



**UNSW**  
AUSTRALIA

Arts & Social  
Sciences

School of Humanities and Languages

## **ARTS3302, A History of Technology, Consumption & Comfort**

**Semester 2, 2014**

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## 1. Course Staff and Contact Details

Course Convenor			
Name	Stephen Healy	Room	MB 319
Phone	9385 1597	Email	s.healy@unsw.edu.au
Consultation Time	Tuesday: 4.30-5.30 pm and Thursday: 2-3.30 pm		
Lecturer			
Name	Stephen Healy	Room	MB 319
Phone	9385 1597	Email	s.healy@unsw.edu.au
Consultation Time	Tuesday: 4.30-5.30 pm and Thursday: 2-3.30 pm		

## 2. Course Details

Units of Credit (UoC)	6	
Course Description	<p>Consumption is a fundamental feature of contemporary life. Yet many taken-for-granted assumptions regarding consumption, such as the universality of notions such as those of comfort and convenience, turn out to be inventions of recent provenance. This course interrogates the complex nexus of influences encompassing not only technology but also political economy, philosophy, literature, and popular culture that fused to make mass consumption what it is today, with the emergence of domestic comfort providing a particular focus for this. The course cumulates with an analysis of broader patterns of contemporary consumption with an emphasis on the role of technologies and infrastructures in them. The platform this provides into the contemporary cultural status of consumption provides an entry point for an exploration of the problems consumption currently presents to the facilitation of sustainability. Notably the less material intensive forms of life proposed by those propounding a requirement for a 'steady state economy'. The course presents opportunities to learn and apply concepts of intellectual history, social theory and newer areas such as consumption studies in addition to being particularly pertinent to studies in the History and Philosophy of Science (HPS) and Environmental Studies. It delivers on a long noted requirement for courses better integrating humanities based, and strongly theoretically grounded material, with more empirical, policy focused studies.</p>	
Course Aims	1.	This course aims to familiarise advanced undergraduate students with the emergence of key structural determinants of contemporary consumption and the problems these present for industrial civilisation
	2.	It builds, most notably, upon earlier Environmental Humanities courses including ARTS2306: Technology Civilization Culture and ARTS2243: Waste and Society but is pertinent to students in both these and cognate disciplines more generally.
Student Learning Outcomes	1.	Knowledge of the emergence of key structural foundations to contemporary consumption with an emphasis on technology and the emergence of domestic comfort.
	2.	An understanding of the emergence of technologies central to

		contemporary consumption
	<b>3.</b>	An understanding of the emergence of the self-interested autonomous individual of economic theory.
	<b>4.</b>	An ability to frame and evaluate the relationship of technical, political, intellectual and cultural change and gauge their broader societal import.
	<b>5.</b>	Refined critical research skills developed through completion of a research essay.
	<b>6.</b>	Developed skills in oral communication and written argument.
Graduate Attributes	<b>1.</b>	Display in-depth knowledge of and insight into major approaches, methodologies, issues and means of explanation in HPS, and into their development.
	<b>2.</b>	Understand the way these relate to and derive from other disciplines and fields in the Social Sciences and Humanities.
	<b>3.</b>	Demonstrate understanding of significant episodes in the history of science and technology including their social and economic setting and their ideological and cultural dimensions.
	<b>4.</b>	Display insight regarding the significance of contemporary science and technology, the challenges they present, and be capable of formulating and articulating constructive responses to these challenges.
	<b>5.</b>	Be able to engage in reasoned discussion of often charged and controversial topics with people of differing views, regardless of social, cultural and/or individual differences.
	<b>6.</b>	Be able to read and analyse complex texts, and be sensitive to issues of interpretation.
	<b>7.</b>	Be confident and effective working as a member of a group focused by a common purpose.
	<b>8.</b>	Be able to identify the underlying dimensions to a debate or controversy and effectively analyse complex problems.
	<b>9.</b>	Be able to construct a substantive reasoned basis for a point of view, and communicate it in a cogent and effective manner, both verbally and in writing.
	<b>10.</b>	Display openness and independence of mind: be receptive to new ideas and approaches, and be able to subject them to critical scrutiny.
	<b>11.</b>	Demonstrate effective research skills including online resources.
	<b>12.</b>	Display a capacity and enthusiasm for learning and continuing intellectual development.

### 3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

The selected course readings embody both detailed historical, and more contemporary empirical, content and a number of contrasting disciplinary frameworks and traditions. Guidance in lectures and structured tutorial discussions will further explore, draw out and contextualise the differences between differing interpretations and insights.

### 4. Teaching Strategies

Lectures and structured tutorial discussions will require students to critically apply interpretive concepts facilitating the development of critical thinking. The research essay and tutorial presentations will enable students to develop research skills and critical thinking through the lens of topics particularly interesting to them. In addition to feedback on the research essay the tutorial presentation and development of an essay outline enables feedback from both peers and the lecturer.

### 5. Course Assessment

Assessment Task	Length	Weight	Learning Outcomes Assessed	Graduate Attributes Assessed	Due Date
Final Written Research Essay	~ 3000 Wds	65% Total (inc: 15% for wk 7 ~500 wd min. proposal)	1-6		Due 23 October. Outline/Proposal (~15% mark) due September 11.
Tutorial Presentation	~ 20 Mins	10%	1-4, 6		Allocated Week 1
Tutorial Presentation Writeup	~ 1500 Wds	25%	1-4, 6		Write up due the week following the tutorial presentation is delivered.

**Please Note:** In addition to fulfilling the above assessment requirements, students are expected to attend at least 80% of their lectures and tutorials in order to pass the course.

### Grades

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the

grading categories see

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/GuideToUNSWGrades.html>

### Submission of Assessment Tasks

Assignments which are submitted to the School Assignment Box must have a properly completed School Assessment Coversheet, with the declaration signed and dated by hand. The Coversheet can be downloaded from <https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/>. It is your responsibility to make a backup copy of the assignment prior to submission and retain it.

Assignments must be submitted before 4:00pm on the due date. Assignments received after this time will be marked as having been received late.

### Late Submission of Assignments

Late assignments will attract a penalty. Of the total mark, 3% will be deducted each day for the first week, with Saturday and Sunday counting as two days, and 10% each week thereafter.

The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.

## 6. Attendance/Class Clash

### Attendance

Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes in the courses in which they are enrolled. Explanations of absences from classes or requests for permission to be absent from classes should be discussed with the teacher and where applicable accompanied by a medical certificate. If students attend less than 80% of their possible classes they may be refused final assessment.

**Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the student misconduct policy.**

### Class Clash

A student who is approved a permissible clash must fulfil the following requirements:

- a. The student must provide the Course Convenor with copies of lecture notes from those lectures missed on a regular basis as agreed by the Course Convenor and the student.
- b. If a student does attend a lecture for which they had secured a permitted clash they will still submit lecture notes as evidence of attendance.
- c. **Failure to meet these requirements is regarded as unsatisfactory performance in the course and a failure to meet the Faculty's course attendance requirement. Accordingly, Course Convenors will fail students who do not meet this performance/attendance requirement.**
- d. Students must attend the clashed lecture on a specific date if that lecture contains an assessment task for the course such as a quiz or test. Inability to meet this requirement would be grounds for a Course Convenor refusing the application. If the student misses

the said lecture there is no obligation on the Course Convenor to schedule a make-up quiz or test and the student can receive zero for the assessment task. It should be noted that in many courses a failure to complete an assessment task can be grounds for course failure.

## 7. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: <http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/>. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student's work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here:

<http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf>

## 8. Course Schedule

To view course timetable, please visit: <http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/>

Week Commencing:	Topic	Lecture Content	Tutorial/Lab Content	Readings
Week 1 - 31/07	<i>Introduction/Rationale</i>	<i>Lecture 1: 'Prosperity Without Growth'? Overview &amp; Course Organization.</i>	<i>See Tute Outline</i>	
Week 2 – 07/08	<i>The Emergence of Consumer Society 1</i>	From 'Private Vices' to 'Public Benefits'		
Week 3 – 14/08	<i>The Emergence of Consumer Society 2</i>	<i>The Emergence of Contemporary Material Culture</i>		
Week 4 – 21/08	<i>The Emergence of Consumer Society 3</i>	The Invention of Comfort		

<b>Week 5 – 28/08</b>	<b>Technology and the Consolidation of Consumer Society 1</b>	<b><i>The Rise of Manufacturing</i></b>		
<b>Week 6 – 04/09</b>	<b>Technology and the Consolidation of Consumer Society 2</b>	<b>The ‘Co-evolution’ of Technology and Consumer Society</b>		
<b>Week 7 – 11/09</b>	<b>Technology and the Consolidation of Consumer Society 3</b>	<b><i>The Example of Automobility</i></b>		
<b>Week 8 – 18/09</b>	<b>Case Study: Air Conditioning 1</b>	<b>‘The End of the Long Hot Summer’</b>		
<b>Week 9 - 25/09</b>	<b>Case Study: Air Conditioning 2</b>	<b><i>The Material Culture of Air Conditioning</i></b>		
	<b>SEMESTER BREAK</b>			
<b>Week 10- 09/10</b>	<b>Case Study: Air Conditioning 3</b>	<b><i>Air Conditioning, Shopping &amp; Sustainability</i></b>		
<b>Week 11 – 16/10</b>	<b>Contemporary Perspectives</b>	<b><i>The ‘Contexts’ of Consumption</i></b>		
<b>Week 12- 23/10</b>	<b>Conclusion/Class Event</b>	<b><i>Transforming Consumption?</i></b>		

All classes run Thursday 9-12am in Morven Brown G4, starting with a lecture followed by a tutorial. Tutorials and readings are detailed in a separate handout distributed in week 1 and on the course Moodle site.

## 9. Course Resources

### Textbook Details

Ackermann, M.E. (2002) *Cool Comfort: America’s Romance with Air-conditioning*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington.

Alder, K. (1995) A Revolution to Measure: The Political Economy of the Metric System in France. In Norton Wise (Ed) *The Values of Precision*, Princeton University Press: 39-71.

Arsenault, R. (1984) The End of the Long Hot Summer: The Air Conditioner and Southern Culture, *The Journal of Southern History*, 50(4): 597-628.

Berg, M. and Eger, E. (eds) *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Birmingham, A. and Brewer, J. (1995) *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, Routledge.

Bud, R. and Cozzens, S. (1992) *Invisible Connections: Instruments, Institutions and Science*, Bellingham WA: SPIE.

Carroll, P. (2007) *Science, Culture and Modern State Formation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.



- Cooper, G. (1998) *Air-conditioning America: Engineers and the Controlled Environment, 1900-1960*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London.
- Crowley, J. (1999) The Sensibility of Comfort. *The American Historical Review*, 104(3): 749-782.
- Crowley, J. (2003a) *The Invention of Comfort: Sensibilities and Design in Early Modern Britain and Early America*, John Hopkins University Press.
- Crowley, J. (2003b) From Luxury to Comfort and Back Again: Landscape Architecture and the Cottage in Britain and America. In Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger (Eds) *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*. Palgrave Macmillan: Houndmills & NY.
- Desrosieres, A. (1998) *The Politics of Large Numbers: A History of Statistical Reasoning*, Harvard University Press.
- Dixon, T. (2003) *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category*. Cambridge University Press.
- [Fam, D.M.](#), Mellick-Lopes, A., [Willetts, J.R.](#) & Mitchell, C.A. (2009) The Challenge of System Change: an Historical Analysis of Sydney's Sewer Systems, *Design Philosophy Papers*: 1-14.
- Foucault, M. (2007) *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France, 1977-1978*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Geels, F. (2005) Co-evolution of Technology and Society: The Transition in Water Supply and Personal Hygiene in the Netherlands (1850-1930) – a Case Study in Multi-Level Perspective, *Technology in Society*, 27: 363-397.
- Grandclement, C. (2004) Climatiser le marche. Les contributions des marketings de l'ambiance et de l'atmosphere, *ethnographiques.org*, 6 (<http://www.ethnographiques.org/2004/Grandclement.html>).
- Hacking, I. (1990) *The Taming of Chance*, Cambridge University Press.
- Hård, M. (1994) *Machines are Frozen Spirit: the Scientification of Refrigeration and Brewing in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century; a Weberian Interpretation*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt & Westview Press, Boulder.
- Healy, S. (2008) Air-conditioning and the 'homogenization' of people and built environments, *Building Research and Information* (Special Issue: Comfort in a Lower Carbon Society), 37(5-6): 312-322.
- Healy, S. (2012) 'Atmospheres of Consumption: Shopping as *Involuntary Vulnerability*,' *Emotion, Space and Society*, Vol. 10, pp 35-43.
- Hirschman, A. O. (1997) *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph* (Twentieth Anniversary Edition), Princeton University Press.
- Hitchings, R. and Jun Lee, S. (2008) Air-conditioning and the Material Culture of Routine Human Encasement: The Case of Young People in Contemporary Singapore, *Journal of Material Culture*, 13(3): 251-265.
- Jackson, T. (2009a) *Prosperity Without Growth? The Transition to a Sustainable Economy*. Sustainable Development Commission (UK).
- Jackson, T. (2009b) *Prosperity Without Growth? Economics for a Finite Planet*. Earthscan.
- Jacob, M. C. and Stewart, L. (2004) *Practical Matter: Newton's Science in the Service of Industry and Empire, 1687-1851*, Harvard University Press.
- Joyce, P. (2003) *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City*. London Verso.
- Illouz, E. (2009) Emotions, Imagination and Consumption: A new Research



- Agenda, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 9(3): 377-413.
- Leong, S.T. and Weiss, S. J. (2001) 'Air-conditioning' in *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*. Edited by C.J. Chung, J. Inaba, R. Koolhaas and A.T. Leong. Taschen 92- 127.
- Melosi, M. V. (2000) *The Sanitary City: Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to the Present*, The John Hopkins University Press.
- Miller, P. (1992) Accounting and Objectivity: The invention of Calculating Selves and Calculable Spaces, *Annals of Scholarship* (Special Edition 'Rethinking Objectivity II), 9(1-2): 61-86.
- Mukerji, C. (1983) *From Graven Images – Patterns of Modern Materialism*. Columbia University Press.
- Mukerji, C. (2007) 'French Management Politics and the Canal du Midi', pp. 169-189 in L. Roberts. S. Schaffer and P. Dear (eds) *The Mindful Hand: Inquiry and Invention from the Late Renaissance to Industrialisation*. Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Mukerji, C. (2010a) 'The Unintended State', pp. 81-101 in T. Bennett and P. Joyce *Material Powers: Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Mukerji, C. (2010b) 'The Territorial State as a Figured World of Power: Strategics, Logistics, and Impersonal Rule', *Sociological Theory* 28(4): 402-424.
- O'Connell, J. (1993) The Creation of Universality by the Circulation of Particulars, *Social Studies of Science* 23(1): 129-173.
- Poovey, M. (1995) *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation 1830-1864*, The University of Chicago Press.
- Poovey, M. (1998) *The History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society*, The University of Chicago Press.
- Poovey, M. (2002) The Liberal Civil Subject and the Social in Eighteenth-Century British Moral Philosophy, *Public Culture* 14(1): 125-145.
- Porter, T. M. (1986) *The Rise of Statistical Thinking 1820-1900*, Princeton University Press.
- Redclift, M. (1987) *Sustainable Development: Exploring the Contradictions*, Methuen.
- Sassatelli, R. (2007) *Consumer Culture: History Theory and Politics*, Sage Publications.
- Schaffer, S. (1995) 'Accurate Measurement is an English Science'. In Norton Wise (Ed) *The Values of Precision*, Princeton University Press: 135-172.
- Shove, E. (2003) Converging Conventions of Comfort, Cleanliness and Convenience. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 26: 395-418.
- Taylor, C. (1989) *Sources of the Self: the Making of the Modern Identity*, Harvard University Press.
- Tierney, T.F. (1993) *The Value of Convenience: A Genealogy of Technical Culture*, State University of New York Press.
- van Vliet, B. Chappells, H. and Shove, E. (2005) *Infrastructures of Consumption: Environmental Innovation in the Utility Industries*, Earthscan.
- Wise, N. W. (1995) *The Values of Precision*, Princeton University Press.

**Journals** Students may find useful material in a broad range of relevant journals. The *Journal of Consumer Culture* and *Journal of Material Culture* are particularly relevant to matters pertaining to, primarily, contemporary consumption.

**Websites**

Students seeking resources can also obtain assistance from the UNSW Library. One starting point for assistance is:

<http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html>

## 10. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students' feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

## 11. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre's website at:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au>

## 12. Grievances

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html>

## 13. Other Information

### myUNSW

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au>

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>

### OHS

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see

<http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/>

### Special Consideration

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/SpecialConsideration.html>

### **Student Equity and Disabilities Unit**

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Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: <http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.