



# One Nation Under Goods: Malls and the Seductions of American Shopping

*James J. Farrell*

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## **One Nation Under Goods: Malls and the Seductions of American Shopping** James J. Farrell

Loved and hated, visited and avoided, seemingly everywhere yet endlessly the same, malls occupy a special place in American life. What, then, is this invention that evokes such strong and contradictory emotions in Americans? In many ways malls represent the apotheosis of American consumerism, and this synthetic and wide-ranging investigation is an eye-popping tour of American culture's values and beliefs. Like your favorite mall, *One Nation under Goods* is a browser's paradise, and in order to understand America's culture of consumption you need to make a trip to the mall with Farrell. This lively, fast-paced history of the hidden secrets of the shopping mall explains how retail designers make shopping and goods “irresistible.” Architects, chain stores, and mall owners relax and beguile us into shopping through water fountains, ficus trees, mirrors, and covert security cameras. From food courts and fountains to Santa and security, Farrell explains how malls control their patrons and convince us that shopping is always an enjoyable activity. And most importantly, *One Nation Under Goods* shows why the mall's ultimate promise of happiness through consumption is largely an illusion. It's all here—for one low price, of course.

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