Course Description
Consumer culture by its nature is intensely local and inevitably global. Its locality is tied up with the intimacy of food, clothing, and shelter, and the elasticity of the relationship between bodies and things. At the same time, consumption is a flash point for basic social and political debates about the relationship between needs and desires. This course seeks to develop critical approaches towards dealing with both these dimensions of consumer culture by exploring the ways in which bodies and things shape each other through long histories of production, distribution, and fashion. Though consumption is conventionally regarded as the terminus of the social life of things, this course will seek to study the social world of consumers as an analytic entry point into complex networks of cultural practice which mediate the perennial tension between habituation and novelty in the shaping of consumer experience.

Required Texts

Class Format
Each 2-hour session will be divided into 2 halves. The first half will consist of a student presentation and collective discussion. The second half will be a lecture by Professor Appadurai.

Course Requirements
Students attending the seminar will be expected to:
1. Present an analysis and lead a discussion of the week’s readings and themes, to be given twice over the course of the term.
2. At the conclusion of the course, each student will write a thematic review paper, based on the course readings. Papers will not exceed 10 double-spaced pages in length (2500 words), and will be written in standard, academic format. THIS PAPER WILL BE DUE ON DECEMBER 8, IN CLASS. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS EXCEPT ON DOCUMENTED MEDICAL GROUNDS.

Attendance:
Your attendance is required at all sessions. Should you require a long absence, be sure to notify me in advance. Arrangements can be made with prior notice, but do not expect consideration after the fact (unless, of course, in the case of extreme emergencies). You are responsible for obtaining any missed notes or material.

Cell Phones & Laptops:
Please refrain from using cell phones, messaging devices, and laptops for personal use during the seminar sessions.

Special Circumstances, Considerations, Needs:
If you have any special circumstances, consideration or needs that you feel will either affect your ability to complete assignments, please let me know as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. In most cases, special circumstances, considerations and needs should be facilitated through the Moses Center.

Grading
The final grade will be based on class presentation and participation (50%) and Final Paper (50%)

Academic Dishonesty And Plagiarism
"Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do... You violate the principle when you: cheat on an exam; submit the same work for two different
courses without prior permission from your professors; receive help on a take-home that calls for independent work; or plagiarize. Plagiarism, whether intended or not, is academic fraud. You plagiarize when, without proper attribution, you do any of the following: copy verbatim from a book, article, or other media; download documents from the Internet; purchase documents; paraphrase or restate someone else’s facts, analysis, and/or conclusions; copy directly from a classmate or allow a classmate to copy from you. " (See School of Education Bulletin, 2009)
Schedule of Classes

Tuesday 09/08  Week 1: Opening Remarks
Introductory Comments & Course Overview

Part One: Overviews & Interpretations

Tuesday 09/15  Week 2 - The Consumer Ethic
Readings: Bauman, Z. Consuming Life (ENTIRE BOOK)

Tuesday 09/22  Week 3 - The Life of the Commodity
Readings: Appadurai, A. The Social Life of Things (Introduction, pp. 3-63)
Braudel, F. The Structures of Everyday Life, Vol 1. Parts 3 & 4
(pp. 183-333)
Latour, B. Where are the Missing Masses? from Candlin, F. & Guins, R. (Eds). The
Object Reader
Williams, J. & Zelizer, V. To Commodify or Not to Commodify?, from
Ertman, M & Williams, J. (Eds.). Rethinking Commodification
(pp. 362-382)

Tuesday 09/29  Week 4 - Affluence & Its Others
Readings: Veblen, Conspicuous Consumption
Selections from Galbraith, Affluent Society
Schudson, M. Delectable Materialism - Second Thoughts on Consumer
Culture
Weber: Class, Status & Party (from Economy & Society?)
Sahlins, M. The Original Affluent Society [need source]
Bourdieu, P. Distinction & The Aristocracy of Culture [need
source; have PDF]

Part Two: The Horizons of Consumption

Tuesday 10/06  Week 5 - Offshore Consumption
Readings: Easterling, K. Enduring Innocence (Contemplation, pp. 63-122)
Mieville, H. Floating Utopias: Freedom and Unfreedom of the Seas
Chapter 18 (pp. 251-274)

Tuesday 10/13  Week 6 - Expenditure and Excess
Readings: Ruggeri, L. 'Palm Springs': Imagineering California in Hong Kong,
Chapter 6 (pp. 102-113)
d’Eramo, M. Bunkering in Paradise, from Evil Paradises (2007),
Davis, M. & Monk, D. (Eds). Chapter 12 (pp. 171--188)
Lipton, S. Monastery Chic from Evil Paradises (2007), Davis,
M. & Monk, D. (Eds). Chapter 17 (pp.241-250)
Roadside Retrospectives, from Brown & Sherry, Time, Space and the
Market (pp. 115-140)
**Tuesday 10/20**  
**Week 7 - Kitchen Citizenship**

Readings: Miller, T. Cultural Citizenship, Ch. 3, Television Food (pp. 112-143)  
          Pollan, M. Out of the Kitchen, Onto the Couch, from The New York Times Magazine, 08/02/09

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**Tuesday 10/27**  
**Week 8 - Global Commodities: Circulation**


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**Tuesday 11/03**  
**Week 9 - Global Commodities: Urban Space**

          Mbembe, A. Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis. Ch. 1: The Aesthetics of Superfluidity (pp. 37-67)

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**Tuesday 11/10**  
**Week 10 - Design Trajectories**

Readings: Molotch, H. Where Stuff Comes From, Chapter 2 ("Inside Stuff") and Chapter 3 ("Form and Function"); (pp. 23-89)  
          Clark, H. Second-Hand Fashion, Culture and Identity in Hong Kong, from Palmer, A. & Clark, H. (Eds). Old Clothes, New Looks; Chapter 9 (pp. 155-169)  
          Goulding, C. Corsets, Silk-Stockings, & Evening Suites, from Brown & Sherry, Time, Space and the Market (pp. 54 - 74)

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**Tuesday 11/17**  
**Week 11 - Brand Empires**

Readings: Moor_JOCC_Branded Spaces Hearn_JOCC_Meat, Mask, Burden - Probing the Contours of the Branded 'Self'  
          Langer_JOCC_The Business of Branded Enchantment Wilk_JOCC_Bottled Water  
          Cohen, L. Segmenting the Mass, from A Consumer’s Republic; Chapter 7 (pp. 292-344)

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**Tuesday 11/24**  
**Week 12 - Habituating the New**

Readings: Frosh_JOCC_Rhetorics of the Overlooked - On the Communicative Modes of Stock Advertising Images  
          Molotch, H. Changing Goods, from Where Stuff Comes From, Chapter 4 (pp. 91-130)  
          Lehtonen_JOCC_The Domestication of New Technologies as a Set of Trials  
          Thrift, N. The Material Practices of Glamour, from The Journal of Cultural Economy
Part Four: Back to the Thing

Tuesday 12/01  Week 13 - Bodies & Things

Readings: Grosz, E. The Thing, from Candlin, F. & Guins, R. (Eds.). The Object Reader (pp. 124-138)
Rose, N. Governing the Present, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-25) and Chapter 5 (pp. 114 -141)

Tuesday 12/08  Week 14: General Discussion

Closing Remarks/Turn in Final Pap