Course description:
This seminar explores the development of consumer capitalism in modern Europe from the eighteenth century to the present, primarily in Britain and France. Topics to be covered include the rise of a market economy and culture, urbanization and the commercial metropolis, changing attitudes toward shopping and spending, the construction of modern gender and class identities through consumption, credit and social trust, and the relationship between consumption and democratic citizenship. Readings will be drawn from history as well as from social theory and cultural studies.

Course requirements:
1. Regular attendance and participation in class discussion (25% of grade).
2. 1/2-1-page response to the readings to be posted on Courseworks2/Canvas (under “Discussion”) by 10 am Tuesday (before class). Students are entitled to three posting “vacations” but must let me know in advance (20% of grade).
3. Moderation of discussion for one reading (20% of grade).
4. A 15-page research paper (35% of final grade). Students will hand in a brief paper prospectus on October 17 and a bibliography for the paper on November 14. Everyone must meet with me between mid-October and early November to discuss ideas for the paper. Final paper is due Friday, December 15.

Course materials:
Readings for the course are posted on Canvas.
I. The Emergence of a Market Economy and Society

1. September 5: Introduction to the Course: Defining Consumer Culture

Texts: Raymond Williams, “Consumption,” Keywords (we will read this in class).

2. September 12: Markets and Material Culture in Early Modern Europe


II. Consumption in the Age of the Bourgeoisie

4. September 26: The Making of the Consumer Metropolis: The Case of Paris


David Pinkney, Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris, Ch. 1, “Paris in 1850.”

Philip Nord, Paris Shopkeepers and the Politics of Resentment, Ch. 3,
“Haussmannization.”


Emile Zola, *The Ladies’ Paradise* (1883), Ch. 9.

*Slides*: the nineteenth-century city; nineteenth-century shops and department stores; advertising.

5. October 3: Spectacle and Selfhood in the Nineteenth-Century City


*Slides*: fashion plates

6. October 10: Gender, Class, and Consumption in the Nineteenth Century

Guy de Maupassant, “The Necklace” (1884), *Collected Short Stories*.
Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), Ch. 4, “Conspicuous Consumption” (*half the class reads Veblen*).

*Slides*: bourgeois interiors

7. October 17: Debt, Credit, and Social Trust in the Nineteenth Century


Paul Johnson, *Saving and Spending: The Working-Class Economy in Britain, 1870-1930*, Ch. 6, “Credit” (half the class reads Johnson).


***Submit paper prospectus via e-mail (but no attachments, please)***

8. October 24: Empire and the Market


Joanna de Groot, “Metropolitan Desires and Colonial Connections: Reflections on Consumption and Empire,” in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, eds., Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose.

Jean Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, Ch. 1, “The Empire’s Old Clothes: Fashioning the Colonial Subject.”


*Slides:* empire and consumption

**III. Consumption and Cultural Crisis in the Twentieth Century**

9. October 31: The Interwar Period: Mass Consumption and its Discontents


Hartmut Berghoff, “Enticement and Deprivation: The Regulation of Consumption in Pre-war Nazi Germany,” in *The Politics of Consumption*, eds., Martin Daunt and Matthew Hilton.

*Slides:* Advertising

10. November 7: Election Day Holiday
11. November 14: Citizenship and Consumption in the Postwar Era


*The Marriage of Maria Braun* (Fassbinder, 1979) (stream on CLIO via Kanopy).

***Submit 1-page paper bibliography via e-mail attachment***

**IV. Contemporary Consumption**

12. November 21: No Class

13. November 28: Digital Capitalism

*Texts:* Alice Marwick, *Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity, and Branding in the Social Media Age*, Ch. 5, “Lifestreaming: We Live in Public.”


14. December 5: The Politics of Global Shopping


Walmart: The High Cost of Low Price (Greenwald, 2005) (stream on Youtube; click on “Browse Youtube” when you open hyperlink).
Elizabeth Currid-Halkett, The Sum of Small Things, Ch. 5, “Conspicuous Production.”

***Paper due Friday, December 15***
Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity
The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity. Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars’ work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. In practical terms, this means that, as students you must be responsible for the full citations of others’ ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent. Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Columbia.

Disability-Related Accommodations:
In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with Disability Services (DS). More information on the DS registration process is available online at www.health.columbia.edu/ods. Faculty must be notified of registered students’ accommodations before exam or other accommodations will be provided. Students who have (or think they may have) a disability are invited to contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion at (212) 854-2388 (Voice/TTY) or by email at disability@columbia.edu

Affordable Access to Course Texts
All students deserve to be able to access course texts. The high costs of textbooks and other course materials prohibit access and perpetuate inequity, and Barnard librarians are partnering with students, faculty, and staff to increase access. By the first day of advance registration for each term, you should be able to view on CourseWorks information provided by your faculty about required texts (including ISBN or author, title, publisher and copyright date) and their prices. Once you have selected your classes, here are some cost-free methods for accessing course texts, recommended by the Barnard Library: find out if your faculty has placed the texts on reserve at Barnard Library or another Columbia library, and look for course texts using CLIO (library catalog), Borrow Direct (request books from partner libraries), Interlibrary Loan (request book chapters from any library), and NYPL. Students with financial need or insecurity can check items out from the FLIP lending libraries in the Barnard Library and Butler Library and can consult with the Dean of Studies and the Financial Aid Office about additional affordable alternatives for getting access to course texts. Talk with your librarian and visit the Barnard Library Textbook Affordability guide (library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability) for more details.