Class code: MCC-UE 9015 - 001

Instructor Details

Salim Murad
sm4393@nyu.edu

Office hours: before Tuesday class 10:45 - 11:45 a.m. in professor’s office in Malé náměstí 11 - Richtrův dům (or by arrangement).

Class Details

Advertising and Society

Tuesday 12:00 – 2:50 p.m.

Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites
none

Class Description

The course will include an introduction of the influential sociological theory of consumerism by Zygmunt Bauman. Other theories (see the syllabus below) will be presented as well. After the presentation of the mentioned theories, we will concentrate on their application to the Central European environment, which will be also discussed in the context of globalization. The main aim is to show the relationship between the advertisement and the society in the current phase of society’s development, which can be characterized as a mutual discussion, but a discussion of unequal partners.

In this context we will discuss the impact of current mechanisms of consumer society, which through the advertisement influences issues like i.e.: gender, politics, art and democracy. We will also discuss chosen types of advertisement messages, how they influence the viewer and which ethical problems arise from such an influence.

The issue present in all the classes of the course will be to introduce the students into specifics of Central European region as the area, where we can follow many mechanisms of influencing the society “live”. That is due to only twenty-three years history of having been connected with the world consumer society. Central Europe will be for us in this sense natural laboratory for applications of introduced theories.

Essential parts of the course will be visits of professionals in the field, who will give the students their point of view.

This course is introductory to the topic.

The course is divided into two main areas:

1. Theoretical introduction into the current state of capitalism, condition of consumerism and advertisement
2. Central and Eastern European specifics of delayed consumerism
Each class will consist of lecture and student discussion. Three times we will have field trips. Each student will present assignment Nr. 1 and assignment Nr. 3 in class. Each presentation will be five minutes long.

**Desired Outcomes**

Interpretation and application of introduced theories.

Gaining the ability of critical reflection on mutual relation between the society and the world of advertising.

Identification of Central European particularities given by historical experience - in advertising and consumerism in general.

Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding and analyze possible consequences of three types of adverts - global, local and glocalised.

**Assessment Components**

Conditions for completing the course:

- Regular attendance (including field trips), study of compulsory reading, active participation, fulfillment of the tasks given – weekly tasks, three assignments, passing of midterm and final test.
- No more than two excused absences will be tolerated.

**Components of Final Grade**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>45 points (25; 10; 10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly tasks</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<td>Midterm test</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<td>Final test</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Assignments**

**Assignment 1:** Students are asked to write an essay concerning the differences in consumerism and its symptoms in the U.S. and the Czech Republic. The essay should be grounded in the theories studied during the beginning of the course (1500 – 2000 words). Deadline for submission: 19 March 2013.

**Assignment 2:** Students are asked to write a review of the movie "Český sen" (Czech Dream). The review should include an investigation of the Eastern European cultural motifs and assessment of advertising campaign shown in the movie (800-1100 words). Deadline for submission: 9 April 2013.

**Assignment 3:** Students are asked to find/take a picture (or other kind of record) of an advertisement with references to Czech culture and write a short justification why they consider this advertisement enrooted in Czech culture. The justification should include the answer to the question: "why this advertisement would be difficult to understand/impossible to understand by individuals from beyond this cultural circle?" (800-1100 words). Deadline for submission: 7 May 2013.
Written assignments should be sent to: sm4393@nyu.edu and also submitted in hard copy. Completed and submitted assignments will be discussed during the class.

At the beginning of the semester students will receive a “Grading Grid” for each of the three assignments - clearly defining how each component of the assignment will be graded. Each student will have a midterm individual tutorial meeting to discuss his/her progress in the course and to discuss the grading of the first two assignments and the midterm test.

Weekly task: students are asked to study obligatory reading and prepare their comments on the text in written form. The comment may include their opinion, ideas, critical views which refer to the reading (200 words). Deadline for submission: Monday before the class. The deadline applies even if the student is not present during the class.

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<th>Assessment Expectations</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grade A</strong>: (Excellent work)</td>
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<td><strong>Grade B</strong>: (Good work)</td>
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<td><strong>Grade C</strong>: (satisfactory work)</td>
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<td><strong>Grade D</strong>: (passable work)</td>
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<td><strong>Grade F</strong>: (failure)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Grade conversion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A=94-100</td>
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<td>A-=90-93</td>
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<td>B+=87-89</td>
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<td>B=84-86</td>
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<td>B-=80-83</td>
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<td>C+=77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C=74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-=70-73</td>
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<td>D+=67-69</td>
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<td>D=65-66</td>
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<td>F=below 65</td>
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Grading Policy

NYU Prague aims to have grading standards and results similar to those that prevail at Washington Square. At the College of Arts and Sciences, roughly 39% of all final grades are in the B+ to B- range, and 50% in the A/A- range.

We have therefore adopted the following grading guideline: in any non-Stern course, class teachers should try to ensure that no more than 50% of the class receives an A or A-.

A guideline is not a curve. A guideline is just that—it gives an ideal benchmark for the distribution of grades towards which we work.

Attendance Policy

Each unexcused absences will result in your final grade being reduced by 3%. Absences only for medical reasons will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor’s note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). Absences due to travel will not be excused.

Late Submission of Work

Assignments and weekly tasks should be completed and submitted by the required submission date. Assignments and weekly tasks which are received late without a formal extension having been agreed will result in deduction of number of points prescribed for the task.

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as though it were one’s own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one’s own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer’s work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student’s intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science’s Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“Presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else’s idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating—and so is giving that help—unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.” (Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)

Plagiarism Policy

Required Text(s)

### Internet Research Guidelines

Students will be able to explore the Advertising Archive of the NYU Department of Media, Culture and Communication. Login information will be provided at the beginning of semester.

### Additional Required Equipment

- **Session 1**
  - February 12
  - General overview of the course
  - Explanation of conditions for completing the course
  - Case study of one concrete “negative” and controversial ad campaign of global company operating on the Czech market. Study of Czech media from summer 2007.
  - In the library there will be available the book of photographs illustrating Central European esthetics of transition toward market economy (Slovakia case).
  - **Suggested movie:**
    - Viewing of the DVD No Logo by Naomi Klein
  - **Constructive critique or false activism?**

- **Session 2**
  - February 19
  - The Central Europe in the net of global capitalism
  - Introduction to the current conditions in Central Europe: Transition towards democracy, transition from planned economy towards market economy. Place of Central Europe in current global political and economical environment.
  - **Reading:**
    - Transnational Practices in the Old Second World - Transnational Advertising and the Spread of Consumerism (Leslie Sklair)
Session 3
Friday, February 22
(make up for Tuesday classes)

"Consumer culture – easy entrance, no exit" (Zygmunt Bauman)

Reading:


Suggested Reading:


(29 pages)

Practical exercise: “Memorial of the Unknown Consumer”.

Session 4
February 26

The Consumer Society

"We have no other choice but choose“ (Anthony Giddens)

Introduction to Czech works on field of consumer society theories. Brief outline of studies of Jan Keller.

Reading:


(72 pages)

Suggested Reading:

Practical exercise: Experience Czech shopping malls. Visit of the Kotva and Palladium shopping malls.

**Session 5**

March 5

**Memories of the communism era. The role of desire for symbols of consumer society before 1989. Materialism as the Political Energy of 1989?**

**Spring 2013 in Prague, still time for “Ostalgia”?**

Pictures of consumption artefacts in former communist Czechoslovakia will be presented.

Optional students photo exercise.

**Reading:**


Berdahl, D. Where the World Ended: Re-Unification and Identity in the German Borderland.


(89 pages)

**Suggested Reading:**


(34 pages)

**Suggested movie:**

Becker Wolfgang, Good Bye Lenin. 2003
**Session 6**  
**Advertising and Pop Art**

**March 12**

Triumph of mass production and the power of the brand.

“I shop therefore I am”. (Barbara Kruger)

Or “I am what I shop”? (slogan on billboard promoting Pittsburgh Airmall. Summer 2008)

Legacy of Pop Art in contemporary Czech advertising.

Reading:


O´Barr, W. M (2006): *The Interpretation of Advertisements*. Advertising & Society Review E-ISSN 1154-7311. The Advertising Educational Foundation. Text is available on line: [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/asr/v007/7.3unit09.html#13](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/asr/v007/7.3unit09.html#13)  (25 pages )

(39 pages)

Suggested Reading:


(42)

**Session 7**  
**Ethics of Advertising, Complex of questions connected with advertisement will be discussed. Responsibility (or recklessness) of those involved in producing advertisement and conscious (or non-critical) recipients.**

**March 19**

**Assignment 1** (no weekly task)

Presentation of student´s assignments

Reading:

Code of Advertising Practice of the Czech Advertising Standards Council. (pp. 1 – 16)


(50 pages)

Suggested Reading:

Chapter DOI: 10.4135/978-1-84860-789-7.n24

Practical exercise: Introduction of the Czech commercial culture. The best and worse examples, ad and campaign Czech award

Session 8

Midterm test

March 26

Ethnic Stereotypes and the Czech Commercial Culture.

Reading:


(S52 pages)

Suggested Reading:

Taylor, C. R., Lee, J. Y. ‘Not in Vogue:


(19 pages)

movie:


Spring Break

April 1-5

Consumer frustration in Central Europe in 2010, still in place?

The process of “westernization” of Central and Eastern Europe consumer habits since 1989.

Reading:


(28 pages)

Suggested Reading:


(24 pages)

Assignment 2 (no weekly task)

**Session 10**

April 16

Visual aspect of advertising and its role and power in society.

Practices of Looking: Images, Power, and Politics – Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright

Reading:


(51 pages)

Suggested Reading:

Aitchinson, J. (2004): *Cutting edge advertising: how to create the world’s best print for brands in the 21st century*, Singapore, Prentice Hall. (pp. 22 – 90)

(68 pages)

Practical exercise: creating a draft of outdoor campaign for NYU in Prague.

**Session 11**

April 23

Images of Women and Advertising, gender issues, question of stereotyping in advertising in the Czech Republic.

Reading:


(63 pages)
Suggested reading:

Occhipinti Laurie: *Two Steps Back?: Anti-Feminism in Eastern Europe.* Anthropology Today, Vol. 12, No. 6. (Dec., 1996), (pp. 13 – 18)


Examples of advertisement will be presented. (Archive of Department of Culture and Communication Advertising Archive of print and TV images NYU and from lecturer’s archive).

**Session 12**

**Field trip to an Advertising Agency, Prague. How the Czech advertising company does the business on the Czech market.**

**April 30**

**Reading:**


(52 pages)

**Suggested Reading:**


(35 pages)

**Session 13**

**Consumerism and prospect of democracy. Effect of advertising on democracy.**

**May 7**

**Assignment 3** (no weekly task)

Advertising and Democratic Society or Advertising or Democratic Society?

**Reading:**


(52 pages)

**Suggested reading:**

(33 pages)

**Session 14**  
Presentation of student’s assignments.

May 14

Field trip to an Advertising Agency in Prague. How the international advertising company does the business on the Czech market.

**Session 15**  
Final test, Concluding debate.

May 21

**Classroom Etiquette**

**Required Co-curricular Activities**

Field trip to McDonald’s restaurant in Smíchov. Debate with head manager of the restaurant.

**Suggested Co-curricular Activities**

**Obligatory literature:**

(All of the below is included in the course reader)


Code of Advertising Practice of the Czech Advertising Standards Council. 2008 (pp. 1 – 16)


**Recommended literature:**


