

21H.206: American Consumer Culture

Possible topics for research paper (**note: for the most part, these are very general topics that you will have to narrow down)

Department Stores
Ready-to-Wear Clothes
streetcar suburbs
Filene's Basement
John Wanamaker
Show windows
Kleptomania
Mail Order Catalogues
Sears Roebuck
1893 World's Fair
Coney Island
Revere Beach
Amusement Parks
Nickelodians
Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade
Mother's Day
Crisco
Listerine
A & P Grocery Chain
Food and Drug Act
National Consumers League
Eight Hours For What We Will
Henry Ford
River Rouge
Model T
Five-Dollar Day
Planned obsolescence
General Motors Acceptance Corporation
Installment Credit
Bruce Barton
Jazz Age
Clara Bow
Radio
Flappers
Prohibition
Home Economics
World War One Conservation
U.S. Food Administration
Ellen Swallow Richards
Hazel Kyrk
Selling Mrs. Consumer
Your Money's Worth
Underconsumption and the Great Depression
New Deal Consumer Advisory Board
Office of Price Administration
GI Bill of 1944
Kitchen Debate

The Feminine Mystique
Interstate and Defense Highway Act of 1956
Levittown
Malls
Father Knows Best
Television from the 1950s-1970s
Lonely Crowd
The Affluent Society
Beat Movement
Elvis Presley
Ralph Nader
Gas Lines of the 1970s
Stagflation
WIN
Second Shift
Yuppies
Environmentalism
Downshifter
Wal-Mart

A very preliminary bibliography:

Lawrence Glickman, Consumer Society in American History

Jennifer Scanlon, The Gender and Consumer Culture Reader

Alfred D. Chandler, The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business

David Hounshell, From the American System to mass Production, 1800-1932

Walter Friedman, Birth of a Salesman: the Transformation of Selling in America

William Leach, Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture

Susan Strasser, Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market

Richard Tedlow, New and Improved: The Story of Mass Marketing in America

Roland Marchand, Advertising the American Dream

Ruth Schwartz Cowan, More Work for Mother: the Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave

Kenneth T. Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier: the Suburbanization of the United States

Lizabeth Cohen, A Consumers' Republic : The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America

Thomas Frank, The Conquest of Cool : Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism

Juilet Schor: The Overspent American: Why We Want What We Don't Need

David Brooks, Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There