

DOES POP CULTURE HAVE HISTORICAL VALUE?

Dominique Ruitort
A&E Editor



YES

General Douglas MacArthur, General George Smith Patton Jr., General Dwight David “Ike” Eisenhower. Surely, you must recognize these names; you have probably seen them many times before. Do you remember why these men were famous for? What great things did they do to have influenced our history? Those of us who were avid listeners and note takers in our history classes would know and be able to list the importance of these men. But how about the rest of us?

Now a new list: The Beatles, Buddy Holly, Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Michael Jackson, Britney Spears, *Nsync, Justin Bieber. Have a better time recognizing these names? These people, despite being wildly famous for their talents, did not have a massive impact on the idea of American History. But all of these names are so well known in the United States, let alone the entire globe. Whether hardcore traditional historians and professors want to admit it or not, pop culture does have historical value, and a lot of.

Pop culture lays a foundation for society. The way society behaves,

the way it is run, who is “in,” who is “out,” who to cheer for, who to not cheer for, all of this is influenced in some way or another by pop culture.

When The Beatles were winning the hearts of people from Liverpool to San Francisco, they were influencing society. People were now beginning to accept, what at that time was known as, harder sounding music, introducing the guitar, drums, and bass into the foundation of rock bands. For all years after, bands were formed around this foundation.

The King of Pop, Michael Jackson, laid the foundation for the dance music and moves that we all enjoy today. He will never be forgotten.

With her famous hit “Oops I Did It Again” Britney Spears was creating a new generation, our generation. Obviously you guys remember this song and how thrilled you would be to hear it play on the radio. How about *Nsync and the Backstreet Boys? Also part of our generation.

Bieber, Justin Bieber. Love him or hate him, we all know about him. This Canadian-born star was shot into stardom with his song “Baby.” Soon enough, eager little twelve-year old girls would be singing Bieber tunes in the mall annoying one and all. (Whether you like him or not, you have to admit that the kid does have talent.)

Twenty years from now, people will remember these names, they will always be remembered.

It is obvious that pop culture does have historical value: everything that people are and the way society behaves is due to pop culture.

Popular culture, or pop culture, is culture enjoyed by the masses, but it only remains relevant for a short amount of time, and to state that it has historical significance is to err greatly.

What is historical significance? An event is historically significant when a given amount of years down the line, it is important enough to receive notice from historians. The more impactful an event, the more likely it is to survive the ravages of time, while the less impactful events simply wear away. Let us list off the top 10 songs of 1975, which is very recent in a historical sense. They were: Love Will Keep Us Together , Rhinestone Cowboy , Philadelphia Freedom , Before the Next Teardrop Falls, My Eyes Adored You , Shining Star , Fame, Laughter In the Rain , One of These Nights , Thank God I’m a Country Boy. How many of those songs did you recognize? Chances are, you did not recognize many. Much of the popular culture of even a mere thirty-five years past has faded away.

It is easy to say the youth of today is corrupted, and that tastes are slipping. Yet looking back through the charts of prior years, much of the songs on the top then are the same sort of songs now berated for their lack of quality. Most of what is produced is not very good, regardless of the time period, and today is no different. It is in hindsight that we see the true gems. The bad or mediocre songs fade away, as they are no longer listened to, and only the classics remain.

One may claim that the pop culture of yesteryear is significant because it

Allen Lin
Reporter



NO

affects us today, but most of the pop culture of then is gone. One might as well say that Mozart is pop culture, as he wrote some religious music which reached the masses. Mozart and his like are high culture, not pop culture, regardless of their popularity, as their work has stood the test of time and has shown itself to have historical significance and worth.

Much of what is now part of the popular culture will fade away as well, meaning it does not have historical significance. It is extraordinarily difficult to determine what is groundbreaking when the groundbreaking act is still in progress.

In addition, popular culture is often self-referencing, full of in-jokes. When reading older literature, one often misses many of these pop culture references, because they are out of date. Even if a work outlasts a temporary period of popularity, and manages to become a classic and considered high art, those in-jokes will be lost with the years, the purview of those academics with particularly esoteric tastes. A work that relies heavily on will be hollow, and thus not interesting.

MODERATE



Shannon Hsu
Opinion Editor

Twenty years from now, what will future generations know of our time? Maybe they’ll know about the Iraq War. Maybe they’ll know about the first election of an African-American into the presidency. Maybe they’ll know about the Great Recession. And maybe they’ll know about Justin Bieber. Okay, that wasn’t a guarantee. But it is highly likely, whether you think future generations will be blessed or cursed to know of Justin Bieber.

Popular culture, better known as pop culture, is defined as cultural patterns widespread throughout a population – which can include music, movies, books, fashion, and other aspects of life, which we particularly associate with the entertainment industry, although it’s not limited to only that area.

Can you name the years that the Vietnam War started and ended in? How much did a loaf of bread cost during the Great Depression? Which president took office directly after Kennedy? Chances are, only a few of us would be able to

answer these fully. But I’m a lot more willing to bet money on the prospect that any one of us is more than capable of naming hits from The Beatles, identifying a photograph of Marilyn Monroe, or describing fashion from the 1970’s.

Pop culture may seem inconsequential and unimportant to many of us. However, although some of it may not necessarily be worth remembering, there are some aspects that were important in how they shaped the lives of people in history. For example, in the past, it was largely considered improper for women to wear pants. When it began to become the norm and even a fashion statement, it was a symbol and a stepping stone towards women’s rights and empowerment. Another example would be how the development of rock and roll gave youths all across the world a new voice.

There’s also the concept of globalization – how economies, societies, and cultures are becoming intermeshed - to consider. Lady Gaga is insanely popular in China, the France-based band Phoenix has a large fan following here. People all across the world can quote Titanic, and everyone knows Chanel and Louis Vuitton. So in a way, pop culture is also significant in the sense that it has helped to unify the world.

Popular culture may not necessarily have the power to start or end wars, but it certainly does have the potential to define an era. erabut at the least, it certainly does have the potential to define an era.

Is pop culture significant to the history of the future? Maybe no, pop culture changes time after time and with new styles, inventions, people, quotes and ways of thinking pop culture eventually wears away and the interest level declines. Pop culture is good in that it reminds us of who we were in the past and how we’ve changed but pop culture doesn’t help us progress as a nation.

Pop culture deters people from things of greater importance and proves to be an excuse for dealing with bigger issues. People use pop culture as an escape from problems that they need to face. It is used as a way to excuse bigger societal issues on a daily basis. While some people focus on larger life issues some people focus on little elements of pop culture. Certain things like music, clothing and certain ideas tend to overshadow the ‘bigger picture’.

Pop culture is not of historical significance because it doesn’t help us grow as a society, a school body or individual. It doesn’t give lessons on how to improve as a human being but it does help us find different niches within our identities. We hope to attain little things from our daily lives and pop culture is just there for a brief moment in time and then we move on to bigger ideas.

With the constant change in pop culture it’s hard to maintain an

MODERATE

Samantha Green
Reporter



understanding about those ideas or styles. Pop culture is not like the Great Depression or wars that people have gone through. These things prove to be of historical significance and help us to prevent certain things from happening in the future.

The pop culture of this time is now in a stagnant faze. It hones with a casual ideas and common mindsets, it’s not as out there as other time periods in terms of the styles people followed. A lot of the ways people think varies tremendously now because we are becoming more open to different ideas and lifestyles. Just like ideas in the past our ideas will also change.

Pop culture is primarily a source of entertainment and with its continual change it will disappear and be gone like the wind. There is no history or science behind it and we notice this more and more time after time.

WEARING YOUR STICKERS ON HATS

By: **Emilie Cady**
Reporter

While walking around campus every day, I always see a lot of boys wearing half-on-their-heads flat billed hats with big, fat, annoying stickers on them. Whenever I'm talking to someone with a sticker on their hat, it is the only thing I can look at because it's just there.

Honestly, I don't understand why it is that boys feel the need to leave the sticker on their hats after they buy them. Whenever you buy clothes, you don't walk around with the tags hanging off of them so that people can see the brand of their clothes, and it should be the same way with wearing stickers on your hats; it's tacky.

Whenever I ask people I know why it is they feel the need to keep the sticker on their hat, I always get the same answers. They say that it's 'legit', or that

it shows that the brand of the hat is 'real'. In my opinion, a hat doesn't need the obnoxious shiny sticker to make it a 'real' hat. Obviously, any hat that is on someone's head is real; otherwise they wouldn't have anything on their head to begin with.

Another thing boys do with their hats other than keep the stickers on is wear them only halfway on their head. I thought that the whole point of a hat was to block out the sun, so it doesn't make sense to me that people would wear their hat somewhere where it clearly has no effect blocking the sun from their face. It seems to me that fashion is taking over practicality with boys as well as girls, a fact that is hard for me to think about straight-faced.

Also, if people have the logo of the brand of their hat on the back of their hat, then there is no need for the sticker in the first place. The logo itself speaks for the validity of the brand. The way that boys freak out about everyone around them knowing about the brand of their hats reminds me a lot of women who only want to wear brand-name clothes or shoes; it's like they believe people will think they're not 'cool' if they don't have or wear the same brand as practically everyone else.

In general, I just really think that keeping the stickers on hats is lame. Of course, it's completely up to the wearer whether they decide to keep it on or not, but to me, a hat is a hat, and the appearance of the sticker doesn't make it any more or any less special than it was when it was bought.



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POTENTIALLY BRILLIANT BUT NOT LIKELY

By: **Andy Anusiem**
Contributing Reporter

Well, after a busy start to the second semester, I think I deserved the break to relax, think, and watch the NBA's All-Star weekend. How swell... The Lakers returned after 3 straight losses, and we get to see Blake Griffin in action!

Personally, I like the Clippers as the great underdog team, Griffin is amazing, and they are exciting. They're so exciting that when commercials come on advertising the Clippers, they don't even ask you to buy tickets because they're going to the playoffs, or they're going to get better this year.

No. They say, "We have a new level of excitement! Many people are excited by our dunks, crossovers, and clutch performances."

Well then, welcome to the Clipper circus... I mean, I could do something else instead of watching that commercial. I could've missed a midget fight! There's only a 1 in 9 chance of that happening, and one could be right outside my door.

Speaking of the top of our society, a man by the name of Jacob Fasdan decided to rob Goodwill. Well, I know what you're thinking, "Was he paid? What's his IQ? How many times did he get dropped on his head as a baby?" Well, the answers are no, low, and only a few times.

How pathetic do you have to be to rob a Goodwill? Has he watched a Robin Hood movie? Even the cartoon? You don't steal from the poor, you steal from the rich! I mean, you don't steal... It's not even the stealing, but couldn't you have stolen from a store with something you might want?

"Every kiss begins with K"... You know what else begins with K? Kool-Aid. No, that's not bad. Kryptonite! That's a menace to Superman, and our society as we know it because according to "urban dictionary", it is not only Superman's weakness, but the weakness of society.

What is Superman going to say when I walk down the street, and my wife has a Kay ring on? He's going to think 'Kryptonite!' and laser me on the spot. Even worse, he could delete me from facebook! So this is why, folks, I will never get married. Just to be safe.

Back to business... a 35-year-old man broke into a house in southern Malaysia and is now serving five years in jail... he was caught sleeping on the job. Well on the bright side, he will get plenty of sleep in the luxurious beds of prison. Sarcasm should be added.

Well, thanks for tuning in. Thanks for your time, and have a fantastic life. Eat lots of cake...

VIRTUAL CHECK-INS, ARE THEY SAFE?

By: **Samantha Green**
Reporter

With tremendous movements in the social networking industry, we have committed our lives to letting others know about our endeavors. How many of us have some way of communicating where we are? One of the core components of social networking is the process of 'checking in' at different points. Social networking has become an innovative way of communicating with each other and this can prove to be a positive or negative thing.

Human beings thrive on the attention of others; we want people to know who we are, where we are and what we're doing. In this essence it can become a dangerous outlet for us in terms of our safety. Be it a walk in the park or something as simple as, "I'm going to Disneyland today!" We're leaving the door wide open for predators to come and step into our lives. At some point we need to separate ourselves from our virtual worlds and the danger of doing 'check-ins'.

For example: you are at Newport Beach and you decide to post your exact location online and a map image comes up, the details are so precise that it shows where you're currently building sandcastles. In your sheer excitement you do this meanwhile someone online who may be a predator will know your location. They will have different plans and might potentially want to break in your house, knowing that you are not home.

Even though there are cons to posting there are also pros. For example: if someone gets kidnapped or something bad happens it will be easier for the police or the person's family to locate where they last were. Often times our technology may be dangerous in some ways, but it can also be helpful in others.

I remember watching a program about the pros of social networking; a fugitive using a different name joined a network for her old school and the police was able to find her through an old friend of hers. She one day posted where she was on her social networking site and the police tracked and arrested her. So unless you're a fugitive running away from the popo that is

a positive—don't worry there's a road to rehabilitation.

People aren't too smart when they express themselves online because there isn't another person directly giving them feedback or conveying emotion.

They believe they can say what ever they want and get away with it because it's plain as day. You've seen small examples of the pros and cons of 'checking in'; at the end of the day it's up to you to make the best decision.

Next time when you decide to post

your location, think on it—you might be doing yourself a favor. For those who like checking in perhaps it would be safer to post when you're in a general place rather than somewhere sacred to you. Make the right choices when it comes to checking in, you don't want to end up checking out.

BE SURE TO BE SAFE WHEN CHECKING IN ON THE SOCIAL NETWORK, PEOPLE NOT INTENDED COULD READ THEM. CARTOON BY: CHRISTINA CHAVEZ.

