to be done. Ground-breaking work on manuscript newsletters, cited above, has not yet penetrated business or commercial history. Much more, still, must be done to amplify oppressed voices and to mine archives more effectively for the stories that remain hidden as, to date, scholars have worked ‘with archival sources mostly produced by dominant western powers and actors’.[[57]](#footnote-57) It is our hope that this collection will not only be of use to scholars in its own right, but that the approaches, methodologies, and ideas contained within the following chapters will encourage new avenues of research, extending our understanding of business news, and the early modern Atlantic World, ever further.

1. CALS, ZCR 352, Daniel Peck, Merchant of Chester, Letterbook, 1702–1704, f.16v, Daniel Peck to Thomas and Michael Carbonnell, 5 February 1703/04, Chester. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Kenneth Morgan, ‘Liverpool’s Dominance in the British Slave Trade, 1740–1807’, in David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz and Anthony Tibbles (eds), *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Much work on early marine insurance has focused on the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, for example Christopher Kingston, ‘Marine Insurance in Britain and America, 1720–1844: A Comparative Institutional Analysis’, *The Journal of Economic History*, 67.2 (2007), pp. 379-409. Work which has explored marine insurance in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries includes A.B. Leonard (ed.), *Marine Insurance: Origins and Institutions, 1300-1850* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); a further notable, if brief, example is C. Ebert, ‘Early Modern Atlantic Trade and the Development of Maritime Insurance to 1630’, *Past and Present*, 213 (2011), pp. 102-6. Leonard’s volume contains a helpful bibliography: pp. 298f. Daniel Peck’s letter-book (among many other sources) suggests that there is much more to be said about marine insurance in the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries, particularly concerning the methods by which merchants navigated and utilised this mechanism: CALS, ZCR 352, Daniel Peck, Merchant of Chester, Letterbook, 1702–1704. An edition of Daniel Peck’s letter-book by the current authors is under contract with The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See for instance the work of The Trust Project, <https://thetrustproject.org/about/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. ‘news, n.’, OED Online. December 2022. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/126615?rskey=9MtQP7&result=3 (accessed January 16, 2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Joad Raymond and Noah Noxham (eds), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the world came to know about itself* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Simon F. Davies and Puck Fletcher (eds), *News in Early Modern Europe: Currents and Connections* (Leiden: Brill, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Paul Arblaster, *From Ghent to Aix: How They Brought the News in the Habsburg Netherlands, 1550-1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Joop W. Koopmans, *Early Modern Media and the News in Europe. Perspectives from the Dutch Angle* (Leiden: Brill, 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Siv Gøril Brandtzæg, Paul Goring, and Christine Watson (eds), *Travelling Chronicles: News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Joad Raymond (ed.), *News,* *Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London: F. Cass, 1999); Joad Raymond, (ed.) *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. John J. McCusker, ‘The Demise of Distance: The Business Press and the Origins of the Information Revolution in the Early Modern Atlantic World’, *The American Historical Review*, 110.2 (2005), pp. 295-321; John J. McCusker and Cora Gravesteijn, *The Beginnings of Commercial and Financial Journalism.* *The Commodity Price Currents, Exchange Rate Currents, and Money Currents of Early Modern Europe* (Amsterdam: Nederlandsch Economisch-Historisch Archief, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. These notable exceptions include McCusker, ‘The Demise of Distance’, and Joseph M. Adelman, *Revolutionary Networks: the business and politics of printing the news, 1763-1789* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See for instance Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe,* 2nd edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Paul Dover, *The Information Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), ch. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Manuscript newsletters are receiving increased attention, though not yet in relation to business and commerce. See Rachael Scarborough King, ‘All the News that’s Fit to Write: The Eighteenth-Century Manuscript Newsletter’, in S. G. Brandtzæg, P. Goring and C. Watson (eds), *Travelling Chronicles: News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2018); M. Infelise, ‘Roman *Avvisi*: Information and Politics in the Seventeenth century’, in G. Signorotto & M. A. Visceglia (eds), *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 212-28; E. M. Keating, ‘The Role of Manuscript Newsletters in Charles II’s Performance of Power’, *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700*, 41.2 (2017), pp. 33-52; R. Eagles and M. Schaich (eds.), *Scribal News in Politics and Parliament, 1660-1760* (*Parliamentary History*, special issue, 2022). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Sophie H. Jones and Siobhan Talbott, ‘Sole Traders? The role of the extended family in eighteenth-century Atlantic business networks’, *Enterprise & Society*, 23.4 (2022), pp. 1093-5, 1098. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. There has been fierce debate about the chronology of studies of the ‘Atlantic World’. Donna Gabaccia calls for ‘a long Atlantic’, while in the introduction to their 2009 collection Jack Greene and Philip Morgan note that ‘the Atlantic world constructed during the early modern era continued to exhibit considerable vitality throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth’: D. Gabaccia, ‘A long Atlantic in a wider world’, *Atlantic Studies*, 1.1 (2004), pp. 1-27; J. Greene and P. Morgan (eds), *Atlantic History: a critical appraisal* (2009), p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Lindsay O’Neill, *The Opened Letter: Networking in the Early Modern British World* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p. 2; for more on letter-writing in the early-modern Atlantic, see Sarah M.S. Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century, Atlantic Families* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Jones and Talbott, ‘Sole Traders?’, pp. 1094, 1107-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Jacob M. Price, *Perry of London: A Family and a Firm on the Seaborne Frontier, 1615-1753* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 1; Constance Jones Mathers, ‘Family Partnerships and International Trade in Early Modern Europe: merchants from Burgos in England and France, 1450-1570’, *The Business History Review*, 62.3 (1988), p. 372; David Hancock, ‘The Trouble with Networks: Managing the Scots’ Early-Modern Madeira Trade’, The Business History Review, 79.3 (2005), p. 474; Kenneth Morgan, ‘Forum: Scottish Mercantile Networks in the Early Modern Atlantic’, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 23.2 (2011), pp. 263-264. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Hannah Barker, *Family and Business During the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 97-103; Morgan, ‘Scottish Mercantile Networks’, p. 265. For various views on this debate see: S. Talbott, *Conflict, Commerce and Franco-Scottish Relations, 1560-1713* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), p. 42; Yoram Ben-Porath, ‘The F-Connection: Families, Friends, and Firms and the Organisation of Exchange’, *Population and Development Review*, 6:1 (1980), pp. 1–30; S. Haggerty, ‘“You Promise Well and Perform as Badly”: The Failure of the “Implicit Contract of Family” in the Scottish Atlantic’, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 33:2 (2011), pp. 267-82; S. Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760-1810: Men, Women, and the Distribution of Goods* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), ch. 4, pp. 109-141; P. Mathias, ‘Risk, Credit and Kinship in Early Modern Enterprise’, in J. McCusker and K. Morgan (eds), *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 15–35; L. Fontaine, ‘Antonio and Shylock: Credit and Trust in France, c. 1680-c. 1780’, *Economic History Review*, 54.1 (2001), pp. 39-57; S. Haggerty, *‘Merely for Money’?: Business Culture in the British Atlantic, 1750-1815* (Liverpool, 2013), pp. 138–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Douglas Hamilton, ‘Local Connections, Global Ambitions: Creating a Transoceanic Network in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic Empire’, *The International Journal of Maritime History*, 23.2 (2011), p. 284; Jones and Talbott, ‘Sole Traders?’, pp. 1113-14; Albane Forestier, ‘Risk, Kinship and Personal Relationships in Late Eighteenth-Century West Indian Trade: The Commercial Network of Tobin & Pinney’, *Business History*, 52.6 (2010), p. 918. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Dover, *Information Revolution,* p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Hancock, ‘The Trouble with Networks’, pp. 467-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Arnaud Bartolomei, Claire Lemercier, Viera Rebolledo-Dhuin & Nadège Sougy, ‘Becoming a Correspondent: The Foundations of New Merchant Relationships in Early Modern French Trade (1730–1820)’, *Enterprise & Society*, 20.3 (2019), p. 22; Jean Agnew, *Belfast Merchant Families in the Seventeenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), p. 144; Hancock, ‘The Trouble with Networks’, pp. 478-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The former includes: Haggerty, ‘The Failure of “The Implicit Contract of Family”’, p. 268; Marsha Hamilton, ‘Commerce Around the Edges: Atlantic Trade Networks Among Boston’s Scottish Merchants’, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 23.2 (2011), p. 306; the latter includes: Talbott, *Conflict, Commerce*, pp. 141-43; P. Croft, ‘Trading with the Enemy, 1585–1604’, *Historical Journal*, 32,2 (1989), pp. 297–9, p. 301; L. Cullen, ‘The Smuggling Trade in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 67 (1969), p. 151; Recio Morales, ‘Identity and Loyalty’, p. 201; S. Murdoch, ‘Irish Entrepreneurs and Sweden in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century’, in T. O’Connor and M. Lyons (eds), *Irish Communities in Early Modern Europe* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), pp. 358–64. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. John Haggerty & Sheryllynne Haggerty, ‘Visual Analytics of an Eighteenth-Century Business Network’, *Enterprise & Society*, 11.1 (2010), pp. 1-25; John Haggerty & Sheryllynne Haggerty, ‘Avoiding “Musty Mutton Chops”: The Network Narrative of an American Merchant in London, 1771-1774’, *Essays in Economic & Business History*, 37 (2019), pp. 1-42; John Haggerty & Sheryllynne Haggerty, ‘Networking with a Network: The Liverpool African Committee, 1750-1810’, *Enterprise & Society*, 18:3 (2017), pp. 566-590; John Haggerty & Sheryllynne Haggerty, ‘The Life Cycle of a Metropolitan Business Network: Liverpool 1750–1810’, *Explorations in Economic History*, 48 (2011), pp. 189-206. See also Emily Buchnea, Transatlantic Transformations: Visualising Change over Time in the Liverpool-New York Trade Network, 1763-1833’, *Enterprise & Society*, 15.4 (2015), pp. 687-721; E. Smith, ‘The Social Networks of Investment in early modern England’, *Historical Journal*, 64.4 (2021), pp. 912-939. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789–1848* (London: Abacus, 1962). While Hobsbawm's use of the term was confined to Europe and the commencement of the French Revolution, the related term the ‘Revolutionary Atlantic’ has become increasingly popular since the 2000s. See, for instance, Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (New York: Verso, 2012); Kit Candlin and Cassandra Pybus, *Enterprising Women: Gender, Race, and Power in the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. In North America, these wars were known as King William’s War (1690-97), Queen Anne’s War (1702-1713), King George’s War (1744-48) and the ‘French and Indian War’ (1754-63), contested by protagonists from New York, New England, and New France, as well as the Haudenosaunee people whose lands spanned the New York and New France border. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Talbott, *Conflict, Commerce*, esp. ch. 6; Siobhan Talbott, ‘“What cannot be helped must be indured”: Coping with obstacles to business during the Anglo-Dutch Wars, 1652-1674’, *Enterprise & Society*, 23.3 (2022), pp. 790-824. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Sophie H. Jones, ‘Anglicisation to Loyalism’(unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Liverpool, 2018), pp. 137-38; NYHS, John Tabor Kemp Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Siobhan Talbott, ‘British Commercial Interests on the French Atlantic Coast, c.1560-1713’, *Historical Research*, 85.229 (2012), p. 402; see also Siobhan Talbott, ‘“Such unjustificable practices?”: Irish trade, settlement and society in France, 1688-1715’, *Economic History Review*, 67.2 (2014), pp. 556-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. APS, Mss.380.P36, Israel Pemberton Letterbook, 1744-1747, p. 511, Israel Pemberton to John Stedman, 7 March 1747, Philadelphia. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Talbott, ‘“What cannot be helped must be indured”’, pp. 805-06; LL, ‘Outletter book of George McCartney’, vol. I, p. 191, George McCartney to John Scouller, 18 November 1665, Belfast. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. New York Governor Gerard Beekman, quoted in C. Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), p. 267; G. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986),pp. 151-56; D. Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Sophie H. Jones, ‘Readers and Readerships’, in Nicholas Brownlees (ed.), *The Edinburgh History of the British and Irish Press, Volume 1: Beginnings and Consolidation 1640–1800* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023), p. 116; Sophie H. Jones, ‘Case Study 2: Readerships in Eighteenth-century Liverpool’, in Brownlees (ed.), *The Edinburgh History of the British and Irish Press,* p. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. M. Ellis, ‘Poetry and Civic Urbanism in the Coffee-House Library in the Mid-Eighteenth Century’, in Mark Towsey and Kyle B. Roberts (eds), *Before the Public Library: Reading, Community, and Identity in the Atlantic World, 1650–1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), p. 72; H. Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society, 1695–1855* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2000), pp. 54-55; J. Brewer, *Party Ideology And Popular Politics At The Accession Of George III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. William Moss, *The Liverpool Guide; Including a sketch of the environs: with a map of the town; and directions for sea bathing* (Liverpool: J. McCreery, 1799), p. 65; ‘Merchants’ coffee-houses could also be found in New York, Philadelphia, Newport (Rhode Island), and Cork. See, respectively, *The New-York Weekly Journal*, 30 March 1747; *The Pennsylvania Packet or the General Advertiser*, 15 April 1779; *The Newport Mercury,* 11 May 1767; *The New-London Summary, or, The Weekly Advertiser*, 19 June 1761. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Max Skjönsberg and Mark Towsey (eds), *The Minute Book of the Bristol Library Society, 1772-1801* (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 2022), p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. See A. Fox, *Oral and literate culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2001), p. 5; see also A. Fox and D. Woolf, ‘Introduction’, A. Fox and D. Woolf (eds), *The spoken word: oral culture in Britain, 1500-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2002), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *Exchange Intelligencer*, 1, 15 May 1645, 102, 145.1/E284(12), cited in J. Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. N. Brownlees, ‘Narrating Contemporaneity: Text and Structure in English News’, in B. Dooley (ed.), *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p. 229. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. F. de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: rethinking early modern politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. NRS, GD18/2455, Letterbook of John Clerk, 1644-45, f.15r, Clerk to William Rires, 20 May 1645, Paris. See S. Talbott (ed.), ‘The Letter-book of John Clerk of Penicuik, 1644-45’, *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society, volume 15*, Scottish History Society 6th series, 8 (2014), p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra.* [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Jack Greene and Philip Morgan date the first ‘institutional use’ of the term to the late 1960s, when the Department of History at Johns Hopkins University established its programme in Atlantic History and Culture, and Alison Games proposes that Johns Hopkins University Press were the first to use the term in its current context with the launch of its ‘Studies in Atlantic History and Culture’ series in the 1970s: Greene and Morgan (eds), *Atlantic History*, p. 3; Alison Games, ‘Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities’, *The American Historical Review,* 111.3 (2006), p. 744; Games, ‘Atlantic History’, p. 744. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Including expansion of the temporal span of the field, as discussed above: Gabaccia, ‘A long Atlantic’; Greene and Morgan (eds), *Atlantic History*, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. M. Barcia, ‘Into the future: a historiographical overview of Atlantic History in the twenty first century’, *Atlantic Studies* 19.2 (2022), p. 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Barcia, ‘Into the future’, p. 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Bernard Bailyn, ‘Preface’, in David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (eds), *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. xiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Armitage and Braddick (eds), *The British Atlantic World.* First published in 2002, the second edition (2009) includes a new essay which considers ‘The British Atlantic World in Global Perspective’. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. John G. Reid, H. V. Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke, Is There a "Canadian" Atlantic World? *International Journal of Maritime History*, 21.1 (2009), pp. 263-95. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Robert S. DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2015), pp. 1-6; John Styles, ‘An Ocean of Textiles’, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 73.3 (2016), p. 534. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Many French Huguenots settled in Dutch New York (then known as New Netherlands) and elsewhere in North America: Joyce D. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664-1730* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 61-63; Michael Kammen, *Colonial New York: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 86; Bertrand Van Ruymbeke, ‘Refugiés Or Émigrés? Early Modern French Migrations to British North America and the United States (c.1680-c.1820), *Itinerario,* 30.2 (2006), pp. 16-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Marisa Fuentes provides a useful framework for considering what she terms the inherent and structural

‘machinations of archival power’: Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), p. 1; Anne Hyde discusses the ‘lost voices’ of native people, women and children. Hyde, *Empires, Nations and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800–1860* (Lincoln NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. CALS, ZCR 352, Daniel Peck, Merchant of Chester, Letterbook, 1702–1704, f.54v, Daniel Peck to Thomas and Michael Carbonnell, 22 July 1704, Chester. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Barcia asserts that scholars have been ‘forced’ to work with these sources, but greater understanding of the ways that archives have been compiled, and more creative research methods, mean that alternative stories can be told: Barcia, ‘Into the future’, p. 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)