

<b>Veranstalter:</b>	<b>Dr. Joshua Davis</b>
<b>Thema:</b>	<b>American Consumer Culture in a Global Context: The History of American Consumer Culture in Global Perspective [AA-M14, AA-M16, AA-W]</b>
<b>Art der Veranstaltung:</b>	<b>Seminar II</b>
<b>Veranstaltungsnummer:</b>	<b>53-572</b>
<b>Zeit:</b>	<b>2st., Do 12–14</b>
<b>Raum:</b>	<b>Phil 1269</b>
<b>Beginn:</b>	<b>21.10.10</b>

### **Course Description:**

In the last three decades, the humanities and social sciences—especially sociology, history and anthropology—have begun to examine consumer culture as a meaningful object of scholarly importance. Although for years many scholars viewed consumption as a trivial topic, since the late 1970s, consumer studies has come into its own as a substantive attempt to analyze and decode the meaning of the nearly ubiquitous exchange of goods and services in both developed and developing countries.

Much of the initial historical scholarship on consumer culture has focused on the origins of modern consumption as they appeared in the United States and western Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century. Still, very little of this scholarship on consumption in the United States has engaged in dialogue with studies of consumption in other countries. This is particularly striking when one considers that exported consumer products quite possibly functioned as the United States' most impactful means of influencing the rest of the world in the twentieth century. Thus, in order to understand fully American consumption in the twentieth century, we must examine American consumption as it has grown and developed both within and without the United States' borders. Broadly speaking, this is also part of a larger ongoing effort to “globalize” American Studies by seeking to understand the culture and history of the United States within a worldwide perspective. Furthermore, the approach of this class will be historical, in the attempt to grasp the unexpected and often forgotten ways in which modern American consumer culture has changed and transformed since its emergence as a shaper of economies and societies around the globe.

### **BOOKS**

Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005). ISBN 978-0674022348

Gary Cross, *An All Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern American* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000). ISBN 978-0231113137

### **Course Requirements:**

Regular active participation  
Final term paper (15 – 20 pages)

<b>Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit:</b>	To be announced.
<b>Sprechstunden während der vorlesungsfreien Zeit:</b>	To be announced

