

ARTH 373-001; HIST 389-006  
Fall 2016  
**The Art of Shopping**



**Barbara Krueger, *I Shop Therefore I Am*, 1987.**

**Dr. Jennifer Van Horn**

Email: [jvanhorn@gmu.edu](mailto:jvanhorn@gmu.edu)

Office: 369 Robinson Hall B

Office Hours: M and W 10:30-11:30;  
and by appointment

**Course Meeting:** M and W 12:00-1:15

Art and Design Building 2026

**E-mail policy**

I check my email throughout the day. I will always respond within 24 hours during the work week. On the weekends, I will respond within 48 hours. One warning: I tend not to check my email after 9:00 PM at night. So, if you email after that, you definitely will not hear from me until the morning.

**Course website/Blackboard**

Access through Blackboard

Assignments and important announcements will be posted on Blackboard and sent via email. It is imperative, therefore, that you check your GMU email account AND the course website via Blackboard. You will also be required to submit assignments via Blackboard. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with Blackboard and to submit assignments via Blackboard. An inability to use Blackboard, or experiencing technical issues with Blackboard, are not excuses for failing to complete reading assignments or for submitting assignments late.

Blackboard is available in the myMason Portal. After logging into <http://mymason.gmu.edu>, you will see a Courses Tab at the top right. From there you will see a Course List. You should select our course.

If you can not log in to myMason please contact the [ITU Support Center](#) at (703) 993-8870 or reset your Mason NetID password at <http://password.gmu.edu>

For tutorials on how to use Blackboard visit:

<http://ondemand.blackboard.com/students.htm>

If you have difficulty with Blackboard you should consult the "Courses Support: Help for Blackboard and Additional Course Tools" website:

[https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=230\\_1](https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=230_1)

**If you repeatedly get "error" messages or are unable to access course content you should contact Mason through the Contact Us form at:**

[https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=230\\_1](https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=230_1)

## **Required Articles, Book chapters, and sections of Books** (available through Blackboard)

### **Course Objectives and Outcomes**

Upon completing the course students will be able to:

- Analyze the history of shopping and consumption in the United States from 1600 to the present.
- Understand how patterns of consumption have changed between 1600 and today and the reasons for those changes.
- Be able to see American architecture and consumer goods from the perspectives of multiple participants.
- Understand and evaluate the nature and possible causes and implications of events, behavior, problems, and issues from an informed and intellectually balanced perspective.
- Connect concepts and empirical evidence in logically coherent, valid, and compelling ways.
- Understand and appreciate social and cultural differences among individuals, groups, and societies with regard to their attitudes towards consumption.
- Engage and learn from others with different backgrounds and perspectives in constructive ways.
- Participate responsibly and effectively in group efforts to address and solve intellectual problems.
- Understand the importance of class, ethnicity, race, and gender in structuring American society and in shaping how people interacted with artifacts.
- Understand how to read and critically interpret: primary historical documents, visual and material artifacts, films, and scholars' interpretations of the past.
- Understand how to identify chronological and geographical patterns, identify issues and problems in the past, formulate historical questions, interrogate historical data and sources, support interpretations with visual and material evidence, and evaluate major debates among scholars.

### **Course Description**

This course investigates the history and culture of shopping in Europe and America from 1600 to the present. When did shopping become a leisure activity and in what spaces have people shopped? What were they buying and why? We will examine both how people acquired the goods they needed for survival and pleasure (food, clothing, status symbols) as well as the cultural meanings of the consumption of these goods. Topics will include the role of fashion, the impact of technology, changing advertising strategies, the emergence of branding, the development of mass consumer culture, and the rise of the shopping mall. In addition to a midterm and a final exam, students will write two short papers and be expected to read critically and to participate in class discussions of readings, artworks, movies, and music videos.

### **Course Requirements**

Being in class and being prepared for class are your first priorities; completing all of the readings and being prepared to discuss those readings are parts of your class attendance.

The course will be a combination of lecture and discussion based upon the readings listed for each class. We will also be viewing several documentaries and music videos in class. While the films should be entertaining, students are nevertheless expected to view them critically. Please have completed the assigned reading before class each day and be ready to discuss what you have read. Please bring any readings that have been assigned for that day to class.

I am available during office hours and by appointment to discuss the course, any concerns you may have, or to talk in more depth about the material. Please see me BEFORE an assignment if you are confused, rather than afterwards when I cannot be of as much help.

### **Assignments/ Assessment**

The Assignments for the course include completing the reading assigned for each meeting. The reading assignment for the week is listed after the session topic; the reading is to be done BEFORE class.

### **Class Participation**

The most important aspect to success in this class is your presence and your active participation. The course will rely heavily upon discussion, so please have completed the assigned reading before class each day, bring any assigned readings to class, and be ready to critically talk about what you have read. I want us to benefit from the experience and perspectives that each brings to the discussion. **That is, I want to hear from each and every one of you, every class.** There are several small assignments that you will need to complete in order to participate in class discussions fully. These will also factor into your participation grade in the course.

Attending class regularly by itself will not ensure you a high participation grade. Your starting attendance/participation grade (i.e., you attend all class meetings but do little else) will be 80% (B-). Active, informed participation in discussion will improve that grade. Conversely, more than one unexcused absence, chronic late attendance, or disruptive behavior will negatively affect your grade. So that you know the criteria by which I will judge your participation I have posted a **Discussion Criteria sheet** on Blackboard.

We will have several **In-class Group Assignments**. For these assignments I will break students into groups and one member of the group will submit the assignment. Each member of the group will then receive a grade based upon the group's final product and their participation level.

### **Reading Analyses**

During the course of the semester you will complete **5 reading analyses**: 6 reading analyses are listed on the syllabus. You have a choice of NOT completing ONE of these analyses. (You will not receive extra credit for completing all 6 analyses.) There will be questions posted on Blackboard about one-week before the reading is due. Your responses are to be submitted via Blackboard. Because discussion is an essential part of this class, these are designed to make sure that students complete and engage with the readings.

### **On-Line Discussions**

**There will be two online discussions over the course of the semester.** We will be using Blackboard to facilitate these discussions. Each student will be placed in an on-line group of approx. 5 students. (I will send an email to let you know I have created the groups). These groups will remain stable for the entire semester. Roughly one week before each discussion I will post several questions to get discussion rolling. I expect each group member to contribute one major post responding to my questions and two posts which are a reply to your classmates. I will be monitoring these boards, adding my own posts and queries, and grading your responses according to their quality and your effort. For the criteria that I will use to assess your participation in on-line discussions see the **On-Line Participation Criteria** sheet on Blackboard under "Information." These discussions are essential to this course and students must actively participate to pass the course.

### **Shopping Mall Analysis**

You will be asked to write a short paper (5 pages) analyzing your experience during a visit to a local shopping mall of your choice. Students will use Jonathan Stern's "Sounds like the Mall of America: Programmed Music and the Architectonics of Commercial Space" *Ethnomusicology* 41:1 (Winter 1997): 22-50 and Jim Farrell's *One Nation under Goods: Malls and the Seductions of American Shopping* as the basis for their thinking. Specific instructions will be posted on Blackboard closer to the due date.

### **Supermarket Ethnography**

After reading a selection from Daniel Miller's *A Theory of Shopping* students will conduct their own modified ethnography and accompany a willing participant on his or her purchasing trip to a grocery store. Students will then write a short (5-7 page paper) analyzing their experiences in terms of Miller's findings. More directions will be posted closer to the due date.

### **Exams**

#### **Midterm Exam**

The exam will consist of essay questions that will allow students to demonstrate their knowledge acquired from course readings, lectures, and discussions. Part of the exam will include questions that ask students to discuss a series of images. A study guide as well as more information about the exam format will be posted on Blackboard closer to the exam date.

#### **Final Exam**

Overall the Final Exam will consist of essay questions that will allow students to demonstrate their knowledge acquired from course readings, lectures, and discussions. The Final Exam should show mastery of the analytical tools developed over the course. It will consist of two parts: The first will be a test similar to the previous exams with essay questions drawn from the materials covered since the midterm. The second portion of the exam will be cumulative and will ask students to discuss selected images drawn from the entire course. They will also answer an essay question that draws on their knowledge from the entire course. More directions will be posted on Blackboard closer to the end of the semester.

**NB: There will be no make-up quizzes or exams without written documentation of illness, family emergencies, etc.** Please notify me as soon as possible if you have problems.

### **Grading:**

This course will use a Plus/ Minus grading scale.

<b>A+</b>	100-97
<b>A</b>	96-93
<b>A-</b>	92-90
<b>B+</b>	89-88
<b>B</b>	87-83
<b>B-</b>	80-82
<b>C+</b>	79-78
<b>C</b>	73-77
<b>C-</b>	70-72
<b>D+</b>	69-68
<b>D</b>	60-67
<b>F</b>	59 and below

### **Your grade will be determined by the following:**

Reading Analyses (five of six), 15%  
Shopping Mall Analysis, 10%  
Supermarket Ethnography, 15%  
Midterm Exam, 20%  
Final Exam, 25%  
Attendance and Participation, 10%  
In-class Group Assignments, 5%

### **Blackboard and Grading**

Grades for papers and assignments (and my comments on your papers) will appear on Blackboard after I have graded an assignment. (On some occasions I may hand a hard copy back to you with my

comments.) Please note: Your cumulative grade on Blackboard is intended to allow you to keep track of your success in the course, but it is only an approximation and does not include your participation grade (which I will calculate at the end of the semester).

### **Attendance**

**It is important that you regularly attend class in order to succeed in the course.** You are expected to be in class each day. Please let me know beforehand if there is a **University sanctioned** reason why you will not be in class. Coming into the class more than ten minutes late will count as an absence. Attendance will be factored into your final grade as a part of the participation grade. Attendance, however, is not the only element factored into participation; I also expect you to be active participants in class conversations.

**The Instructor reserves the right to reduce students' overall final grade by a 1/3 of a letter grade for three unexcused absences and to continue reducing the final grade by a 1/3 of a letter for each additional unexcused absence over three. So for instance, three unexcused absences would take an overall grade of A to an A-, four would take an overall grade of an A- to a B+, etc.**

Excused absences require medical (or athletic) documentation. Holiday trips are never counted as excused absences.

### **Make Up Policy Regarding Missed Papers and Other In-Class Assignments**

Papers and presentations must be submitted to Blackboard and/or handed in when scheduled unless medical (or athletic) documentation is provided BEFORE the deadline. Late assignments will be accepted with a deduction in points. Unforeseen emergencies, of course, will be accommodated in consultation with me.

### **Classroom Conduct Policy**

All students will show respect to one another and to the instructor. I promise to do the same. The course will encompass difficult topics including slavery and racial and gender discrimination. Students are expected to engage these issues critically and without denigrating any member of the university community. In the event that students are disrespectful in class they will be asked to leave.

### **Cellphone, Laptops, and Tablet Computers Policy**

**All cell phones, smart phones, tablet computers, laptops and other electronic devices should be turned off prior to the beginning of class.** Text messaging, emailing, and posting on facebook is considered to be the equivalent of cell phone conversation and is not welcome in the classroom. If there is a specific reason why you need to use a laptop for note taking or if you need to use an electronic device, in the case of a family emergency, etc., then please let me know before class begins. My goal is to have each member of the class engaged and participating in discussion. By eliminating the use of electronic devices during class time I seek to eliminate impediments to your participation. The only exceptions are if we are talking about a reading posted on Blackboard and you wish to access an electronic copy during our discussion, in which case you can do so on an electronic device (although printing a hard copy is preferred). Or if we are completing a group assignment which requires you to use technology, which I will let you know about ahead of time. Students are given two warnings regarding texting, etc. I will record a student's name for the first warning. I will dismiss a student from class for the second warning. For each offense after the second warning, the student will be dismissed from class and I will drop the student's final grade in the class by 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. from B- to C+) for each additional warning that you receive.

### **Plagiarism Statement**

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. **ANY instance of plagiarism on any assignment will result in a grade of "0" for that assignment. A second instance of plagiarism will result in a grade of "F" for the course.** Additionally, while I encourage students to discuss

course work outside of class, all written assignments are to be your own work, you may not collaborate beyond the discussion of topics.

This course will use a Plagiarism Detection Service called "Safe Assign" built into Blackboard. I only use this program as a guideline to flag suspicious papers. If you do not plagiarize then there will be no problem—I grade each paper myself.

*Continued enrollment in this course after receipt of this syllabus signifies your understanding and acceptance of the definition and consequences of plagiarism and cheating as defined by George Mason University.*

### **Academic Honesty**

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an [Honor Code](http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu) (academicintegrity.gmu.edu) with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using Chicago Manual of Style (Humanities) format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see the instructor.

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see the instructor and contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

### **Dates to Remember**

Sept 5	Class Cancelled, GMU closed
Sept 7	Reading Analysis #1 due
Sept 12	Personal Probate Inventory due-submit Blackboard and bring to class
Sept 19	Reading Analysis #2 due
Oct 5	Reading Analysis #3 due
Oct 10	Class Cancelled, GMU closed
Tues. Oct 11	Class Meeting rescheduled from Oct 10
Oct 12	Midterm Exam
Oct 19	Class Cancelled; First Online Discussion first post due by start of class.
Oct 24	Reading Analysis #4 due
Nov 9	Class cancelled for Shopping Mall Paper
Sat. Nov 12	Shopping Mall Paper Due Submit via Blackboard by 9:00 PM
Nov 16	Reading Analysis #5 due
Nov 23	Class Cancelled for Thanksgiving Break, GMU closed
Nov 30	Class Cancelled; Second Online Discussion first post due by start of class.
Sat. Dec 3	Supermarket Ethnography due by 9:00 PM
Dec 7	Reading Analysis #6 due
<b>Dec 19</b>	<b>Final Exam 10:30-1:15 in regular classroom</b>

## Tentative Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings

### **Week One: What is Shopping?**

M August 29      Introductions:  
**In-class Activity:** *Living in a Material World: Madonna's Consumption Parable*

W August 31      Defining Terms: What is Consumption? What is Shopping?

**Readings:**

- Ann Smart Martin, "Makers, Buyers, and Users: Consumerism as a Material Culture Framework," *Winterthur Portfolio* (1993), p. 141-157 **(Blackboard)**

### **Week Two: The Consumer Revolution**

**M Sept 5            Classes cancelled for Labor Day Holiday**

W Sept 7            The Clothes Make the Man (or the Woman)

**Readings:**

- Chapters 3 and 4 from Richard Bushman, *Refinement of America* p. 61-138 **(Blackboard)**

**Reading Analysis #1 due: submit via Blackboard by the start of class**

### **Week Three: Measuring Consumption and Production**

M Sept 12          The Probate Inventory

**In-Class Activity:** Comparing 18<sup>th</sup> century and 21<sup>st</sup> century probate inventories.

**Assignment Due:** Personal Probate Inventory bring with you to class and submit online via Blackboard

W Sept 14          Creating Demand

**Readings:**

- Neil McKendrick, "Josiah Wedgwood: an Eighteenth-Century Entrepreneur in Salesmanship and Marketing Techniques," *The Economic History Review*, 3 (1960), p. 408-33 **(Blackboard)**

**In-class Group Activity:** Advertising for Goods in Newspapers

### **Week Four: The Birth of Shopping**

M Sept 19 Shops and Stores: The Art of Display; Women as Shoppers

**Readings:**

- Claire Walsh, "Shops, Shopping, and the Art of Decision making in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830*, eds., John Styles and Amanda Vickery (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 151-78 (**Blackboard**).

**Reading Analysis #2 due: submit via Blackboard by the start of class**

W Sept 21 The Problems of Shopping as Colonists

**Readings:**

- Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, "Shopping Networks and Consumption as Collaboration," in *The Ties that Buy: Women and Commerce in Revolutionary America* (**Blackboard**)

**In-class Group Activity:** George Washington the Shopper

### **Week Five: The Politics of Importation and Tensions of Gender**

M Sept 26 Non-Importation and the American Revolution

**Readings:**

- T.H. Breen, "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century, Past & Present (1988) (**Blackboard**)

W Sept 28 The Culture Wars: Fashion and Gender

**Readings:**

- Kate Haulman, "Fashion and the Culture Wars of Revolutionary Philadelphia" *William and Mary Quarterly* (2005) (**Blackboard**)

**In-class Group Activity:** Women in the Revolution

### **Week Six: Expanding Markets**

M Oct 3 Peddlers and Country Stores

**Readings:**

- David Jaffee, "Peddlers of Progress and the Transformation of the Rural North," *The Journal of American History* 78:2 (1991) (**Blackboard**)



W Oct 5 Enslaved Consumers

**Readings:**

- Ann Smart Martin, "Suckey's Looking Glass: African Americans as Consumers" in *Buying into a World of Goods*, 2008, p. 173-93 (**Blackboard**)

**Reading Analysis #3 due: submit via Blackboard by the start of class**

**Week Seven: What About Men?**

**M Oct 10 Class Cancelled Mason Columbus Day Holiday**

**T Oct 11** The Problem with Clerks

**Readings:**

- Brian Luskey, "Jumping Counters in White Collars: Respectability, and Work in the Antebellum City," *JER* (2006) (**Blackboard**)

W Oct 12 **Mid Term Examination**

**Week Eight: Department Stores**

M Oct 17 Changing Spaces of Consumption

**Readings:**

- William Leach, "Transformation in a Culture of Consumption: Women and Department Stores, 1880-1920," *Journal of American History* 71:2 (September 1984), 318-342 (**Blackboard**)

W Oct 19 Disorderly Women: Shoplifters and Tipplers  
**No Class Meeting; Class moved to Online Discussion #1. First post due by start of class W Oct 19, two follow-up posts due by Thursday 9:00 PM.**

**Readings:**

- Elaine Abelson, "Shoplifting Ladies" in *When Ladies Go-A-Thieving: Middle Class Shoplifters in the Victorian Department Store*, (**Blackboard**)
- Emily Remus, "Tippling Ladies and the Making of Consumer Culture: Gender and Public Space in Fin-de-Siecle Chicago," *Journal of American History* (**Blackboard**)

**Week Nine: New Modes of Convincing Shoppers**

M Oct 24 Branding and Advertisements

**Readings:** (continued next page)

- Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market*, pp. 3-58, 89-124 **(Blackboard)**

**Reading Analysis #4 due: submit via Blackboard by the start of class**

W Oct 26 Modern marketing

**In-class Activity:** Screening of Frontline: *The Persuaders*

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/persuaders/>

**Readings:**

- Charles Duhigg, "How Companies Learn Your Secrets," *The New York Times*, Feb. 16, 2012 **(Blackboard)**

### **Week Ten: Suburbanization and Shopping**

M Oct 31 The Spectacle of the Supermarket

**Readings:**

- Lisa Tolbert, "The Aristocracy of the Market Basket: Self-Service Food Shopping in the New South," in *From Farmyard to Shopping Cart* (2009) **(Blackboard)**
- Selection from Bill Bryson, *The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid* **(Blackboard)**

W Nov 2 The Birth of the Shopping Mall

**Readings:**

- James Farrell, *One Nation Under Goods*, p. 3-32 **(Blackboard)**

### **Week Eleven: The Shopping Mall in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries**

M Nov 7 The Growth of the Shopping Mall

**Readings:**

- James Farrell, *One Nation Under Goods*, p. 137-63 **(Blackboard)**
- Jonathan Stern, "Sounds like the Mall of America: Programmed Music and the Architectonics of Commercial Space" *Ethnomusicology* 41:1 (1997): 22-50 **(Blackboard)**

**In-class Group Activity:** The Mall in 1980s and 1990s music and movies

W Nov 9 **Class cancelled for Shopping Mall Paper**

**Sat. Nov 12 Shopping Mall Paper Due Submit via Blackboard by 9:00 PM**

## **Week Twelve: Selling to Women, Selling Through Women**

M Nov 14 Advertising and Gender

**In-class Activity:** Screening *Killing Us Softly 4: Advertising's Image of Women*  
([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-08qnL\\_Okw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-08qnL_Okw))

W Nov 16 Sex Sells?: A Case Study of *Victoria's Secret*

**Readings:**

- Jane Juffer, "A Pornographic Femininity? Telling and Selling Victoria's (Dirty) Secrets," *Social Text* (1996) **(Blackboard)**
- Marie Smith, "Decoding Victoria's Secret: The Marketing of Sexual Beauty and Ambivalence," *Studies in Popular Culture* (2002) **(Blackboard)**

**Reading Analysis #5 due: submit via Blackboard by the start of class**

**In-class Group Activity:** examining gendered advertisements and products

## **Week Thirteen: Big Box Retailers**

M Nov 21 Wal-Mart

**Readings:**

- Vicki Howard, "The Rise and Fall of the American Department Store," in *From Main Street to Mall* (2015) **(Blackboard)**

**In-class Activity:** Screening *Frontline: Is Wal-Mart Good for America?*  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/walmart/>

W Nov 23 **Classes Cancelled Thanksgiving Holiday**

## **Week Fourteen: Theories of Shopping**

M Nov 28 Online Shopping

**Readings:**

- Sharon Zukin, "The Zen of Internet Shopping," in *Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture*. (2005), p. 227-68 **(Blackboard)**

W Nov 30 **Class Cancelled for Online Discussion # 2. First post due by start of class W Nov 30, two follow-up posts due by Thursday 9:00 PM.**

Making Love in Supermarkets

**Readings:**

- Daniel Miller, "Making Love in Supermarkets," in *A Theory of Shopping* (1998), p. 15-72 **(Blackboard)**

**Sat. Dec 3 Supermarket Ethnography due by 9:00 PM submit via Blackboard.**

**Week Fifteen: The Negative Effects of Consumption**

M Dec 5 Shopping in Poverty

**Readings:**

- Elizabeth Chin, "Anthropologist Takes Inner city Children on Shopping Spree," in *Purchasing Power: Black Kids and American Consumer Culture* (2001) (**Blackboard**)

W Dec 7 The Costs of Fashion

**Readings:**

- Elizabeth L. Cline, *Overdressed: The Shockingly High Cost of Cheap Fashion*, p. 1-35, 95-118, 138-60 (**Blackboard**)

**Reading Analysis #6 due: submit via Blackboard by the start of class**

**Final Exam 10:30-1:15 Monday, December 19 in regular classroom**