

Cliometrics Conference Email Survey, October 2004

Do you have any additional comments about your experience at the Cliometrics Conference?

“I liked the informal atmosphere. Just as in a previous conference I attended (in 1992), I was a little less sure about the implicit hierarchy and opinion leadership visible in the discussions. Generally, such phenomena tend to generate a certain pressure towards conformity, and to suppress creativity, especially of beginning scholars. Economics conferences are typically dominated by much younger people, which fosters a higher turnover of methodology. I took away the impression there could be a potential problem with this for the Clio community.”

The Clio format is the greatest way to get feedback about one's work that I have experienced. All conferences should run on this model.

It was a nice experience. In a general way, however, my feeling about conferences is "the smaller and the more focused, the better". I took part in two small conferences organized by Gunnar Persson on the topic of "Market integration" which were probably more helpful from a scientific point of view.

It might be nice to organize one lunch on the first day... It is such a vast conference that it is sometimes a bit hard to find colleagues.

The clio conference is a fantastic venue for gathering feedback on new ideas, helping tighten the logic of a paper, and making sure the whole package--theory, data, methods--is cogent enough to convince the reader. It is an invaluable institution for young scholars and more experienced ones alike. In addition, the conferences help build comradery and gives younger scholars access to the network of quantitative economic historians.

Just that I would love to come again some year!

The conference format is so very useful as people actually read your work and give you detailed comments on how to improve the paper.

It is a very useful window on current research issues and methods. It is also very valuable to talk to other economic historians about ideas and questions for future research.

It aided in making significant revisions to the manuscript that gave it the needed polish so that it would be publishable. It also helped make other scholars aware of what I was working on which in turn lead to helpful scholarly interaction both at and after the conference.

The discussion was very useful for me. I added some source data and corrected conclusions presented in my paper for future publication.

Clio Conference has the best format : creative, professional, demanding. A lot of discussions, comments. I expressed this opinion and gave a review of the Conference in the Russian periodical "Economic History Review":

I find the Cliometrics format quite useful. The fact that everyone has read the paper before the conference means that they have had time to think about the issues and formulate comments/criticisms. As a result, I typically get better comments at Cliometrics conferences than at the Economic History Association or Social Science History Association conferences.

I still recall it fondly and hope to attend another Clio sometime in the future.

I think that we as a community can take pride in the fact that we are tough but strive to be fair: comments are often harsh but rarely does the conversation become personal (as happens in some other scholarly communities). We might, though, appear to a newcomer to be a bit cliquish, and might strive to be more open to new people and perspectives.

I have sometimes worried that the conversation focuses too much on questions of method to the exclusion of discussions about how important it is to ask certain questions. And as a methodological pluralist, I naturally worry that Clio sometimes expresses too much of a preference for only one method. Nevertheless, I am pleased that there seems increasingly to be a place for papers that take a case study approach to questions of technological and institutional innovation.

As a young scholar I have benefited significantly due the fact that clio seeks opportunities to include and help young scholars.

This was, I think, my second conference presentation. The small scale of the conference and the vigorous nature of the discussion helped me to develop professional relationships that have been of great benefit to me ever since. I think it would have been harder for me to begin some of those relationships through larger and more impersonal conferences like ASSA or SSHA (though EHA probably falls somewhere in the middle).

Great conference. I would happily participate again.

It is the best conference I have ever been to, bar none. I like the small size - everyone works hard, and there is no skipping out of sessions. I cannot commend it highly enough, and recommend it to the NSF without hesitation or reservation. I should also like to thank you for funding me, as a non-American. Flights from London are cheap, but it is good when America stands up with confidence for the values of freedom and openness on which it was founded.

Highly collegial, focused and efficient forum to present and appraise work. By far and away the best type of conference in economics, econometrics, economic history I have attended in 30 years as an academic. I hope and trust the Cliometric conferences continue in the future - their loss would be profound on the discipline.

For people like me who do not have colleagues working in the same area, it is incredibly valuable to meet with others who have similar interests and to get up to date with recent thinking and current research.

I always very much enjoy the opportunity provide by the Cliometrics Conference to learn about the work of the new scholars coming into the field of economic history.

As I said, it was a long time ago, but I remember it as a nice and stimulating conference.

Its a great conference, particularly for younger people. You get top notch comments and the conference is small enough that you are able to get know lots of other people.

I found it to be one of the most enjoyable, both intellectually and socially, conferences I've been to. I found that economic historians are able to look at all problems in economics in a very productive, insightful way. I hope to apply the macroeconomic tools of interest to me to more problems in economic history, so I can go to more Clis!!

The conference was excellent. The quality of the papers and the discussion was among the best at any conference that I have attended. The serious and cordial atmosphere is ideal. I benefited very much from the conference.

For Ph.D. students and young researchers, this is a great opportunity to present your work and get feed-back. Requiring a paper before-hand is also a good disciplining device.

Best place for informed and constructive criticism.

I first went to Clio in February of 1963. I do not remember the number of times I have gone since. I think it is particularly valuable for young scholars who get to meet major figures in their field of research. I cannot think of a series of conferences that is a better way to sharpen one's own work and at the same time broaden one's perspectives by hearing the ideas of others.

One of these days I might even ask to be invited again --just for old times sake.

To me, the annual Clio conference is the model for how academic conferences should work. The 1992 conference was the first academic conference I ever attended, and it spoiled me forever. It is the kind of careful and collegial scholarship that life in the academy should be.

I don't know if the format of the meetings is still the same, but I think you might think of changing it.

I recognize the positive externalities your work on it is throwing off and am grateful.

Very valuable. Lots of good papers presented. High quality of participants made for very good discussions.

In addition, I was able to expand the material contained in one of the paper's sections into a separate paper aimed for Ottoman/Middle East specialists, submitted to the International Journal of Middle East Studies. This paper has been recently revised and resubmitted with a high likelihood of being accepted for publication.

Thanks again for organizing the conference, making all this possible.

I enjoyed it a lot and found it a very helpful experience. It strengthen my feeling of belonging to a group and I have interacted with members of this group quite a lot afterwards. In this sense, my experience is still giving its fruits. Furthermore, the commitment of scholars attending the meeting (most of us read all the papers in advance) is a good lesson for the future.

The conference was exceptionally well run; the papers presented at the conference were stimulating and provoked considerable conversation among the participants. In particular, the conference provided an excellent forum for young graduate students and recent PhDs in economic history to interact with established scholars in the economic history profession.

The Clio Conference is welcome for its intense commentary. No where else does one receive so careful attention from so many specialist scholars.

It was a wonderful experience! The Cliometrics Conference is a great and valuable conference that should be continued.

The format of the conference (expecting participants to read the papers before the conference, devoting 60 minutes to a single paper with only a 5 minute presentation) is the most effective I've seen. Some meetings of Federal Reserve economists are using a similar format (though I can't say it was borrowed from the Cliometric Society).