

Global Commodity Flows

A conference presented by the Institute for Historical Studies in the Department of History
The University of Texas at Austin

College of Liberal Arts Building, [CLA 1.302B](#)
in the Julius Glickman Conference Center

The co-development of economic and ecological crises, the social life of things, the globalization of mass consumerism, and conflicts over natural resources need to be understood in historical depth. These questions bridge conventional boundaries between history and other disciplines. Over the last several decades, historians have compiled an impressive body of work on the history of commodities and their production, circulation, and uses. Historical studies reveal the impact of commodity production and consumption on landscapes and sociopolitical formations. Research into commodity chains brings new dimensions to understandings of social identities and systems of communication and representation. Contemporary global economic crises have re-focused attention on the nature of capital accumulation and the limits to growth. In connection with these themes, participants in the conference explore questions of food and raw material production, energy and ecology, status goods, and networks of exchange. The investigations reach from early modern times to the present, span multiple continents and oceans, and range in scale from the global to the worksite level.

Convened by:

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