

Course Description

We are a nation of consumers is a commonly stated observation of Americans. Some theorists and cultural critics argue that in fact consumption is the national religion and it is the thread that binds the diverse and divergent constituents that make up the nation's population. This course will provide an opportunity for us to think critically about the role of consumption culturally, historically, and economically in the United States.

Consumption is our broad theme through which we will explore a range of topics, debates, and methods in the field of American Studies. The course will look at various forms of consumption, including food, music, amusement parks, psychology, education, and representations. Students will engage with primary and secondary sources as well as various forms of media and literature. The goal of the course is expose students to scholarly possibilities afforded to them in the field of American Studies, as well as provide incoming majors with key concepts and analytical tools to prepare them for more advanced courses in the major.