

HISTORY 2124A [001]
Sounds, Sights & Bits:
Explorations in 20th Century Canadian Popular Culture
Fall/Winter 2021-22
Wednesday, 6:30pm – 8:20pm, In person

Instructor: Prof. Peter V. Krats

Office Hours: TBA

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Course Description:

Canadian popular culture: poor-quality imitation of American, or crucial element of Canadian identity, worthy of "Canadian Content" regulations and financial support? This course traces the 20th century evolution of "Canadian popular culture," offering glimpses into music, film, television, sport and more. What was enjoyed, why, and was it "Canadian?"

Antirequisite:

History 2124 F/G

Course Syllabus:

Canadian popular culture is sometimes derided as "inferior mimicry" and "derivative" of "pop culture" from south of the 49th parallel. Was (is?) that the case? We trace the evolution of "Canadian popular culture," offering glimpses into music, film and television, sport, consumption and more. What was enjoyed, why, and was it "Canadian?" Scrutiny of "voices, images, and more reveal histories little appreciated, with both impressive originality and sycophantic imitation readily found. We will examine *popular* culture in various guises – from radio and television to film to music, sports and more. The character of that cultural product; the role of changing tastes and technologies; the influence of regulation versus free enterprise; national versus international perspectives; and the changing "mass" market all come into play. History 2124 challenges notions about Canadian popular culture, suggesting that "our" culture is more multifaceted than the caricatures provided by either nationalist "cheerleading" or dismissive rejection.

Course Materials:

There are no course texts – the 2124 OWL site includes Power points and other materials that will provide the "sounds and sites" of popular culture. There are suggestions about "good" writing practice on OWL and examination preparation in the "Resources" section.

Methods of Evaluation: Tentative

Participation	20
Group Chat on OWL	10
Comments on Early Lectures [3 pp]	15

Thoughts on a Cultural Element [4 pp]	25
Final Exam	30

Accommodation for missed assignment deadlines with a Self Reported Absence:

If a student reports a SRA for an assignment (i.e. an essay) the new due date will be 48 hours after the SRA was submitted. For example, if you complete a SRA on March 19 at 3pm, your new due date will be March 21 at 3pm.

Course Schedule and Readings: tentative

*** several topics extend beyond one class; subject to change**

1. Introductions / Contexts of Canadian Culture / Culture Contemplated
2. Glimpses of 19th Century Popular Culture
3. Popular Culture Meets Urban-industrial Capitalism
4. Tiddley Winks to “Reaching for a Lucky”: Popular Culture as Control & as Site of Contention
5. Music & Machines → Mesmerizing the Masses
6. Entertaining Canadians: Expanding Media
7. Sporting Spectacles in a Modernizing Canada
8. Contexts of “Modern” Popular Culture: W.W. II to the 1980s
9. Consuming as Progressive Popular Culture
10. *Seeing Things*: Images & Popular Culture in Canada, 1939-1990s
11. “Bits” of Canadian Popular Culture since the 1990s

Use of Electronic Devices:

No electronic devices will be permissible for use for the Final examination. Use in lectures at the discretion of the professor – objectionable or distracting use forbidden.

Additional Statements:

Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document, <https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf>, for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness