



Susan Strasser

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Susan Strasser is a professor in the Department of History at the University of Delaware and Senior Resident Scholar at the Hagley Museum and Library's Center for the History of Business, Technology, and Society. Her books include *Never Done: A History of American Housework* (1982); *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (1989); and *Waste and Want: A Social History of Trash* (1999). She has also edited *Commodifying Everything: Relationships of the Market* (2003) and coedited *Getting and Spending: American and European Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century* (1998).

Susan Strasser is currently working on *A Historical Herbal: Healing with Plants in a Developing Consumer Culture*. In chapters organized around individual plants, the book describes the culture and commerce of medicinal herbs in 19th and 20th century America. As Americans increasingly solved problems by purchasing goods and services rather than by cultivating skills and knowledge, practitioners' prescriptions coexisted with self-medication and herbal commerce with backyard medicine. Despite effective chemical drugs and government support for scientific medicine, folk practices survived, as did medicinal herb hunting, growing, wholesaling, and retailing. Herbal medicines were old-fashioned compared with new chemicals by the middle of the 19th century, and by its end self-dosing was under attack as quackery.

Professor Strasser studied at Reed College and the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and has taught at The Evergreen State College, Princeton University, George Washington University, and the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture. Her work has been supported by fellowships from the Rockefeller and Guggenheim foundations, the German Historical Institute, the Harvard Business School, the American Council of Learned Societies, Radcliffe College's Bunting Institute, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Cultures of Consumption Programme, Birkbeck College, and the University of London.

Thursday, July 7, 6:15 p.m.

Woolworth to Wal-Mart: Mass Merchandise and the Changing American Culture of Consumption

Location: HCA, Curt und Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais, Hauptstr. 120, Heidelberg