SHOT 2022 Panel Proposal: Historical Contexts of Today’s Transnational Supply Chain Woes

Over the past few years, climate change, international political instability, and the COVID-19 pandemic created shortages across a variety of goods, which continue to plague consumers across the globe and have cast doubts as to the viability of the current technological systems used in manufacturing and transportation networks tasked with providing the complex goods of today’s consumer economy. From shortages of package meat to microprocessors, manufacturers continue to struggle with acquiring raw materials, keeping factories operating, and chartering affordable transnational (or local) shipping, causing prices to rise and shelves to remain unfilled. This panel seeks to draw connections from the past to contextualize the challenges faced by today’s complex global supply chains. Are the challenges of today unique to our current circumstances, or did environmental, political, and sanitary events cause watershed changes to past technological systems? Scholars interested in systems histories, analysis of technical choice in consumer goods, histories of international transportation, and studies of manufacturing would be especially at home on this panel.

Contact Information:

Kevin Moskowitz, History PhD Candidate
University of Texas at Arlington
Kevin.Moskowitz@uta.edu

Proposed Paper Topic: Automobile Part Suppliers and WWII- this paper would outline the challenges faced by American automakers by the onset of conflict in the late 1930s across Europe and Asia, and the changes to manufacturing systems brought on by the switch to war production in 1942 in shaping post-war American manufacturing.