

Department of Anthropology

ANTHRO 2274B-650: The Anthropology of Shopping

BRIEF COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2026

Date: July 4, 2025

Instructor and course information:

Instructor: Dr. Lindsay Bell

Method of delivery: Online, asynchronous.

Credit value: 0.5

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: None.

Please ensure you have the correct requisites by checking [the Academic Calendar](#).

Course Description:

This course serves as an introduction to how anthropologists study everyday life to reveal the meanings and consequences of what often seem like mundane, routine actions. Shopping is a ubiquitous activity that we may take for granted as “normal”. Indeed, our daily lives involve the purchase and consumption of “lots of stuff.” More than simply being about individual materialism, this course explores how shopping is a cultural practice. We will learn how to closely observe shopping environments to discover what people’s procurement practices reveal about their social relationships and identities. We will explore the diversity of ways in which people shop as well as what they shop for. We will think about local and global consumer culture with an eye towards a better understanding of both human creativity and social inequality.

The course has an experiential learning component with our industry partner, [London Economic Development Corporation](#). Students will learn about the partner’s work and mission and design a research proposal to assist with one of their current challenges. The top three proposals will be given an award with an option to pursue the research in a subsequent course.

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course’s OWL Brightspace site before the first day of class.

Course Materials:

James Carrier. *Economic Anthropology*. Agenda Publishing, 2021.

The textbook costs \$46.

Students are welcome to purchase second-hand editions of this textbook.

And: Additional required readings will be available through the Course Readings tool on the course site.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on the following:

Bi-Weekly Quizzes (T/F)	20%
Bi-Weekly Consumer Diary Entries	20%
Research Proposal for Industry Partner	30%
Final Exam (multiple choice)	30%

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