Advertising and Society

Course description:
This course examines the social implications of consumerism and advertising as economic and cultural forces. The course surveys the history of consumer culture and advertising, focusing primarily though not exclusively on the United States and investigates the changing strategies that have been used by advertisers from the 19th to the 21st centuries. This course thus provides a cultural approach to advertising and its history as a means to understand advertising as a central component in capitalist economies and its role as an indicator of cultural attitudes and ideologies. It also examines consumer practices, the role that consumerism plays in identity, social trends, and style, and the consequences of a society structured by consumerism. The latter half of the course examines the impact of digital media, social media, and data gathering on the emergence of brand culture and changing consumer practices.

Course Requirements:
Students are required to attend all lectures, complete the readings, and complete all assignments. Lectures cover more material than the reading and attendance at them will be monitored. If you miss more than 4 lectures without a reasonable excuse, your grade will be lowered.

You should make an effort to meet with me in person at some point in the semester. I am available for consultation via e-mail, during office hours, and by appointment. Jennifer will be assisting me in grading papers and exams. You can meet with her during office hours or e-mail her at jmm1187@nyu.edu.

Readings:
Sarah Banet-Weiser, Authentic™: The Politics of Ambivalence in a Brand Culture
All other readings will be posted in pdf on NYU Classes under Resources. There are many recommended readings listed on the syllabus and in Resources on NYU Classes, which you may want to read if the topic interests you further and which should be useful to you in writing your papers.

Website:
We will use two websites in this class. The NYU Classes site will be used for class announcements, assignments, class readings (which will be posted in pdf form under Resources), and links to online sources about advertising. We will also use the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication Advertising Archive of print and TV images. This site is http://cultureandcommunication.org/advertising/. The user name is “dcc” and the password is “advertising”
Assignments:
There are two papers, a midterm, and a take-home final exam (which will be cumulative but will concentrate primarily on the second half of the course). These assignments will be worth the following portion of your grade:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>paper 1</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>midterm</td>
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<tr>
<td>paper 2</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>final exam (take-home)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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In addition, strong class discussion participation will enhance your final course grade.

Please type and double-space your written work and number your pages. I recommend you use Chicago style for your citations; the short version is here: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. If you send either of us a document via e-mail, please put your name in the file name and on each numbered page.

Grading and Evaluation:
You are responsible for the material covered in lecture and in the reading. You will be evaluated on (1) the level of your engagement with the class materials (as evidenced in your written work and class participation) (2) your capacity to explain your ideas and analysis in articulate and well-written forms (3) and your ability to creatively explore these theories and methodologies. All of your written work will be graded on two primary evaluative scales (1) how well it demonstrates an understanding of the theories and methodologies of the class (2) how well it structures and articulates its argument.

Academic Integrity:
Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do, from taking exams, making oral presentations to writing term papers. It requires that you recognize and acknowledge information derived from others, and take credit only for ideas and work that are yours. You violate the principle of academic integrity 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 examination that calls for independent work, or plagiarize.

When taking this class, you enter into a contract that states that all the work you are turning in has been your own and no one else’s, and that you have not turned in any work for which you have received credit in another class, and that you have properly cited other people’s work and ideas. Do not take this policy lightly! Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade in the course. If you have questions about these policies, or proper citation of scholarship, please come speak with me in person. (see http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity)

Student Resources
- Henry and Lucy Moses Center for students with disabilities (http://www.nyu.edu/csd/)
- Writing Center: 269 Mercer Street, Room 233. Schedule an appointment online at www.rich15.com/nyu or just walk-in.
Week 1:

Sept. 3—Introduction: Modernity and the Rise of Consumerism

Week 2:

Sept. 8 – Origins of the Modern Consumer Society
Reading:
T.J. Jackson Lears, “From Salvation to Self-Realization” pp. 6-30.

Recommended:

Sept. 10 – The Rise of Modern Advertising
Reading:
Sivulka, *Sex, Soap and Cigarettes*, Chapter 4: The Roaring Twenties

Recommended:
Roland Marchand, “Men of the People: The New Professionals” (From *Advertising the American Dream*) pp. 25-38.
Charles Goodrum and Helen Dalrymple, “Cereal, Soap and Sex” From *Advertising in America*

Week 3:

Sept. 15 – Spaces for Shopping: The Rise of the Department Store
Reading:
Adam Gopnik, “Under One Roof”
Sharon Zukin, “A Brief History of Shopping”

Recommended:
Jan Whitaker, *Service and Style* (Chapter 4: Bricks and Mortar and Chapter 5: Window Shopping)

First paper assignment given.
Sept. 17—Modern Ad Design and Aesthetics
Reading:
Catherine Gudis, “Modern Art and Advertising”

Recommended:
Roland Marchand, “The Consumption Ethic: Strategies of Art and Style” (From Advertising the American Dream)

Week 4:

Sept. 22—Billboards and the Mobile Consumer
Reading:
Catherine Gudis, “The Aesthetics of Speed”

Sept. 24—The 1950s and the Consolidation of Consumerism (Dana Polan guest lecture)
Reading:
Juliann Sivulka, Sex Soap and Cigarettes, Chapter 6: The Postwar Boom
Thomas Frank, The Conquest of Cool: Chapter 2, Buttoned Down

Week 5:

Sept. 29—
The Shopping Center and the Mall
Reading:
Lizabeth Cohen, “From Town Center to Shopping Center”

Recommended:
James Farrell, “Designing Malls” from One Nation Under Goods

First Paper Due.

Oct. 1—The “Creative Revolution” of 1960s Advertising
Reading:
Thomas Frank, The Conquest of Cool, Chapter 3: Advertising as Cultural Criticism and Chapter 4: Three Rebels
Week 6:

Oct. 6 – Commodity Fetishism and Marketing Capital
Reading:
Robert Goldman and Stephen Papson, “Landscapes of Fictitious Capital”
Karl Marx, “The Fetishism of the Commodity”
Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, pp. 275-93 (from Chapter 7)

Oct. 8 – The Semiotics of Branding
Reading:
Sarah Banet-Weiser, *Authentic™*, Introduction
Raymond Williams, “Advertising: The Magic System”

Recommended:
Marcel Danesi, *Brands*, pp. 7-33
Celia Lury, “The Interface of the Brand”

Week 7:

Oct. 13 – Fall Recess, NO CLASS

Oct. 15 – Selling Youth Culture and Marketing Coolness
Reading:
Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, Chapter 6: Think Young
Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, pp. 293-99 (from Chapter 7)

Recommended:
Malcolm Gladwell, “The Cool Hunt”

Week 8:

Oct. 20 – Irony, Self Reflexivity, and Hipness
Reading:
Robert Goldman and Stephen Papson, “Yo! Hailing the Alienated Spectator”

Oct. 22 – MIDTERM
Week 9:

Oct. 27 – Selling Feminism and Empowerment
Reading:
Sarah Banet-Weiser, Authentic™, Chapter 1 (Branding Consumer Citizens) and Chapter 2 (Branding the Postfeminist Self)

Recommended:
Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, Practices of Looking, pp. 123-36

Second paper assignment given.

Oct. 29 – Global Capitalism, Wal-Mart, Big Box Stores, and Outsourcing
Reading:
David Bosshart, “The Wal-Martization of Society”
Clare Lyster, “The Logistical Figure”
Marc Levinson, The Box – excerpt

Week 10:

Nov. 3 – The New Consumerism: How the Web Changed Advertising
Reading:
Joseph Turow, The Daily You, Chapter 2: Clicks and Cookies

Nov. 5 – The Disappearing Mass Consumer and the Rise of Consumer Data
Reading:
Joseph Turow, The Daily You, Chapter 4: Targets or Waste

Week 11:

Nov. 10 – Social Media and Guerilla Marketing
Reading:
Michael Serazio, “Buying into the Cool Sell”
Nicole Cohen, “Commodifying Free Labor Online”

Recommended:
Joseph Turow, The Daily You, Chapter 6: The Long Click

Nov. 12 – Product Placement
Reading:
Michael Serazio, “The Ambient Governance of Advertainment”
Week 12:

**Nov. 17 – Pharmaceutical Advertising: Selling the New Self**
Reading:
Joseph Dumit, “Pharmaceutical Witnessing: Drugs for Life”
Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, pp. 381-84

**Nov. 19 – Environmental Consumer Politics—the Case of Bottled Water**
Reading:
Robin Anderson, “The Crying Indian: Corporations and Environmentalism”
Andy Opel, “Constructing Purity: Bottled Water and the Commodification of Nature”

Recommended:
John Connell, “The Taste of Paradise”
Elizabeth Royte, *Bottlemania* excerpt

Second paper due.

Week 13:

**Nov. 24 – Consumer Activism**
Reading:
Sarah Banet-Weiser, *Authentic™*, Chapter 4: Branding Politics
Jo Littler, “Good Housekeeping: Green Products and Consumer Activism”

Recommended:
Sarah Banet-Weiser and Roopali Mukherjee, Introduction to *Commodity Activism*

**Nov. 26 – NO CLASS, Thanksgiving**

Week 14:

**Dec. 1 – Branding Humanitarianism**
Reading:
Jo Littler, “Cosmopolitan Caring” from *Radical Consumption*
Mara Epstein, “Cause Marketing and the Rise of Vales-Based Brands”

**Dec. 3 – Guest Lecture, Travis Leone, Digital Media and Social Media Strategies**
Week 15:

Dec. 8 – Culture Jamming and DIY Culture
Reading:
Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, pp. 300-304 (from Chapter 7)
Anne Elizabeth Moore, *Unmarketable* (excerpt)

Recommended:
Kalle Lasn, “Culture Jamming”

Dec. 10 – Alternative Marketing and the New Cultural Entrepreneurs
Reading:
Sarah Banet-Weiser, *Authentic™*, Chapter 3: Branding Creativity and Conclusion

Week 16:

Dec. 15 Conclusion
Reading:
Sarah Banet-Weiser, “Rate Your Knowledge: The Branded University”

Take-home Final due: Friday, December 18