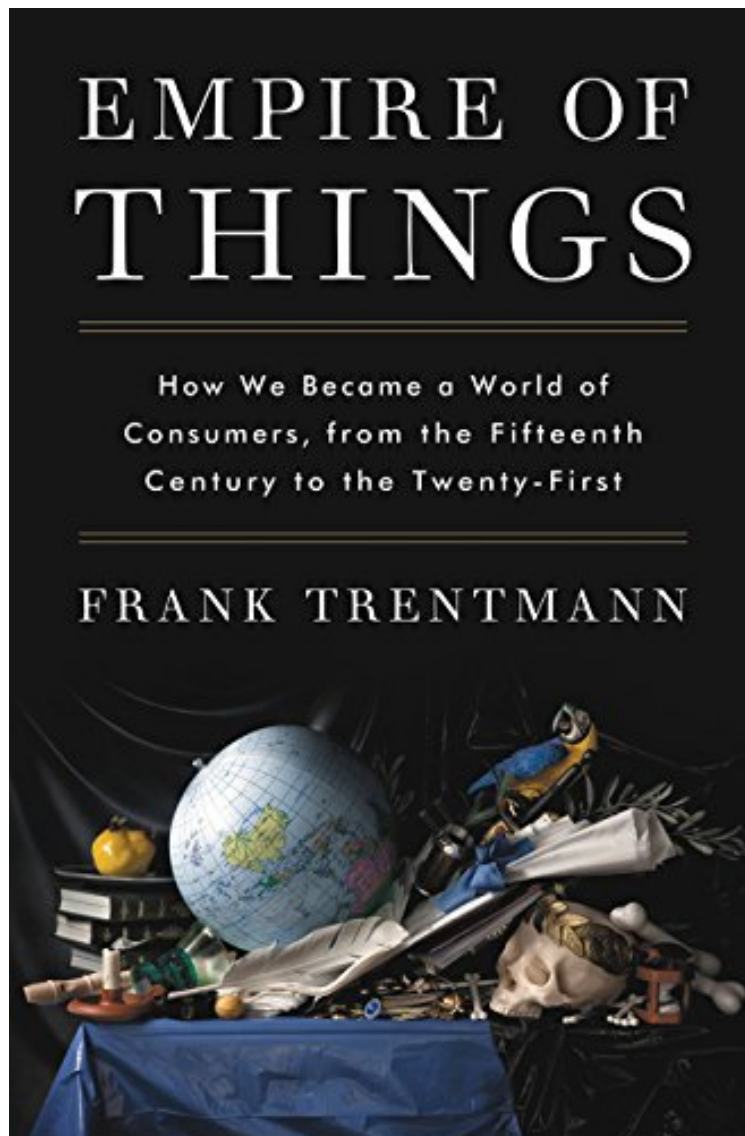


[Download] Empire of Things: How We Became a World of Consumers, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twenty-First

Empire of Things: How We Became a World of Consumers, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twenty-First

Frank Trentmann

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Frank Trentmann : Empire of Things: How We Became a World of Consumers, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twenty-First before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Empire of Things: How We Became a World of Consumers, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twenty-First:

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Great read, well researched, probably the most interesting and insightful history book I've read in a long time. Wonderful job putting today's society in context and providing the insight into how we are where we are.
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By Itsinthefineprints
I struggle with the guilt of being part of the conspicuous consumption cadre, and strive to rein it in. This book both taught me new knowledge while disillusioned some misconceptions on where the problems and solutions space lie. Food for thought as I deliberate the path I could take as part of the solution.
3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Worthwhile history of globalization.
By aj10000
Informative and scattershot addendum to the histories of globalization. Trentmann's key concern is emphasizing that global trade isn't just a phenomenon of the recent past, but has been intensively altering culture on a majority of the world's population for at least since the 14th century.

Empire of Things isn't just an insightful and surprisingly entertaining read, but a crucial one.
NPR
What we consume has become a centralperhaps the centralfeature of modern life. Our economies live or die by spending, we increasingly define ourselves by our possessions, and this ever-richer lifestyle has had an extraordinary impact on our planet. How have we come to live with so much stuff, and how has this changed the course of history?
In Empire of Things, Frank Trentmann unfolds the extraordinary story of our modern material world, from Renaissance Italy and late Ming China to today's global economy. While consumption is often portrayed as a recent American export, this monumental and richly detailed account shows that it is in fact a truly international phenomenon with a much longer and more diverse history. Trentmann traces the influence of trade and empire on tastes, as formerly exotic goods like coffee, tobacco, Indian cotton and Chinese porcelain conquered the world, and explores the growing demand for home furnishings, fashionable clothes and convenience that transformed private and public life. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought department stores, credit cards and advertising, but also the rise of the ethical shopper, new generational identities and, eventually, the resurgence of the Asian consumer.
With an eye to the present and future, Frank Trentmann provides a long view on the global challenges of our relentless pursuit of morefrom waste and debt to stress and inequality. A masterpiece of research and storytelling many years in the making, Empire of Things recounts the epic history of the goods that have seduced, enriched and unsettled our lives over the past six hundred years.

[A] sweepingly detailed history of humanity's passion for the possession of objects ... [an] epic chronicle. (Wall Street Journal)
Massively ambitious Trentmann displays astonishing erudition across multiple disciplines. (Washington Post)
In this important book, Trentmann argues that our increasingly complex consumer societies have evolved over five centuries. (Financial Times (A Summer Book of 2016))
[B]ig, deeply researched and hugely ambitious. (The Times Literary Supplement)
Empire of Things is a masterpiece of historical research . . . a delight to read. (The Times (UK))
At last, a genuinely enjoyable book about our addiction to things. (The Times, books of the year)
Challenges the popular notion of a twentieth-century affluent society and offers, instead, an illuminating account of how our vexing and complex attachment to things has arisen across the past five centuries from an interplay of market forces, politics, war, identity and emotion. (The Times Literary supplement, books of the year)
Sweeping, insightful and often surprising, this history of consumerism since the Elizabethans is itself a vast treasure chest of consumer pleasures, from coffee and chocolate to stuffed crocodiles. Fear of consumerism, Trentmann shows, is as old as consumerism itself: the Catholic Church inveighed against luxury, while by 1770 one Scottish writer was complaining that his countrymen had become slaves to their own wants. Yet Trentmann's bustling, overflowing book is a refreshing antidote to snobbish doom-mongering, showing how credit cards and washing machines have liberated rather than enslaved us. (Sunday Times, books of the year)
Informed, detailed, and dynamic. Trentmann has created a valuable contribution to the conversation around consumption—a commendable fusion of scholarship and engaging writing. (Publishers Weekly)
Empire of Things isn't just an insightful and surprisingly entertaining read, but a crucial one. (NPR)
Empire of Things is something to behold; a compelling account of consumerism that revels in its staggering breadth and depth. Frank Trentmann has written a necessary and important book about one of the defining characteristics of our times. (Amanda Foreman, author of *Georgiana*, Amanda Foreman, author of *Georgiana*, winner of the Whitebread Prize, and *A World on Fire*)
Impeccably scholarly, vividly detailed, and delightfully written, Empire of Things is the indispensable starting point for anyone who wants to understand how, in the last half millennium, every effort to restrain consumers has failed, while revolutions in consumption keep piling up stuff and waste. (Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, author of *Millennium* and *Civilizations*)
Empire of Things is an extraordinary, Braudelian achievement. It is impossible to imagine that any one person would be able to do a better job than Frank Trentmann. (John Brewer, author of *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, winner of the Wolfson History Prize)
In this magisterial volume, Frank Trentmann takes us through time and across national borders to provide a comprehensive history of how people the world over have come to live with more and more things. Here is the crucial backstory to every consumer exchange. (Lizabeth Cohen, author of *A Consumers' Republic*)
From the Back Cover
What we consume has become a centralperhaps the centralfeature of modern life. Our economies live or die by spending, and we increasingly define ourselves by our possessions. This ever-richer lifestyle has had a profound impact on our planet. How have we come

to live with so much stuff, and how has this changed the course of history? In *Empire of Things*, Frank Trentmann unfolds the extraordinary story of our modern material world, from Renaissance Italy and late Ming China to today's global economy. While consumption is often portrayed as a recent American export, this monumental and richly detailed account shows that it is, in fact, a truly international phenomenon with a much longer and more diverse history. Trentmann traces the influence of trade and empire on tastes, as formerly exotic goods like coffee, tobacco, Indian cotton, and Chinese porcelain conquered the world, and explores the growing demand for home furnishings, fashionable clothes, and convenience that transformed private and public life. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought department stores, credit cards, and advertising, but also the rise of the ethical shopper, new generational identities, and, eventually, the resurgence of the Asian consumer. With an eye to the present and future, Trentmann provides a long view on the global challenges of our relentless pursuit of more: from waste and debt to stress and inequality. A masterpiece of research and storytelling many years in the making, *Empire of Things* recounts the epic history of the goods that have seduced, enriched, and unsettled our lives over the past six hundred years. Praise for *Empire of Things*

Empire of Things is a masterpiece of historical research . . . a delight to read. *The Times (UK)*

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