

Dr. Bettina Liverant
Adjunct Assistant Professor
Department of History, University of Calgary
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Historian specializing in the intersections of commerce, culture, and consumer society in North America. Extensive publication record on retail history, corporate philanthropy, and material culture. Committed to advancing understanding of consumer capitalism and its societal impacts.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- History of Retailing
- Consumer History (Consumer societies, consumer capitalism, consumer credit, spaces of consumption)
- Corporate Philanthropy
- Material Culture, Architecture, and Design
- Daily life and Domesticity, Northern North America

EDUCATION

PhD. History, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 2008.

M.A. History, University of Calgary, Calgary, 1998.

Bachelor of Architecture, Carleton University, Ottawa, 1983.

SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS

Books

A Business History of Retail: From Trading Post to E-Commerce in the America and Canada, Routledge International Studies in Business History, (New York and London: Taylor & Francis, 2025).

Buying Happiness: The Complicated Emergence of Consumer Consciousness in English Canada, 1890-1960 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2018).

<https://www.ubcpress.ca/buying-happiness>

Book Chapters

“Rethinking Postwar Domesticity: The Canadian Household in the 1950s,” in Asa McKercher and Michael D. Stevenson, eds., *North of America Canadians and the American Century, 1945–60* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2023): 141-175.

<https://doi.org/10.59962/9780774868853-009>

“Geographical Variations: USA/Canada” in Jon Stobart and Vicki Howard, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Retail History* (New York and London: Routledge, 2019): 359-376. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.4324/9781315560854>

“Making a Market for Consumers: The Calgary Consumers’ League and the High Cost of Living,” in *Shopping for Change: Consumer Activism and the Possibilities of Purchasing Power*,

Louis Hyman and Joseph Tohill, eds., (Ithaca NY and Toronto: ILR Press/Cornell University Press and Between the Lines Press, 2017): 41-52.

“Strategic Austerity: The Canadian Middle Path” in *Consumption on the Home Front During the Second World War: A Transnational Perspective*, Hartmut Berghoff, Jan Logemann and Felix Roemer, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016): 249-278.

“Canada’s Consumer Election (1935)” in *Consuming Modernity: Changing Gendered Behaviours and Consumerism, 1919-1945*, Cheryl Warsh and Dan Malleck, eds. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013): 11-33. <https://www.ubcpress.ca/consuming-modernity>

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles and Review Essays

“Negotiating Narratives: Recent Approaches in Consumer Studies,” *Labour/ Le Travail*, 71 (Spring 2013): 217-235.

“The Incorporation of Philanthropy: Negotiating Tensions Between Capitalism and Altruism in Twentieth Century Canada” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Society* 20:1 (2009): 191-220.

"The Promise of a More Abundant Life: Canadian consumer society and the rise of the managerial state," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Society* 19:1 (2008): 229-51.

“From Budgeting to Buying: Canadian Consumerism in the Post War Era, *Past Imperfect* 8 (1990-2000): 62-92.

Invited Presentations

“Postwar Domesticity.” Canada in the Age of Eisenhower Symposium, May 7, 2021, The Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History, Toronto, Canada.

“Rethinking postwar domesticity.” Keynote Address University of Alberta, History, Classics and Religious Studies Graduate Conference, March 2021.

“Strategic Austerity.” The Consumer on the Home Front: World War II Civilian Consumption in Comparative Perspective, German Historical Institute, London, England, December 2013.

“Academic Encounters with Consumer Society.” The Colloquium Series, Department of History, University of Calgary, October 24th, 2013.

Conference Papers

May 2018, “Public Markets and Civic Purposes.” 95th Meeting of the CHA, Regina

June 2013, “Academic Encounters with Consumer Society.” 92nd Meeting of CHA, Victoria.

May 2009, “Paradoxes of Philanthropy: Moral Authority and Capitalism.” 88th Meeting of CHA, Ottawa.

September 2008, “Reassessing the Inquiry into Price Spreads and Mass Buying.” Northern Great Plains History Conference, Brandon, Manitoba.

June 2008, "The Promise of a More Abundant Life: Canadian consumer society and the rise of the managerial state," 87th meeting of the CHA, Vancouver.

Professional Engagement

Provided expert consultation to national broadcasters, financial services firms, and media and communications agencies on topics related to retail and consumer history.

Other Professional Work

Numerous articles on architecture, design, and financial strategy including in the *Calgary Herald*, *Globe and Mail*, *Canadian Architect Magazine*.

Professional Affiliations

Canadian Historical Association (CHA), American Historical Association (AHA), Canadian Business History Association (CBHA)

SERVICE

Scholarly

Book reviews and peer reviews for the *Prospectus*, the journal of the Canadian Business History Association, *Histoire sociale/Social history*, *Pacific Historical Review*, and *Prairie History*.

Editor, *Past Imperfect*, a peer-reviewed graduate student journal based in the Department of History and Classics, University of Alberta, 1998-2000.

Community

Jewish Community Foundation of Calgary: Chair, 2011-2015; Board Member, 2010-2018; Member of the investment Committee, ongoing.

Calgary Pro Musica: President, 2005-2009; Board Member, 2000-2012; Director Emeritus.

May 2025