

Sociology 342-101
Consumers and Consumption
2020-2021
Term 1

“Web Oriented Course”
Schedule: MWF 2:00 – 3:00 pm PST

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I. Course Description

In many ways, consumption defines our lives—our identities as consumers are even more important, some would argue, than our identities as workers or producers. But what are the implications of a society in which “you are what you buy?”

In this class, we will explore some of the different arguments about and approaches to consumption in modern society that have been adopted by sociologists and others. This course is divided into four major segments: “Consumption and Inequality,” “Critiques of Consumer Society,” “Consumption and Meaning,” and “Linking Production and Consumption.” We will touch on a wide range of themes, from the connection between consumption, taste, and inequality to arguments about the impact of consumption on our environment. We will also consider consumption as a source of meaning and a means for identity construction and expression in society today. The overall goal of this course is to provide you with a broad overview of debates and theories about consumption, and to provide you with an opportunity to engage with some of the debates and explore a consumption-related topic yourself.

By the end of this course, you should have a good understanding of the general sets of debates and theories about consumption, be familiar with some specific scholars and their arguments about consumption and consumer society, and be able to apply these ideas to specific examples. You will also, it is my hope, have whetted your appetite and want to learn more about how consumption and consumer practices shape our society and impact our world.

II. Course Format and Readings

Although I will avoid making any unnecessary changes to this course once the term has started, please be aware that the course schedule and format is subject to change at instructor discretion.

In these unprecedented times, the course format for SOCI 342 has changed from the past. If we were meeting in person, we would have had three 50-minute sessions together every week. Instead, most weeks there will be two online “lectures” and one “discussion.” There will be an option quiz, on the weekly readings and lecture material, for you to check your understanding of the course material. I will also provide one “Q&A” period per week, which will be an opportunity to interact directly (online) with me, to discuss course material, ask questions, or whatever would be useful to students.

Lectures

Class lectures will be available to you in two forms: First, I will provide recorded versions of each lecture, accompanied by PowerPoint slides; second, I will also provide you with the full text of each lecture as well. Lectures will be available by class time each week (so the first lecture will be available by Monday at 2 pm, and the second by Wednesday at 2 pm). You will be free to read or listen to (or both) each lecture at a time that is convenient to you, but I expect that you will have done so by Thursday each week in order to participate in group discussions. In each lecture, I will introduce the subject matter, discuss the important aspects of the weekly readings, and incorporate additional (hopefully interesting!) material related to the topic at hand. A key goal of my lectures is to help you understand the course readings and help you identify what aspects of the readings are important. Please keep in mind that a single “lecture” might actually be several short, recorded segments.

Group Discussions

During the term, you will be assigned to a discussion group, and most weeks, you will be asked to participate in an online discussion with your group members about the week’s topic. These discussions will be held through Canvas’ “discussion” function, so they will be text-based, and you will be able to participate when it is convenient for you, within a specific time frame (between Wednesday and Friday each week). I provide more information about how these discussions will be organized, and how we will evaluate your participation in them, below.

Weekly “Q&A”

One of the best parts of being a faculty member at UBC is the opportunity to interact with and get to know undergraduate students, something our remote learning model makes much more difficult this term. In order to offer some form of “face-to-face” contact, I will offer once-a-week “Question & Answer” sessions, starting in the second week of classes. Initially, these Q&A sessions will be held during scheduled class time, on Fridays from 2-3 pm Pacific Standard Time. Participation will be entirely optional. I plan to use a UBC Zoom account initially to organize these meetings. The timing, platform, and format of this weekly session will be open to changes, based on student feedback and student needs.

Office Hours

If you need to communicate with me one-on-one, I will also offer office hours, though on an appointment-only basis. Appointments can be made through the SOCI 342 Canvas

website or by email. This is not to discourage you from using office hours, but rather it will allow me to communicate with students at more flexible times and using different methods (Zoom, telephone, Skype, whatever is best for the two of us).

Readings

Please note, **ALL** course readings are available through the course's **Canvas** website. You will need a Campus Wide Login to access this resource:

canvas.ubc.ca

ALL required readings can be found either in PDF format or through a persistent URL link on the course's Canvas website. Each week's readings can be found under the module for the week (i.e. "Week 1," "Week 2," etc.). The course outline also includes numerous "recommended" readings. These are for your reference only, and you are not expected to read them. Some of these might be useful for you when writing your short paper at the end of the term. They have not been posted on the course website, though often you can easily find them through the UBC Library website.

Weekly quizzes

Each week of class, I will provide a weekly quiz on the readings and lecture notes through the course's Canvas website. These quizzes will be very short and will include several questions on the content of the weekly reading and my lectures. These quizzes are optional and will not be graded; they are meant to help you keep up with the course material and also to give you a sense of how well you understand the weekly material.

Keep Learning!

Need some extra support handling the new, online learning environment? You are always welcome to contact me, but you can also find lots of tips, information, and access to university resources at: <https://keeplearning.ubc.ca>.

III. Pre-requisites

Sociology 100, or with instructor approval.

IV. Assignments, Evaluation, and Grading Procedures

Grades will be calculated according the following formula:

Group Discussion Report	10%
Midterm exam (due Oct. 23)	25%
Final exam (TBA)	25%
Paper proposal (due Nov. 13)	5%
Paper (due Dec. 11)	25%
Attendance and participation	10%

2. Group Discussion Report

One time in the term you will also be asked to write a short report, or overview of your group's weekly online discussion. Each weekly discussion will be guided by a set of instructions and discussion questions. At the beginning of the term, you will sign up to "report" on one week's discussion, writing a short commentary or overview on your group's discussion (roughly two, double-spaced pages), due the following Tuesday. Guidelines for this assignment will be posted on the course Canvas website. The group discussion report will be worth 10% of your total mark.

3. Midterm and Final Exams

These will be examinations that primarily test whether or not you have been keeping up with the course readings and have been reading/listening to lectures and engaged with group discussions. In the past, I have adopted in-class exams, primarily because in-class exams provide a guarantee of academic integrity. But in other ways, traditional, in-class exams are very artificial arrangements, forcing you to memorize material and demonstrate knowledge under odd conditions. In the "real" world, of course, there is nothing wrong with looking up information, double-checking notes, or re-reading a relevant source of information. Given that I have concerns about using online exam-proctoring software (Proctorio, for example, is not accessible to students in China and is frankly a bit creepy), I will instead adopt a "take-home exam" format for both the midterm and final exams.

This means that both the midterm and the final exams will consist of a few short answer questions and one or two essay questions. They will be open book, open notebook, and you will be asked to "sign" an honesty pledge as part of the exam, attesting that the exam represents your own work, and that you completed it without assistance. The midterm will evaluate your mastery of course material from the first six (6) weeks of the course. You will be given two full days to complete the exam; the questions will be posted on Canvas on **Wednesday, October 21**, and your answers will be due by the end of the day on **Friday, October 23**. The final exam will primarily focus on the second half of the course and will have a similar format and procedure to the midterm, only I will give you more time to complete it. Final exam will be due (on Canvas) on the final exam date that we are assigned by the university, which will be announced early in the term. I will release the final exam questions on Canvas about a week ahead of time, so you should have plenty of time, and flexibility, in completing the final exam.

4. Paper

You will be required to produce one short paper. The paper assignment is made up of two parts.

You must first submit a one-to-two-page proposal for your paper, due **Friday, Nov. 13**. Detailed instructions for this portion of the assignment will be distributed on the course website. This summary will be worth 5% of your total mark.

The paper itself will be roughly 6-8 double-spaced pages in length; this does not include title page or references. In this paper, you will be asked to discuss a topic related to one of the weekly themes covered in the course, and you should draw upon relevant readings from the course (at least three). This paper is due on **Friday, December 11**. This paper will be worth 25% of your mark.

5. Attendance and class participation

This portion of your grade will be primarily based upon your virtual “attendance” at and participation in weekly group discussions. Even though we are not able to meet in person, discussions are still a crucial component of the course, and attendance is expected.

You will be assigned a discussion group through Canvas, and online discussions will be scheduled every week. You will be able to participate in your group discussion at a time that is convenient for you, but each week’s discussion will only be available Thursday and Friday each week. I will provide clear instructions each week on the topic and questions I would like groups to engage with, but you will of course be free to introduce new questions and draw upon your own experiences. I will provide a rubric on Canvas to help you understand what constitutes good participation in an online discussion. “Attendance” and participation in online group discussions will be 10% of your total mark.

V. University and Course Policies, Expectations and Responsibilities

By enrolling in this class, you are expected to keep up with course material, and to complete your assignments in a timely and honest fashion, just as you should expect me to lecture and guide discussions effectively and give you feedback on your work in a timely (and honest) manner. It is my expectation that students will do their best to complete the entire reading assignment each week. Weekly reading assignments should be completed by Thursday evenings in order to be participate effectively in weekly group discussions.

I also expect that everyone will participate in discussions respectfully and be considerate of one another. This can be more of a challenge in an online environment, where we don’t interact in person. This class should be a space in which everyone feels comfortable expressing their views, and I see it as my responsibility to help make it so. If you have any concerns about the course, or how discussions or class are being conducted, please contact me. I take your concerns seriously, and I appreciate student feedback.

Accommodation: UBC accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disability Resource Centre. The University also provides accommodation to students whose religious obligations conflict with scheduled examinations or class attendance. If you will require accommodation on these grounds, please let me know in advance.

‘Early Alert’: During the term, I will do my best to reach out and offer support If I am concerned about your academic performance or well-being. I also encourage you to

contact me if you need assistance. This is especially important given the new and usual circumstances we are living under, and our shift to online learning! In addition, I may identify my concerns using Early Alert. The program allows academic, financial, or mental health concerns to be identified sooner and responded to in a more coordinated way. This provides you with the earliest possible connection to resources like academic advising, financial advising, counseling, or other resources and support to help you get back on track. The information is treated confidentially and is sent because I care about your academic success and wellbeing. For more information, please visit earlyalert.ubc.ca.

Late Policy: Late written assignments will be penalized up to 5% for each day late. All completed assignments should be submitted through the course's Canvas website. If you are concerned that you will miss a deadline for a course assignment, don't be afraid to contact me about it ahead of time.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is both dishonest and violates University policy, and if I discover any cases of plagiarism or cheating I will not hesitate to report it to the Academic Integrity Program; the ultimate consequence could be a failing grade in the course and suspension from the University. You are expected to give proper credit to ideas you borrow from others, even if you do not quote them word-for-word.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism. If you feel you do not understand what plagiarism is, consult this UBC website:

http://wiki.ubc.ca/Library:Academic_Integrity

There are many resources at UBC available to help you complete your academic work under your own power. If you need extra guidance in writing your term paper, know that I am available to help. You can also find tutoring services from AMS Tutoring (<https://www.ams.ubc.ca/services/tutoring/>) or the UBC Writing Centre (<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/tutoring-studying/improve-your-writing/>).

Grade Appeals: I am always happy to answer questions about marking and grading procedures and criteria, and I take marking of student work very seriously. The criteria used to evaluate course assignments will be elaborated in assignment guidelines and include not only comprehension but also such elements as critical analysis, originality, and insight as well as grammar, spelling and the like. Simply being unhappy with a mark is **not** grounds for re-evaluation or appeal. If, however, you feel your mark for a particular assignment does not reflect the quality of your work, I ask: 1.) that you first wait about 48 hours before you request to discuss your mark; 2.) that you first approach the person who marked your assignment; and 3.) that you be prepared with short and specific written comments regarding why you believe you deserve a higher grade. Please also recognize that a re-evaluation of your work can result in a higher **or** a lower mark.

Communication: The best way to reach the course instructor is by email. If you type the course title in the subject heading of your email, your emails will be easier to spot and are

likely to receive higher priority. If your questions regard assignment due dates, assigned readings, or other information included in the course syllabus, please consult the syllabus or a classmate before contacting me. I appreciate emails that begin with “Dear Amy” or “Dear Professor Hanser.” Avoid emails that start with “Hey” or with no greeting at all!

University Statement regarding online learning for international students:

During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0> for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression>

VI. Course outline

Week 1: Introduction: What is a Consumer Society?

What is a consumer society? Why do people consume, how is consumption organized in society, and why does it matter? And finally, what is consumerism and why does it represent something “new”?

Wednesday (September 9): Course Introduction (Lecture 1)

Friday (September 11): What is a “Consumer Society”? (Lecture 2)

Readings:

Required:

- Juliet B. Schor, “Introduction,” from Schor’s *The Overspent American* (Harper Perennial 1998), pp.3-24.
- Gary Cross, “The Irony of the Century,” Chapter 1 in *An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America*. New York: Columbia University Press 2000, pp.1-13.
- Lecture notes

PART 1: Consumption and Inequality

Week 2: Consumption and Inequality

It makes sense for us to start the term by putting consumption and discussions of “consumer societies” and “consumer cultures” into perspective. First, we will consider the scope of material inequalities across the world and across time—how global are consumer societies? How recent, historically speaking, are consumer societies? Second, we will delve into some theories about the role that consumption plays in shaping social inequalities.

Monday (September 14): Consumption, Affluence and Global Inequalities (Lecture 3)

Wednesday (September 16): Consumption and Theories of Inequality (Lecture 4)

Friday (September 18): Online discussion

Readings:

Required:

- Andrew B. Trigg. 2001. “Veblen, Bourdieu, and Conspicuous Consumption,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 35(1): 99-115.
- Lecture notes

Recommended:

- Claude Fischer and Michael Hout. 2006. *A Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last 100 Years*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Branko Milanovic. 2012. “Global Inequality: From Class to Location, from Proletarians to Migrants,” *Global Policy* 3(2): 125-134.
- Arjun Jayadev, et al. 2015. “Who’s Got What, Then and Now? A Fifty Years Overview from the Global Consumption and Income Project,” https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2602268.

Week 3: Inequality and the Practice of Consumption

Inequality among consumers is not simply a matter of quantitative differences; inequality also takes the form of distinctive consumer practices that then reflect, and sometimes to reinforce, social divisions. But how do consumer preferences vary across social groups, and especially across social hierarchies? Are some cultural preferences more highly valued than others? And are things changing—are we moving from a society with snobs to one with “omnivores”?

Monday (September 21): Inequality and Consumer Practices (Lecture 5, Part 1).

Wednesday (September 23): Inequality and Consumer Practices, cont. (Lecture 5, Part 2); short film (“People Like Us: Social Class in America”)

Friday (September 25): Online discussion

Readings:

Required:

- Richard A. Peterson and Roger M. Kern. 1996. “Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore,” *American Sociological Review* 61(5): 900-907.
- Rachel Sherman. 2017. *Uneasy Street: The Anxieties of Affluence*, chapter 3, “‘A Very Expensive Ordinary Life’: Conflicted Consumption.” Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Lecture notes.

Recommended:

- Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction*. Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Bethany Bryson, 1996, “Anything But Heavy Metal: Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes,” *American Sociological Review* 61: 884-899.
- Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann, “Democracy versus Distinction: A Study of Omnivorousness in Gourmet Food Writing,” *American Journal of Sociology* 2007 113(1): 165-204.
- Zachary Hyde. 2014. “Omnivorous Gentrification: Restaurant Reviews and Neighborhood Change in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver,” *City and Community* 13(4): 341-359.
- Tak Wing Chan. 2019. “Understanding Cultural Omnivores: Social and Political Attitudes,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 70(3): 784-806.

Week 4: Institutions of Consumption and Inequality—Consumer Credit

Modern, consumer societies are, in some ways, built upon consumer credit—the ability of consumers to borrow money. This week, we consider the development of consumer credit in North America, examining one of the key institutions of modern consumption. We will examine why these institutions are important and what implications they hold in terms of social inequality. I will also give you a sense of how consumer credit is both a global phenomenon but also deeply shaped by local and especially national contexts.

Monday (September 28): Consumer Credit and Why it Matters (Lecture 6)

Wednesday (September 30): Credit Inequalities (Lecture 7)

Friday (October 2): Online discussion

Readings:

Required:

- Barbara Kiviat. 2019. “Credit Scoring in the United States,” *Economic Sociology* (The European electronic newsletter), 21(1): 33-42.
- Read about credit scores and credit reports in Canada:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/credit-reports-score/credit-report-score-basics.html>
- Lecture notes

Recommended:

- Marion Fourcade and Kieran Healy. 2013. “Classification situations: Life-chances in the neo-liberal era,” *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 38(8):559-572
- Akos Rona-Tas and Alya Guseva. 2018. “Consumer Credit in Comparative Perspective,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 44: 55-75.
- Rachel E. Dwyer. 2018. “Credit, Debt and Inequality,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 44: 237-61.

PART 2: Critiques of Consumer Society

Week 5: Commodification, Advertising, and Corporate Power

Some of the most powerful and enduring critiques of consumerism focus on the impact of markets on culture, the power of corporations in dictating the content of consumer culture, and the role that advertising plays in shaping consumer wants and desires.

Monday (October 5): Advertising, Corporate Power, and Consumer Culture Critiques (Lecture 8)

Wednesday (October 7): Film (“The Merchants of Cool”)

Friday (October 9): Online discussion

Readings:

Required:

- Juliet B. Schor. 2007. "In Defense of Consumer Critique: Revisiting the Consumption Debates of the Twentieth Century," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 611:16-30.
- Thomas C. Frank. 1997. "Advertising as Cultural Criticism: Bill Bernbach versus the Mass Society," pp.52-73 in *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Grace Glueck. 1955. "On the Florida Highroads in a Low Car," *The New York Times*, Jan. 30. [Be sure to read this, it is such fun!]
- Lecture notes.

Week 6: Ethical Consumption: Sustainability, Fair Trade and Social and Environmental Justice

This week we will consider some of the new critiques of consumerism and consumer societies from the perspectives of environmental sustainability and social justice. Can consumers act as ethical citizens, or is consumption a fundamentally flawed framework for thinking about sustainability or fairness?

Monday (October 12): Thanksgiving – No class!

Wednesday (October 14): Green Consumption, Ethical Consumption, and the Limits of the "Good" Consumer (Lecture 9)

Friday (October 16): Online discussion

Readings:

Required:

- Michael F. Maniates, "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" *Global Environmental Politics* 2001 1(3): 31-52.
- Margaret M. Willis and Juliet B. Schor. "Does Changing a Light Bulb Lead to Changing the World? Political Action and the Conscious Consumer," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 2012 644:160-190.
- Lecture notes

Recommended:

- Emily Huddart Kennedy, Harvey Krahn and Naomi T. Krogman. "Are we counting what counts? A closer look at environmental concern, pro-environmental behavior, and carbon footprint," *Local Environment* 2013:1-17.
- Matthew Adams and Jayne Raisborough, "Making a Difference: Ethical Consumption and the Everyday," *British Journal of Sociology* 2010 61(2): 256-274.
- Julie Guthman, "Fast food/organic food: reflexive tastes and the making of 'yuppie chow'," *Social and Cultural Geography* 2003 4(1): 45-58.

Week 7: Midterm Exam

Monday (October 19): Midterm review

Wednesday (October 21): Midterm review; take-home midterm exam questions released on this date.

Friday (October 23): Take-home midterm exam due on Canvas.

PART 3: Consumption, Identity and Meaning

Week 8: Consumption and Identity

In addition to the many critiques of consumption, consumerism, and consumer society, there are also those who argue that consumption offers people an avenue for individual fulfillment, a means for self-expression or the construction of individual and collective identities, and even a means to challenge traditional constraints of society. They ask a different set of questions about consumption: How does consumption fit into people's everyday lives? What role does it play in helping people make sense of their worlds and their places in them? This week, and in the following several weeks, we take a bottom-up look at consumption.

Monday (October 26): Meaningful Consumption (Lecture 10)

Wednesday (October 28): Shopping (Lecture 11)

Friday (October 30) Group discussions

Readings:

Required:

- Daniel Miller, *The Comfort of Things*, chapters 1-2, pp.1-31.
- Russell W. Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self," *Journal of Consumer Research* 1988 15:139-168.
- Lecture notes

Recommended:

- Daniel Miller, *A Theory of Shopping* (Polity, 1998).
- Igor Kopytoff, "The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process," in A. Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 1986).

Week 9: Consumption, Gender, Race and Ethnicity

What is the relationship between consumption and the expression of gendered and ethnic or racial identities? Do consumption practices, expectations and norms serve to construct such identities and categories as well as provide individuals an avenue for self-expression?

Monday (November 2): Consumption and Gender Identities (Lecture 12); short film (“Body typed”)

Wednesday (November 4): Race, Ethnicity and Consumption (Lecture 13)

Friday (November 6): Group discussions

Readings:

Required:

- Kate Cairns and Josee Johnston, “Feeding the ‘Organic Child’: Mothering through Ethical Consumption,” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 2013 13(2): 97-118.
- Michele Lamont and Virag Molnar, “How Blacks Use Consumption to Shape their Collective Identity: Evidence from marketing specialists,” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 2001 1(1): 31-45.
- Lecture notes.

Recommended:

- Douglas M. Stayman and Rohit Deshpande, “Situational Ethnicity and Consumer Behavior,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 1989 16:361-371.
- David Crockett. 2017. “Paths to Respectability: Consumption and Stigma Management in the Contemporary Black Middle Class,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 44: 554-581.

Week 10: Consumer-Based Communities

Can the things we consume serve as the basis for group identities and facilitate the formation of community? In what ways might consumer goods allow us to find connections with others? Is this a bottom-up process, or a top-down one?

Monday (November 9): Brands, Nations, and Collective Consumer Identities (Lecture 14)

Wednesday (November 11): Remembrance Day, no class!

Friday (November 13): Group discussions; **paper proposal due, to be submitted online.**

Readings:

Required:

- Albert M. Muniz, Jr. and Thomas C. O’Guinn, “Brand Community,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 2001 27:412-432.

- Lecture notes.

Recommended:

- Michaela DeSoucey. 2016. *Contested Tastes: Foie Gras and the Politics of Food*. Princeton University Press.
- Enric Castello and Sabina Mihelj. 2018. "Selling and Consuming the Nation: Understanding Consumer Nationalism," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 18(4): 558-576.

Week 11: Kids and Consumption

Are kids consumers? Should they be? What does consumption mean to children, and how does children's consumer culture get defined? How important are parents, how important are peers? We'll explore some of these questions this week.

Monday (November 16): Children's Consumption (Lecture 15)

Wednesday (November 18) Gender and Children's Consumption (Lecture 16)

Friday (November 20): Group discussions

Readings:

Required:

- Allison J. Pugh, "Making Do," pp.48-82 in *Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children, and Consumer Culture* (University of California Press, 2009).
- Emily W. Kane, "'No Way My Boys Are Going to Be Like That!': Parents' Responses to Children's Gender Nonconformity," *Gender & Society* 2006 20(2):149-176.
- Lecture notes.

Recommended:

- Elizabeth Chin, "Anthropologist Takes Inner-City Children on Shopping Sprees," pp.117-141 in *Purchasing Power: Black Kids and American Consumer Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2001).
- Daniel Cook, "Pediocularity: From the Child's Point of View," pp.66-95 in *The Commodification of Childhood: The Children's Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer* (Duke University Press, 2004).

Week 12: Social Media, Virtual Worlds, and Modern Consumption

The Internet, and especially new forms of social media that operate on the Internet and through cellular communications system, have become increasingly intertwined with consumption: We both consume social media, ideas about consumption are communicated through social media, and our consumer purchases may be carried out online as well. This week, we consider "virtual" worlds and consumption.

Monday (November 23): Consumption and Social Media (Lecture 17)

Wednesday (November 25): The New Digital Data of Consumption (Lecture 18)

Friday (November 27): Group discussions

Readings:

Required:

- Minna Ruckenstein and Julia Granroth. 2020. "Algorithms, Advertising, and the Intimacy of Surveillance," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 13(1):12-24.
- Lecture notes

Recommended:

- Russell W. Belk, "Digital consumption and the extended self," *Journal of Marketing Management* 2014 30(11-12): 1101-1118.
- Adam Arvidsson and Alessandro Caliendo, "Brand Public," *Journal of Consumer Research* 2016 42:727-748.
- Carsten Schwemmer and Sandra Ziewiecki. 2018. "Social Media Sellout: The Increasing Role of Product Promotion on YouTube," *Social Media & Society* 4(3): 1-20.
- Shoshana Zuboff. 2019. *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*. New York: Public Affairs.

PART 4: Conclusion: Linking Consumption and Production

Week 13: Linking Production and Consumption; Consumer Citizenship

When we trace a consumer good from production to consumption, what do we find? What is the social life of a pair of jeans, a cup of coffee, or a tomato, like? We will also take stock of the various approaches to and arguments about consumption that we have encountered over the course of the term, and we will turn our attention to the politics of consumption. Is it a basis upon which collective action or social movements can develop?

Monday (November 30): Linking Production and Consumption (Lecture 19)

Wednesday (December 2): Consumer Citizenship and the Possibilities for Political Consumerism (Lecture 20)

Friday (December 4): Review and wrap-up (Lecture 21)

Readings:

Required:

- Tim Bartley et al, "Electronics: The Hidden Costs of Computing," chapter 6 in *Looking Behind the Label: Global Industries and the Conscientious Consumer*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2015, pp.179-208.
- Lecture notes.

Recommended:

- Josée Johnston, “The citizen-consumer hybrid: ideological tensions and the case of Whole Foods Market,” *Theory and Society* 2008 37:229-270.

Final paper due Friday, December 11.

Final exam during the exam period; date, time, and place TBA. The format will be take-home style; your answers will be due on the date the university assigned us; I will release the questions one week in advance.