WGSS 444 - Gender and Consumption in a Global World

Lecturer: Dr. L. Ayu Saraswati
Contact information: luhp@hawaii.edu

Department: International affairs
Semester: 1

Course level: L3 Undergraduate
Domain: XXX
Teaching language: English
Number of in-class hours: 33
Number of course sessions: 10 + Exam
ECTS: 6

Course description and objectives

This class explores theories of the global economy, histories of consumerism, and constructions of gendered public spaces and identities through consumptions. We will examine advertisements, consumer products, stores/shopping malls, and consumption patterns. Students will also learn about how the cultural production of consumers and consumer culture functions in the process of globalization.
Specifically, students will learn: how processes of consumption are gendered and produce gendered subjects; how technologies of consumption, including advertisements blur the distinction between emotional and rational choice; how spaces of consumption are historically and culturally produced; how our consumption patterns, including of luxury brands, shape and perpetuate global hierarchies; and how some people have formed resistance to consumer culture. Various assignments in this class are designed to help students hone their analytical and oral communication skills.
**** For UH students, this course fulfills an Oral Focus (O) and DH (Diversification Humanities) requirement.**

Prerequisites

None

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:
OLO1. Present information orally in an organized manner appropriate for intended a) audience and b) purpose;
OLO2. Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal delivery techniques;
OLO3. Select and use appropriate content for oral (presentation) activity/context; and
OLO4. Generate/use/develop visual aids and handouts appropriate to the rhetorical situation that promote clarity, interest, and comprehension.

Assignments and grading

- Discussion/Class Participation/The “One Thing”
- Gender and Consumption “Show-and-Tell”
- “Gender and Consumption” Project Step 1: Individual Consumption
- “Gender and Consumption” Project Step 2: Public Space
- “Gender and Consumption” Project Step 3: Final Presentation (Final Exam)

The numerical grade distribution will dictate the final grade. The passing grade for a course is 10/20. For UH students, it is “D”

DAUPHINE GRADES	CONVERSION	COMMENTS
20	A+	Excellent
19		
18		
17		
16	A	Very good
15		
14	A-	Good
13	B+	Satisfactory
12	B	
11	B-	Sufficient
10	C	
Less than 10	F	FAIL

Class participation: Active class participation – this is what makes classes lively and instructive. Come on time and prepared. Class participation is based on quality of comments, not quantity.
Exam policy: In the exam, students will not be allowed to bring any document (except if allowed by the lecturer). Unexcused absences from exams or failure to submit cases will result in zero grades in the calculation of numerical averages. Exams are collected at the end of examination periods. For this class, in lieu of traditional exam, we will have oral presentation as an exam.

Discussion/Class Participation/The "One Thing"

This class is oral communication focus. It means that we will rely heavily on and improve our oral communication skills. For each class, you are expected to come already prepared with **either:** 1) one discussion question related to the reading materials for that day; or 2) your critical analysis of the readings for that day. You will be asked to orally deliver these questions or analyses. This will be your "one thing" for that day. You will get **ZERO (0) for that day's participation if you answer "I did not do the reading" when I ask you to share your one thing for the day.**

Gender and Consumption Show and Tell
By the second week of class, you will have already chosen a day when you will do your "show and tell" (First come, first serve).
The "show and tell" assignment is designed to help everyone in the class understands the reading materials better. It is also a way for you to improve your oral communication skills (public speaking/presentation).
What you need to do:
1. Choose a CHAPTER/ARTICLE from the syllabus. Write your name next to the title of that article/chapter. When you sign up, make sure no one else has chosen to present on that specific article.
2. Read the article and understand its argument.
3. Bring an object, an image, a website, a photography, a poem or anything at all that is related to the article you're reading. Tell the class how that particular story or object that you choose **support**, **challenge**, or **complicate** the argument in the article/chapter.
4. At the end of your "show and tell," you need to pose AT LEAST **FIVE QUESTIONS** (related to your show and tell and the class material) that would serve as an entry point to that day's discussion.
5. Please be as creative and engaging as possible; creativity is ALWAYS part of the presentation grade.
6. Your presentation (not including posing the question and leading the discussion) will be about 10 minutes.

An example: if you are responsible to do a "show and tell" on the day we read articles on the food industry, you may show us a food advertisement and your **analysis** of that ad and how that ad challenges, complicates, or supports the argument in the readings. (You CANNOT use more than two minutes of your total presentation time to play youtube clips etc.)
Because there are so many possible stories and/or objects that you can share with the class, I would **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** you to let me know in advance what you plan to show and tell the class.
There is a grading rubric for this assignment.

"Gender and Consumption" Project

You will need to choose a topic for your project. You can choose whatever topic that fascinates you as long as it highlights processes of gender and consumption in a global world (i.e., environmental issues, organic farming, technological gadgets, or products you regularly buy such as a particular brand of cosmetic or skincare products, or places you often go to, such as restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream stores, bookstores, clothing stores). Because this class happens in Paris (whoo-hoo!), you will need to focus on a product/consumption that is sold in Paris and that there is a physical store where you can go and analyze it. It does not have to be of a French brand/company.

This assignment consists of three steps. Each step builds on the previous one.

- Step 1: Individual Consumption

Step One requires that you examine the gendered processes of consumption and how these processes produce gendered subjects. Examine your own consumption pattern. For this step, you may want to pay attention to who consumes what and how gender matters in this process. That is, note how these commodities help us articulate our gender identity. If your larger topic is on fashion, for example, you will create a digital scrapbook, using whatever software you know how to use (Word Doc, Powerpoint, Canva, etc), of clothing that you love. These can be your own clothes that you bring to Paris or from websites (please make sure to include the links where those pictures are taken). Do NOT take pictures of people WITHOUT their consent.

Then, **write a short paragraph underneath each photo** to explain your point (five photos/paragraphs minimum). Be creative. If you need ideas of what topics to talk about, see step 3 below.

IMPORTANT: CHOOSE SOMETHING THAT YOU KNOW HAS A PHYSICAL STORE/PRESENCE IN PARIS OR SURROUNDING AREAS. This will be important for step 2 later.

Some Ideas:

- French baguette, French pastry, croissants, chocolates, etc.
- French tourist sites
- Cosmetics, perfumes or beauty products (don't have to be of French brands but must have a physical store in Paris or surrounding areas that you can visit)
- Bags, shoes, or clothing (don't have to be of French brands but must have a physical store in Paris or surrounding areas that you can visit)
- Music stores and movie theaters in Paris or surrounding areas
- Technology items
- Cars, skateboards, bicycles
- Restaurants, bars, clubs, etc. in Paris or surrounding areas

- Step 2: Public Space

For step two, you are required to build on your step one by adding the "public space" dimension of it. That is, you will focus on how these gendered processes of consumption play out in public spaces. A trip to the mall or other sites of consumption is therefore a must. If your step one is on fashion, for example, for step two, you may want to go to one of the clothing stores and examine how fashion consumption matters in this public space. Notice what the sales associates and people who go to this store wear. Think about how people articulate their identities through what they consume/wear, how their articulation of self through fashion makes meaning of this public space, and how gender, racial, and class hierarchies become visible through these processes of consumption.

Remember to take pictures of the stores and add them to your scrapbook (five photos/paragraphs minimum). Some places do NOT let you take pictures, that's ok. You can take screenshots from their websites and provide proper citation/credits/links. The most important thing is you bring a note and do your analysis in the physical store. If you take images of people in public or semi-private spaces such as restaurants, etc, you need to ask for their permission first. (Alternatively, you can blur out their faces if they are in the background.)

A short paragraph accompanying each photo is also required. If you need ideas of what topics to talk about, see step 3 below.

- Step 3: Final Presentation (Final Exam)

For step three, you will present your analysis to the class. The class will also vote on best presentation.For this presentation, you will use the materials you have from step 1 and step 2 to present your analysis.
The presentation MUST INCLUDE ALL FOUR aspects below:

1. Gender (beyond the binary) analysis of the consumption patterns (based on step 1).

   Is this product designed/produced with a specific gender in mind? Provide evidence/example for how it is/not.
   Is this product advertised/marketed for a specific gender in mind? Provide evidence/example for how it is/not.
   Is this product consumed mostly by people of a specific gender? Provide evidence/example for how it is/not.
   What is the history of this product? Who owns it? Where is it made?
   Do an intersectional analysis, if possible: are there any racial, class, sexuality, dis/ability, nationality dimensions to this product? (You can limit your discussion to one aspect, such as class. It doesn't have to be all categories.)
   Is there anything unique that you observe from this product? What are they? What makes this product desirable for you and its consumers?
   What are the **patterns** of consumption for this product? What themes/words/colors/images keep coming up about this product?
   Are there any problems about this product? What are they?
2. Gender (beyond the binary) analysis of the public spaces of consumption (based on step 2)

   Is this store/public space created with a specific gender in mind? Provide evidence/example for how it is/not.
   Is this store/public space advertised/marketed for a specific gender in mind? Provide evidence/example for how it is/not.
   Is this store/public space frequented mostly by people of a specific gender? Provide evidence/example for how it is/not.
   What is the history of this store/public space?
   Do an intersectional analysis, if possible: are there any racial, class, sexuality, dis/ability, nationality dimensions to this public space?
   Is there anything unique that you observe from this place? What are they? What makes this place desirable for you and its customers?
   Are there any problems about this place/store? What are they?
3. CITE or MENTION some of the readings that we read in class or other readings to support your point.

4. Have an engaging presentation, **15 MINUTES MAX**. I will have a timer and you will unfortunately have to **stop when the alarm rings**. So please rehearse your presentation, make it fun and convincing! IF YOU ARE USING ANY TECHNOLOGY, please make sure that it works. We cannot wait for you to play around with it until it works.

Course structure

Session	Topic
1	**Introduction** (The Class, The City, to Each Other, etc.) We will view several advertisements in class and analyze them together. ****Workshop: "How to Participate Actively, Critically, and Respectfully in Class Discussions"** ****Workshop: "How to give engaging, convincing, and persuasive presentations."** CHOOSE a presentation day
2	**Get Set, Ready, History!**

	Zukin, Sharon. "A Brief History of Shopping." (LAMAKU) *Phenix, Sara. "Designing Women: Fashion, Fiction, and Femininity in Second Empire France," (Selected sections, on LAMAKU)* Finamore, Michelle Tolini. "Fashioning the Colonial at the Paris Expositions, 1925 and 1931." (LAMAKU) LAST DAY TO CHOOSE a show and tell presentation day
3	**Consuming Food and Constructing Identity** Batat, Wided. "The Role of Luxury Gastronomy in Culinary Tourism: An Ethnographic Study of Michelin-Starred Restaurants in France." (LAMAKU) Mathias, Manon. "Chocolate and the French novel: modernity, language, nature." (LAMAKU) Fisher, Kathryn. "Gruyère and Camembert—An Exploration into Food, Identity, and the Securitization of Cheese" (LAMAKU)
4	**Spaces of Consumption and Consuming Spaces** Champsaur, Florence Brachet. "Madeleine Vionnet and *Galeries Lafayette*: The Unlikely Marriage of a Parisian Couture House and a French Department Store, 1922–40." (LAMAKU) M. McBride, Theresa. "A Woman's World: Department Stores and the Evolution of Women's Employment, 1870-1920" (LAMAKU) Romana Forlini, Francesca. "The Cultural Construction of the Domestic Space in France: Women's Lived Experience and the Materialization of Customs." (LAMAKU) GC Step 1 due. Post it on Lamaku under "Assignment," and then, "STEP 1" -11:55pm
5	**FIELD TRIP – Galeries LaFayette**
6	**Tourism, Traveling, and Consuming Culture/Otherness** Davis, Judy and Talé A. Mitchell. "Understanding Racial Capitalism Using the Photovoice Method: Black Tourism in France" (LAMAKU) Cohen, Mathilde. "The Whiteness of French food." (LAMAKU) Trelohan, Magali, et al. "Tourism Development or Nature Protection? Lessons from a Cluster Analysis Based on Users of a French Nature-Based Destination." (LAMAKU)
7	**Advertisements and Gender** Montenach, Anne. "Women in Trade: Female Advertisers in Eighteenth-Century French Provincial Towns." (LAMAKU) Gordon, Pauline and Adrian Furnham. "The Effect of Gender Stereotype Content, Program Congruity, and Liking on Unconventional French Television Advertisement Recall and Purchase Intention." (LAMAKU)

	Bourcier-Béquaert, Bénédicte, et al. "The Old and the Beautiful: Senior Women's Exposure to Models in Advertisements and the Impact on Their Identity" (LAMAKU)
8	**Beauty, Body, and Consumption** Grout, Holly. "'Le Miracle et le Mirage': Beauty Institutes and the Making of Modern French Women" (LAMAKU) Morris, Pamela K. and Katharine Nichols. "Conceptualizing Beauty: A Content Analysis of U.S. and French Women's Fashion Magazine Advertisements." (LAMAKU) Ourahmoune, Nacima and Hounaida El Jurdi. "Beauty Salon: A Marketplace Icon" (LAMAKU) GC Step 2 Due. Post it under "Assignments"-"Step 2" on Lamaku by 11:55pm
9	**Brands, Luxury Items, and Why We Buy Nice Things** Barrère, Christian. "The French Luxury Model." (LAMAKU) Serdari, Thomaï. "Chanel's Ascent to the Pinnacle of Luxury: A Triadic Model of Evolution for Luxury Brands." (LAMAKU) Kapferer, Jean-Noel. "Assessing Levers of Guilt in Luxury Consumption: An International Perspective." (LAMAKU)
10	**Resistance to Consumer Culture** Boulianne, Shelley and Nicole Houle. "Chocolate and Politics: A Crossnational, Survey-Based Experiment on Recruitment to a Boycott Campaign." (LAMAKU) Mantz, Ophélia. "The Ecological Class: Modes of Resistance: Idling, Cartography and Commoning." (LAMAKU) Ertaş, Çağdaş. "Tasting Politics? The Relationship Between Neoliberalism, Political Consumerism, and the Slow Food Movement." (LAMAKU)
11	**Final Exam/Oral Presentation in Class**

Bibliography

See above

Lecturer's biography

L. Ayu Saraswati, Ph.D is professor in women, gender, and sexuality studies at the University of Hawai`i. She is the author and co-editor of six books, including *Seeing Beauty, Sensing Race in Transnational Indonesia* (Winner of 2013 National Women's Studies Association Gloria Anzaldúa book prize) in which she discusses the consumption of skin-whitening cream among Indonesian women. Her latest book, *Scarred: A Feminist Journey through Pain* (Winner of 2024 Association of American Publishers PROSE Auto/biography book award) explores the relationship between traveling and healing. Her works have been included as one of *Meridians* journal's most impactful works in the past twenty years, *Library Journal*'s Best Books of 2023, and in *Vogue Australia*'s "An Essential Queer Reading List."

Moodle

This course is on Moodle: **XXX**

Academic integrity

Be aware of the rules in Université Paris Dauphine about plagiarism and cheating during exams. All work turned in for this course must be your own work, or that of your own group. Working as part of a group implies that you are an active participant and fully contributed to the output produced by that group.