

## The Seductions of Shopping: Sex, Gender, and Market Exchange

GSWS 1140/ Anthropology 1737  
Monday and Wednesday 4:30-5:45pm  
2800 WW Posvar Hall

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Money and markets are often depicted as sexless, unfeeling, and external to other domains of social life. This course seeks to alter our understanding of commercial transactions by examining them in relation to other more intimate exchanges that comprise family, sexuality, and gendered relationships. Drawing on anthropology, history, literature, and film, this course invites you to examine relationships between the exchange, evaluation, and control of objects and the regulated movements of bodies that surround them. The course is divided into three sections “Gendering Gifts and Money”, “The Seductions of Shopping”, and “Sex in/as the Market”. Readings include gendered critiques of classical economics, vaudeville sketches describing the distribution of funds within families, and debates about the best way to advertise condoms in contemporary India. Assignments for the course include a one-page review of an article or film, a prospectus, an in-class presentation, and a short research paper.

### Getting Your Money's Worth:

Whenever possible ask questions about assignments and seek out help before papers are due. I will not offer extra credit or the opportunity to revise work for a better grade. I am always delighted to discuss ideas related to anthropology, but ***I will not discuss grades on assignments more than two weeks after they have been posted on CourseWeb.*** If you have concerns or complaints about your grade please let me know as soon as possible. I reserve the right to modify course policies to support students who endure traumatic life events.

Because assignments in this class build on each other in a sequence missed classes and late work will impair your participation in this course. Unless otherwise marked all papers are due in class on the date marked on the syllabus. Papers will be marked down one grade for each day late. If medical or other emergencies impair your ability to participate or get work in please let me know as soon as possible.

My primary aim in teaching this class is to make sure you learn something. If you have questions or interests that go beyond the material covered on our syllabus please let me know. I welcome feedback on assigned readings and activities and will use them to improve the class in future years. If you have particular interests, fears, or disabilities that you'd like me to address please let me know about them as soon as possible.

## Readings:

de Grazia, Victoria and Ellen Furlough, 1996 *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, University of California Press  
ISBN-10: 0520201973

Miller, Daniel 1998 *A Theory of Shopping*. Cambridge: Polity Press. ISBN-10: 0801485517

Zelizer, Viviana A, 2007. *The Purchase of Intimacy*, Princeton University Press. ISBN-10: 0691130639

Zola, Emile (2008 [1886]) *The Ladies Paradise* Oxford World Classics (other editions/translations would be fine – it just needs to be inexpensive and in English). ISBN-10: 0199536902

Required books are available at the book center and are held on reserve at Hillman Library. All other readings can be found on our CourseWeb site under “Readings”. Please read all assigned texts by the date listed *and bring copies of the texts assigned with you to class*. I suspect that most of you will find it helpful to print out and mark-up assigned readings, but you may bring electronic copies if you prefer. If the cost of books prohibits your participation in the class please let me know.

## Assignments and Grading:

Your grade in this class will be determined by three formal writing assignments - a brief evaluative abstract, a 5-page paper proposal, and a 15-page final paper. It is impossible to receive a passing grade in this class without turning the final paper in. ***All written assignments will be marked down one letter grade for each day late.*** You will also be asked to make a contribution to a class wiki, to participate in a group presentation, and to share your term paper findings in a “colloquium” at the end of the class. I will round borderline final grades up or down based on your class participation grade. All parts of the course will be graded on a point system:

Discussion Participation (all classes after Week 1): 25 points

Group Presentation (date of your choice): 5 points

Evaluative Abstract (Due January 22): 10 points

Wiki Contribution (Due February 26): 10 points

Paper Proposal (Due March 19): 15 points

Term Paper Presentation (Due April 7 or 9): 5 points

Term Paper (Due April 18): 30 points

**Total: 100 points**

## Participation:

***Regular attendance is critical to your success in this class.*** In-class activities will provide your primary guide to course concepts and build connections between assigned readings. Attendance and engagement with course materials will count towards a significant portion of your grade.

You are allowed one “free” absence during the term, after that you will lose one participation point for each class for which you are absent for more than 15 minutes. If you cannot avoid missing a class, you may make-up the point that you missed by meeting with Dr. Brown during office hours ***no more than one week after the class that you missed.*** This make-up assignment is, by design, both more work and less fun than actually attending class. Students who miss more than 10 classes will not be eligible to receive a passing grade. If life events require you to miss class for more than one month please investigate options for withdrawal.

## Media Use:

Please bring copies of readings to class during the week in which they are assigned. You are encouraged to take written notes during class. Please refrain from taking photos, videos, or audio recordings during class – these forms of recording inhibit free and open discussion.

You are welcome to use laptops, tablets, and other communication devices to review assigned readings, look-up examples, and provide supplementary materials for discussion. Use of such devices in ways that are unrelated to class activities is distracting to others. If you repeatedly engage in distracting behavior during class you will be asked to leave.

This class is designed with the assumption that you have a Pitt E-mail account and access to CourseWeb. Please check both regularly.

## Policy on Academic Integrity:

As a student in this course you are expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Plagiarism and all other forms of cheating will result in automatic failure. I trust that you know what they are and how to avoid them. If you find yourself in a situation where plagiarism seems like your best option please let me know and I'll help you find a better one.

One of the goals of this course is to allow you to find and pursue topics of interest from multiple disciplinary perspectives. For this reason, you are invited to cite or incorporate elements of earlier assignments *from this class* into later ones.

## Schedule

### -Week 1: Approaching Exchange-

Jan 6: No reading

Jan 8:

Mauss, Marcel 1990 [1925] (chapter 1 and 2) *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. W.D. Halls, translator New York: Norton. Pp. 8-46.

### -Week 2: Commodity Fetishes-

Jan 13:

Stallybrass, Peter 1998 "Marx's Coat" In *Border Fetishisms: Material Objects in Unstable Space*. P. Spyer, ed. New York: Routledge. Pp. 183-207.

*Optional*: Marx, Karl "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof" In *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* pp. 71-83.

Jan 15:

Graeber, David 1996 "Beads and Money: Notes Toward a Theory of Wealth and Power" *American Ethnologist* vol. 23 no 1 pp. 4-24

*Optional*: Graeber, David 2005. "Fetishism as social creativity, or fetishes are gods in the process of construction" *Anthropological Theory*.

### -Week 3: Consuming Gender-

Jan 20: **Group Presentation Sign-up**

Kuchta, David (1996) "The Making of the Self-Made Man: Class Clothing, and English Masculinity" in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*.

*In Class*: "Beau Brummell: This Charming Man" (selection)

Jan 22: **Evaluative Abstract Due**

Selected short stories (see CourseWeb)

*Optional*: Rappaport, Erika (1996) "A Husband and His Wife's Dresses: Consumer Credit and the Debtor Family in England 1864—1914" in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*.

### -Week 4: Adornment and Desirable Bodies -

Jan 27: **Wiki Topic Sign-Up**

Popenoe, Rebecca (2005) "Ideal" in *Fat: The Anthropology of an Obsession*, Don Kulick and Anne meneley eds., New York; Penguin, p. 9-28.

*Optional:* Gell, Alfred (1986) "Newcomers to the World of Goods: Consumption among the Muria Gonds", in Arjun Appadurai (ed.) *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Social Perspective*, pp. 110-138. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Jan 29:

Peiss, Kathy (1996) "Making Up Making Over: Cosmetics, Consumer Culture and Women's Identity in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*

### **-Week 5: Tea, Chocolate, and Seductions of Empire-**

Feb 3:

Chatterjee, Piya 2001 "Travels of Tea, Travels of Empire" in *A Time for Tea: Women, Labor, and Post/Colonial Politics on an Indian Planation*, Duke University Press. pp 21-50,

Feb 5:

Schama, Simon 1987 "Housewives And Hussies: Homliness and Worldliness" from *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, Random House, pp. 430-480.

*In Class:* Fieldtrip to Carnegie Museum

### **-Week 6: Women on/in the Market**

Feb 10:

Rubin, Gayle 1975 "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the "Political Economy" of Sex" in Linda Nicholson (ed) *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997): 27 – 62.

*Optional:* Graeber, David (2007) "Love Magic and Political Morality in Central Madagascar, 1875-1900" in *Possibilities: Essays of Heierarchy, Rebellion, and Desire*, Oakland, CA: AK Press, p. 223-253.

Feb 12:

Zelizer, Viviana A. 1994 "The Domestic Production of Monies" (chapter 2) in *The Social Meaning of Money: Pin Money, Paychecks, Poor Relief, and Other Currencies*. New York: Basic Books.

*In Class:* Balzac, Honore *Mercadet* (a reading)

## -Week 7: Seductions of Shopping -

Feb 17:

Zola, Emile (2008 [1886]) *The Ladies Paradise* Oxford World Classics (other editions are fine)

*In Class*: “Mr. Selfridge”, “The Paradise” (selections),

Feb 19:

Pinch, Adela 1998 “Stealing Happiness: Shoplifting in Early Nineteenth-Century England” *Border Fetishisms: Material Objects in Unstable Places* ed. Patricia Spyer (Routledge).

## -Week 8: Money and the Family -

Feb 24:

Mahir, Saul 2004 “Money in Colonial Transition: Cowries and Francs in West Africa” *American Anthropologist* vol 106 no 1 pp. 71-84

*In Class*: Djibril Diop Mambéty’s *Hyènes* (1992)

Feb 26: **Wiki Contribution (due before class)**

Smith, Randal 1998 “Money Breaks Blood Ties’: Chiefs’ Courts and the Transition from Lineage Debt to Commercial Debt in Sipolilo District.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24(3) pp.509-526.

*In Class*: Djibril Diop Mambéty’s *Hyènes* (1992) continued

## -Week 9: Purchasing Intimacy? -

March 3:

Zeilizer, Viviana A 2007 Ch 1-3 *The Purchase of Intimacy*

March 5:

Zeilizer, Viviana A 2007 Ch 4-6 *The Purchase of Intimacy*

## -Week 10: Spring Break -

## -Week 11: Making Love in Shops -

March 17:

Miller, Daniel 1998 (chapters 1 and 2) in *A Theory of Shopping*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

March 19: **Paper Proposal Due**

Miller, Daniel 1998 (chapter 3) in *A Theory of Shopping*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

## -Week 12: Thinking Sex-

March 24:

Rubin, Gayle (1984) "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality" in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, edited by Carole S. Vance. London, UK: Routledge.

March 26:

Hall, Kira (2005). Intertextual Sexuality: Parodies of Class, Identity, and Desire in Liminal Delhi. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15(1):125-144

## -Week 13: The Politics of Consumer Desire-

March 31:

Mazzarella, W. (2003). Ch 3 "Citizens Have Sex, Consumers Make Love: Kama Sutra Condoms I" *Shoveling Smoke: Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India*. Durham, Duke University Press.

*In Class*: Kamasutra condoms and other commercials (1990-2012)

April 2:

Mazzarella, W. (2003). Ch 4 "The Aesthetic Politics of Aspiration: Kama Sutra Condoms II" *Shoveling Smoke: Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India*. Durham, Duke University Press.

## -Week 14: Love, Money, and Modernity-

April 7:

Ross, Kristin 1996 "Hygiene and Modernization" (Chapter 2) in *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture*.

*In Class*: "The Umbrella's of Cherbourg" (selection), "Two or Three Things I know about Her" (selection)

April 9:

Cole, Jenniffer (2004) "Fresh contact in Tamatave, Madagascar: Sex, money, and intergenerational transformation" *American Ethnologist* 31 (4) p. 573 – 588.

## -Week 15: Colloquium-

April 14:

*Essay Presentations – check CourseWeb for schedule*

April 16:

*Essay Presentations – check CourseWeb for schedule*

**Final Paper Due: April 18**