



MHIX3065

From the Beats to the Bachelorette: Popular Culture Since the 1950s

Session 1, Online-flexible 2025

School of Humanities

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	4
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	7
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	7

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Abbie Hartman

abbie.hartman@mq.edu.au

email for an appointment

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above OR (20cp in HIST or MHIS or MHIX units at 200/2000 level)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

What can we learn about the past when we examine it through the lens of popular culture? This unit traces a history of popular culture in the United States of America and Australia from the 1950s to the present, exploring the ways that popular culture can magnify and reflect changing ideas about race, class, gender, and ideology. We will examine the impact of new technologies, moral panics over popular culture, and whether popular culture constituted a form of cultural citizenship. Film, television, music and other media are used in this unit to evoke seminal moments in the history of popular culture and students are encouraged to explore these non-discursive forms as primary sources. Students are also encouraged to consider the reception of popular culture by audiences and to think about their own experience of popular culture historically. This unit will be of particular interest to students in media, education, and cultural studies, as well as history.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Locate, read, and analyse different kinds of historical evidence (primary sources), including visual and textual sources

ULO2: Devise and answer research questions drawing on primary and secondary

evidence

ULO3: Identify key arguments in secondary source materials and apply them in your own historical arguments

ULO4: Communicate thoughtfully in classroom discussions, and in a range of written forms

ULO5: Be able to identify and analyse key developments in the history of popular culture since 1945

ULO6: Analyse selected examples of popular culture produced since 1945 in their historical contexts, and describe the ways these examples, relate to, and reflect, broader, social, cultural, and political trends

General Assessment Information

Penalties for Late Assessment:

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to written reports and recordings only. Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application.

Use of Large Language Models ('AI') in this unit:

While Macquarie University does not have a policy to 'ban' the use of ChatGPT or other LLMs, I would strongly discourage you from using it. This is for a number of reasons:

1. learning to write clearly and well is a fundamental skill, and one of the most important things you will learn in your humanities education. If you outsource writing, then you're not learning, and you're certainly not going to improve.
2. There are serious academic integrity issues with ChatGPT and AI - if you use these tools to complete your work, is it even 'your' work? Also, tools like ChatGPT rely on taking uncredited material from scholars and writers.
3. Using AI does not guarantee accurate results - again, it undermines your development of critical thinking skills and your ability to evaluate sources. AI often produces really poor history!
4. AI tools have significant negative environmental impacts - they use far more energy and water than standard google searches, for example.

University is a singular opportunity to develop and extend your skills; use that opportunity, rather than outsourcing it to technology. You will reap the rewards for the rest of your life.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Weekly Quiz	30%	No	23:59 21/03/25, 23:59 2/05/25, 23:59 30/05/25
Research Project Proposal	20%	No	23:59 week 7 11/04/25
Research Essay	50%	No	23:59 week 13 6/06/25

Weekly Quiz

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 12 hours

Due: **23:59 21/03/25, 23:59 2/05/25, 23:59 30/05/25**

Weighting: **30%**

A set of two short answer quiz questions that will be embedded in the online lecture and should be completed before the weekly discussions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Locate, read, and analyse different kinds of historical evidence (primary sources), including visual and textual sources
- Devise and answer research questions drawing on primary and secondary evidence
- Identify key arguments in secondary source materials and apply them in your own historical arguments
- Communicate thoughtfully in classroom discussions, and in a range of written forms

Research Project Proposal

Assessment Type ¹: Plan

Indicative Time on Task ²: 16 hours

Due: **23:59 week 7 11/04/25**

Weighting: **20%**

This task will assess student's ability to develop a research question and approach, as well as your ability to locate and analyse primary and secondary sources. Students will respond to a series of questions to prepare the proposal.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Locate, read, and analyse different kinds of historical evidence (primary sources), including visual and textual sources
- Devise and answer research questions drawing on primary and secondary evidence
- Identify key arguments in secondary source materials and apply them in your own historical arguments
- Communicate thoughtfully in classroom discussions, and in a range of written forms
- Be able to identify and analyse key developments in the history of popular culture since 1945

Research Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 46 hours

Due: **23:59 week 13 6/06/25**

Weighting: **50%**

This assessment task evaluates students' ability to construct an argument in response to a self-devised research question, based on primary and secondary sources. This task is the culmination of the assessment tasks in this unit; previous assessments provide scaffolding for this final task.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Locate, read, and analyse different kinds of historical evidence (primary sources), including visual and textual sources
- Devise and answer research questions drawing on primary and secondary evidence
- Identify key arguments in secondary source materials and apply them in your own historical arguments
- Communicate thoughtfully in classroom discussions, and in a range of written forms
- Be able to identify and analyse key developments in the history of popular culture since 1945
- Analyse selected examples of popular culture produced since 1945 in their historical contexts, and describe the ways these examples, relate to, and reflect, broader, social, cultural, and political trends

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Delivery:

this unit is taught through a combination of online lectures and supplementary materials (including film clips and music videos) and face to face seminar discussions - the lectures will be available online, and you must listen to the lectures and complete the weekly readings before you come to the seminars.

Unit webpage and technology used and required:

Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>

Required reading:

Students will need to have access to the following required text: Michelle Arrow, *Friday on Our Minds: Popular Culture since 1945* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009). You do not have to purchase the book, though you might find it is easier to prepare each week if you do so. The book is available to purchase through Booktopia, and it is also available from the university library to borrow or to access as an ebook.

The iLearn site for this unit lists the required weekly readings alongside *Friday on Our Minds*. These readings are available on Leganto, via the Macquarie University library.

Classes and timetables:

Students are required to prepare for class by listening to the weekly lectures, which are available on iLearn, and reading the required readings each week. Students will attend a seminar per week - the seminar will run between 1.5 and 2 hours each week, depending on the content to be covered. See www.timetables.mq.edu.au for the most up-to-date information about class times and locations.

Learning and Teaching Strategy:

This unit has been 'flipped' - that is, we have moved to pre-recorded lectures in order to make more space in the timetable for discussion in seminars. Each week, you will need to prepare for class discussion through active listening of the lectures (taking notes is a valuable skill that you should practice whilst at University (see this article from *The Conversation* on the best ways to take notes: <https://theconversation.com/whats-the-best-most-effective-way-to-take-notes-41961>).

You also need to prepare for class (remember, quizzes on this material consist of 30% of your grade) by reading the required readings. This doesn't mean skimming them - you should be annotating your readings and highlighting the author's core **argument**, the **evidence** they use to

support it, and the **method** they have applied to their evidence. You should also note any parts you don't understand.

Seminars are important for students because they represent a space for students to discuss the readings and issues raised by the lectures, to ask questions, and solve problems together. Students learn in seminars through a combination of small and whole group discussions, working closely through the set readings, and analysing primary sources, both in small and large groups.

Unit Schedule

Unit Schedule

Week 1 - Historians and Popular Culture

Week 2 - Popular Culture and Postwar Family Life

Week 3 - Beats and Playboys: Suburban Rebels

Week 4 - The Rise of Teenage Culture

Week 5 - The Sixties and the Counterculture

Week 6 - Soul to Blaxploitation

Week 7 - The Sexual Revolution and its Enemies

Week 8 - The Neoliberal Revolution

MID- SEMESTER BREAK

Week 9 - Hip Hop and African American Pop Culture in the late 20th Century

Week 10 - Postmodern Gender Cultures

Week 11 - Neoliberalism and Reality TV

Week 12 - Streaming, Superheroes and Social Media: Popular Culture Now

Week 13 - Popular culture imagines the past and future

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)

- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2025.01 of the [Handbook](#)