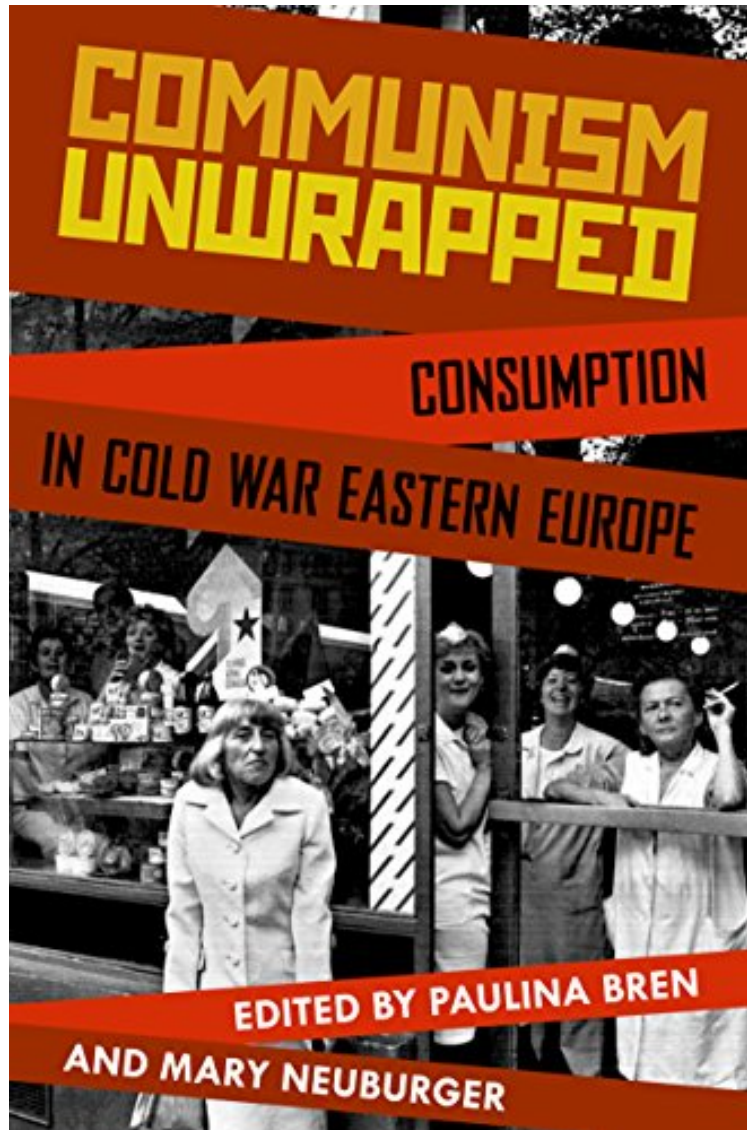


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Communism Unwrapped reveals the complex world of consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe, exploring the ways

people shopped, ate, drank, smoked, cooked, acquired, assessed and exchanged goods. These everyday experiences, the editors and contributors argue, were central to the way that communism was lived in its widely varied contexts in the region. From design, to production, to retail sales and black market exchange, *Communism Unwrapped* follows communist goods from producer to consumer, tracing their circuitous routes. In the communist world this journey was rife with its own meanings, shaped by the special political and social circumstances of these societies. In examining consumption behind the Iron Curtain, this volume brings dimension and nuance to understandings of the communist period and the history of consumerism.

"[Bren and Neuburger] provide a valuable and detailed backdrop to a history of places where sausage stands for abundance and bulldozed parmesan symbolises crushed hopes for freedom."--*Contemporary European History*"The essays are consistently readable and insightful, and the editors' introductions to each section help guide readers along the contours of the book's major themes. Highly recommended." --*CHOICE*"This rich collection of essays offers a unique look at post-1945 Eastern Europe. Departing from the Cold War narrative of endemic shortages and the gloominess of daily life under communism, the essays highlight the everyday creativity and agency of ordinary people. We follow Eastern Europeans to hard-currency stores and gated communities. We see them cross borders to shop in better-supplied neighboring countries and navigate complex social networks to obtain goods and favors. Situating these stories in the context of transnational modernity rather than a totalizing party state, the book offers a rare combination of new research and a compelling theoretical insight." --Malgorzata Fidelis, University of Illinois at Chicago"Consumerism in Eastern Europe has become a fertile field for exploring the dreams and delusions of state socialist politics, as well as the agency and resourcefulness of its citizens. Bren and Neuburger's pioneering volume brings together a range of rich and surprising case studies from across the whole region, significantly enriching our understanding of Eastern European social history during the Cold War." --Paul Betts, University of Sussex

About the Author
Paulina Bren teaches at Vassar College and is the author of *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*. Mary Neuburger is Associate Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin and is the author of *The Orient Within: Muslim Minorities and the Negotiation of Nationhood in Modern Bulgaria* and *Balkan Smoke: Tobacco and the Making of Modern Bulgaria*.