

ADVERTISING AND SOCIETY
Historical and Critical Perspectives on Consumer Culture
Temple University
Fall 2015

Instructor: **Dr. Brooke Erin Duffy**
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Course Info: **ADV 3000 Section 001**
11:00 AM-12:20 PM
Annenberg Hall, Room 222

Office Hours: **Tuesdays and Thursdays**
1:15-2:45 PM or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will examine the role of advertising and consumerism in our culture and social life. We will begin by exploring the rise of a consumer society and its evolution over the course of the twentieth century; various theoretical and critical perspectives will be introduced to illuminate the changing relationships between advertising, culture, and the economy. We will then examine how advertising “texts” and “producers” represent various social identities: gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and more. The final section of the course will focus on promotional culture in the early 21st century; topics will include social media advertising/user-generated content; ideologies and practices of branding the self; and the role of digital media in shaping social trends and style.

The learning objectives of this course include to:

- Understand the origins of consumer culture in American society
- Recognize how the ideology of consumerism shapes various aspects of social life
- Critically evaluate promotional messages as cultural “texts”
- Enhance critical thinking and writing skills by engaging with social critiques of advertising
- Become more responsible consumers—and future producers—of advertising texts and imagery

MATERIALS

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, I have selected book chapters, journal articles, and readings from mainstream magazines/newspapers. All readings will be distributed through the course Blackboard page. You are responsible for completing all reading **prior** to the class for which it is assigned and for the content contained in the reading. This includes material on the syllabus and assigned in class. Please make sure you check your email and Blackboard regularly for updated/additional readings.

GRADING

Your final grade for the course is comprised of your performance on:

| | POINTS | % FINAL |
|-------------------------------|------------------|---------|
| Midterm | 90 points | 22.5% |
| Final | 90 points | 22.5% |
| Final Project/Presentation | 80 points | 20% |
| Short Writing Assignments (3) | 80 points | 20% |
| Attendance/Participation | 60 points | 10% |
| | <hr/> 400 points | 100% |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------|----|----------|----|---------------|
| A | = 93-100% | A- | = 90-92% | B+ | = 87-89% |
| B | = 83-86% | B- | = 80-82% | C+ | = 77-79% |
| C | = 73-76% | C- | = 70-72% | D+ | = 67-69% |
| D | = 63-66% | D- | = 60-62% | F | = 59% or less |

If you are .5% away from a higher letter grade (i.e., 92.5% for an A), I reserve the right to round up (or not) based on your performance in other areas of the class.

Exams

The examinations will be based on material from the book, assigned articles, class discussions, and any videos shown in class. The exam format will be multiple choice and short answer. The first exam will be given in class; the final will be given according to Temple University's final examination calendar.

There will be absolutely NO makeup exams except in the case of a documented medical or family emergency. If the student does miss an exam due to a verified emergency, it is the student's responsibility to provide documentation and make-up the exam within one week of the original exam date.

Note: There will be no make-ups for the final exam; you must take the final at the scheduled time or forfeit all points for the exam.

Written Assignments

All written assignments must be (1) uploaded to Blackboard using Safe Assign and (2) handed in during class (hard copy) on the date that it is due. Written work must be typed, double-spaced, and paginated. Please be sure to check spelling, grammar, and use proper referencing (APA or MLA).

Late assignments will be marked down one letter grade per day late. Please discuss any extenuating circumstances with me before the due date.

Short Assignments

Over the course of the semester, you will submit three short writing assignments to apply concepts and/or ideas discussed in the class. Each assignment will be approximately 3-pages in length, and additional information/requirements will be discussed in class.

Assignment 1: Reading Ad History (30 Points)

This assignment will involve exploring the relationship between advertising and culture in a particular historical context. You will use the online archives of the Duke University Advertising Archive (<http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adaccess/>) to analyze an ad from the early- to mid-20th century. Or, you may compare/contrast two ads for the same product in different eras. Be sure to answer the

following questions: What does the ad tell us about society and culture at that time? What were the norms and ideals that guided the creation of the ad? Who is the ad targeting? How do you know?

Assignment 2: Shopping Ethnography (20 Points)

After discussing shopping spaces in class, you should conduct a short ethnography of a retail site (mall, store, pop-up shop, promotion). What did you learn about the culture of shopping from your role as a covert observer? How does what you observed compare with the writings of Cohen and Underhill? What might such data suggest about the role of shopping in contemporary social life?

Assignment 3: Constructing the Audience (30 Points)

As we will discuss in class, audiences are not “real” social categories; instead, they represent what Joseph Turow calls “industrial constructions of audiences.” For this assignment, you will select an article/report from the trade press (e.g., *Advertising Age*, *Adweek*, *IAF Smartbrief*) and explore how a particular social group is being “constructed.” In what ways is the group being constructed and how do you know? How might such constructions shape the content and format of ads? In addition to examining how this group is being constructed, you should discuss why these ideas can be problematic.

Final Project and Presentation

For the final class project, due on the last day of the semester, you have two options:

1. Subverting the Ad Project: Hacked ad (print/commercial/web) plus 5-page discussion of what you did to “culture jam”—or subvert—the original ad.
2. Research paper on a topic of your choice exploring the relationship between advertising, culture, and society: 8-9 pages.

During the last week of class, each student will deliver a 10-12 minute presentation to showcase your ad and/or your research findings. Further information about this assignment will be provided in class.

Participation/Attendance

I strongly encourage you to come to every single class; you WILL do better in the course. However, you are allowed two “free” absences. **If you miss more than two classes for ANY reason (other than a documented medical/family emergency), I will lower your participation/attendance grade by 5 points per absence.**

In class, I expect you to contribute actively to class discussions. The course will be more enjoyable and engaging for everyone if you bring your enthusiasm and insight into the classroom. Relevant examples and articles are most welcome! Attendance will be taken through a sign-in sheet that I pass around at the beginning of class. This is the only way that I can track who is in class on a given day, so it is your responsibility to sign it.

Please note that I do not give out full PowerPoint slides nor do I review entire course lectures with students who miss class. If you do miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what we covered from a classmate in advance of the next course meeting.

Extra Credit:

While I **do not guarantee** there will be extra credit opportunities, I may announce them as the semester progresses (e.g., lecture attendance, film screenings, bonus assignments). In accordance with a School-wide policy, all opportunities for extra credit must be available to every student and should be completed during the timeframe of the semester. Thus, please do not ask if I can give *you* extra credit.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally at all times. This includes attending class, being punctual for class, maintaining a formal and respectful demeanor in all communications with the instructor, and observing appropriate classroom protocol. Make sure to turn your cell phones/mobile devices off at the beginning of class. As you know, sleeping, texting, g-chatting, and doing work for other courses are distracting activities—be considerate! Please be respectful to everyone in the classroom, and you can expect that I will do the same.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Honestly/Plagiarism

Any student who is found violating standards of academic honesty will automatically **FAIL** the class. This includes committing an act of plagiarism or cheating on an exam. All material submitted in the course is expected to be original material written specifically for this class and may not under any circumstances have been recycled from papers submitted in other courses. For students that violate the standard of academic honesty, a charge may be lodged with the University Disciplinary Committee. Reprinted below is Temple University's policy on academic honesty, taken from the Undergraduate Bulletin:

Temple University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism and academic cheating are, therefore, prohibited. Essential to intellectual growth is the development of independent thought and a respect for the thoughts of others. The prohibition against plagiarism and cheating is intended to foster this independence and respect.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor, another person's ideas, another person's words, or another person's assistance. Normally, all work done for courses -- papers, examinations, homework exercises, laboratory reports, oral presentations -- is expected to be the individual effort of the student presenting the work. Any assistance must be reported to the instructor. If the work has entailed consulting other resources -- journals, books, or other media --, these resources must be cited in a manner appropriate to the course. It is the instructor's responsibility to indicate the appropriate manner of citation. Everything used from other sources -- suggestions for organization of ideas, ideas themselves, or actual language -- must be cited. Failure to cite borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Undocumented use of materials from the World Wide Web is plagiarism.

Academic cheating is, generally, the thwarting or breaking of the general rules of academic work or the specific rules of the individual courses. It includes falsifying data; submitting, without the instructor's approval, work in one course which was done for another; helping others to plagiarize or cheat from one's own or another's work; or actually doing the work of another person.

The penalty for academic dishonesty can vary from receiving a reprimand and a failing grade for a particular assignment, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or expulsion from the University. More information regarding the rights and responsibilities of students is available at: http://www.temple.edu/bulletin/Responsibilities_rights/responsibilities/responsibilities.shtm

Students with Disabilities

Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has a policy on Student and Faculty and Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy #03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES*

Week 1: Introduction--Advertising as Social Communication

8/25 Introductions and Course Overview

8/27 Leiss, W, Kline, S., Jhally, S, and Botterill, J. (2005). Introduction. In *Social communication in advertising: Consumption in the mediated marketplace*, 3rd Edition. New York, NY: Routledge.

Twitchell, J. B. (1997). The work of adcult. In *Adcult USA: The triumph of advertising in American culture*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Week 2: Orienting Frameworks—Commodity Fetishism and Political Economy

9/1 Williams, R. (1980). Advertising, the magic system. In *Problems in materialism and culture*. New York: Verso.

Schudson, M. (1984). Advertising as capitalist realism. In *Advertising, the uneasy persuasion: Its dubious impact on American society*. New York: Routledge.

9/3 Bagdikian, B. H. (2004). Dr. Brandreth has gone to Harvard. In *The new media monopoly*. Beacon Press.

Steinem, G. (1990) Sex, lies, and advertising. *Ms.* July/August: 18-28

Week 3: History I—Early Foundations of Consumer Society

9/8 Sivulka, J. (2012). The beginnings: 1492 to 1880. In *Soap, sex, and cigarettes: A cultural history of American advertising. 2nd Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

9/10 Strasser, S. (1989). Chapter 1. In *Satisfaction guaranteed: The making of the American mass market*. New York: Pantheon.

In-class screening: Curtis, A. (2002). *Century of the Self* (first 25 minutes)

Week 4: History II—American consumerism in the Postwar Era

9/15 Cross G. (2000). Coping with abundance. In *An all-consuming Century: Why commercialism won in modern America*. New York: Columbia University Press.

9/17 Turow, J. (1987). Mapping a fractured society. In *Breaking up America: Advertisers and the new media world*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE

Week 5: Creativity and the Creative Revolution

- 9/22 O'Barr, W. (2007). Creativity in advertising. *Advertising and Society*, 8: 3.
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/advertising_and_society_review/v011/11.4.o-barr01.html
- 9/24 Frank, T. (1997). (Excerpt). *The conquest of cool: Business culture, counterculture, and the rise of hip consumerism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Week 6: Ad Semiotics

- 9/29 Barthes, R. (1977). The rhetoric of the image. In *Image-Music-Text*. New York: Noonday.
- Hall, S. (1997). Encoding/Decoding. In *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices* (Vol. 2). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 10/1 Williamson, J. (1978), Chapter 1. In *Decoding advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising*, London: Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd.

Week 7: Advertising and Identity I—Gender and Sexuality

- 10/6 Bordo, S. (1998). Hunger as ideology. In *Unbearable weight: Feminism, Western culture, and the body*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Wade, L. (2015, January). Five reasons why gendered products are a problem. *The society pages* (online). Retrieved from <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2015/01/20/five-reasons-why-pointlessly-gendered-products-are-a-problem/>
- Gladwell, M. (1997). Listening to the khakis, *The New Yorker*, July 28, pp. 54-58.
- 10/8 In-class screening: Kilbourne, *Killing Us Softly 4: Advertising's Image of Women* (2010)

Week 8: Advertising and Identity II--Race, Ethnicity, Ability

- 10/13 Wilson, C.C. and Gutiérrez, F. (2003). Advertising and people of color. In *Gender, race and class in media: A Text-Reader*, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- London, B. (2015). Disabled models take to catwalk in wheelchairs as New York Fashion Week promotes diversity. *The Daily Mail* (London), February 16.
- O'Barr, W. (2012). Sexuality, race, and ethnicity in advertising. Adtext, www.adtextonline.org (skim)

10/15 MID-TERM

Week 9: Shopping and Retail Space

- 10/20 Cohen, L. (1996). From town center to shopping center: The reconfiguration of community marketplaces in postwar America. *The American Historical Review*, 1050-1081.

Underhill, P. (2009). *Why we buy: The science of shopping--updated and revised for the Internet, the global consumer, and beyond*. Simon and Schuster. (excerpt)

10/22 No Class--Shopping Ethnography

Week 10: Brand Promotion and Public Relations

10/27 McAllister, M. P., & Smith, A. N. (2013). Understanding hypercommercialized media texts. In S. R. Mazzarella (Volume Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of media studies: Vol. 2: Content and representation* (pp. 31-53). Oxford, England: Wiley-Blackwell.

Chayka, K. (2015, January 25). Meet the Don Draper of guerrilla marketing. *Take part*. Retrieved from: <http://www.takepart.com/article/2015/01/29/guerrilla-marketing-history>

10/29 Einstein, M. (2012). *Compassion, Inc: How corporate America blurs the line between what we buy, who we are, and those we help*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Think Before You Pink. <http://thinkbeforeyoupink.org/about-us/> (Skim)

ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE

Week 11: Ad Resistance and Culture Jamming

11/3 Jhally, S. (2000). Advertising at the edge of the apocalypse. In R. Andersen and L. Strate. *Critical studies in media commercialism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Schor, J. (1998). Introduction. *The overspent American: Upscaling, downshifting and the New consumer*. New York: Basic Books.

11/5 Klein, N. (2002). (Excerpt). *No logo: No space, no choice, no jobs*. New York: Macmillan.

Lasn, K. (2000). Culture jamming. In *Culture jam: How to reverse America's suicidal consumer binge--And why we must*. William Morrow Paperbacks.

Week 12: Advertising in a New Media Age

11/10 Turow, J. (2012, February 7). A guide to the digital advertising industry that's watching your every click. *The Atlantic*. Online.

Garfield, B. (2007, March 26). The chaos scenario 2.0: The post advertising age. *Advertising Age*, 1, 12.

ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE

11/12 Huet, E. (2014, July 23). Snaps to riches: The rise of snapchat celebrities. *Forbes*. Retrieved from www.forbes.com.

Mari, F. (2014, September). The click clique. *Texas Monthly*. Retrieved from www.texasmonthly.com.

Marikar, S. (2015, January 30). Sundance courts a new celebrity crowd. *New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/01/style/sundance-courts-a-new-celebrity-crowd.html>

Week 13: Branding the Self

11/17 Peters, T. (1997). The brand called you. *Fast Company*, August/September. Retrieved from fastcompany.com

Harold, C. (2013) Brand you!: The business of personal branding and communities in anxious times. In McAllister, M. P. and E. West (Eds.). *The Routledge companion to advertising and promotional culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.

11/19 Muentner, O. (2014, July 18). What I instagrammed vs. what was really happening, or my entire life is a lie. *Bustle*, Online.

Williams, A. (2013, December 13). The agony of instagram. *New York Times*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com.

Pollard, C. (2015, July 7). What Taylor Swift can teach you about personal branding on social media. *Huffington Post*. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/catriona-pollard/what-taylor-swift-can-tea_b_7733406.html

Week 14: NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING

Week 15: Presentations

12/1 Final Project Presentations

12/3 Final Project Presentations

FINAL EXAM: Please see Temple University calendar

*I reserve the right to make modifications to this syllabus and the course schedule for pedagogical purposes)