

# Popular american culture paper soc 105



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According to Merriam-Webster, Inc. (2011), culture is defined as “ the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group” (para. 5b). Popular culture involves the most current and modern elements in our lives that can often change rapidly in the modern world of technology. “ Because of its commonality, popular culture both reflects and influences people’s way of life; because it is linked to a specific time and place, pop culture is transitory, subject to change, and often an initiator of change” (Petraicca & Sorapure, 2007, p. ). These effects are often constant in our daily environment as a result of the ever-present mass media. One major trend in popular culture in the U. S. is that of the popular novels and movies. For example, the Harry Potter novels were written by J. K. Rowling, who is thus far the only known billionaire author. The story is about Harry Potter, an adolescent wizard, and his close friends and their adventures as they attend a school of Wizardry. The main plot involves how Harry is a special wizard that has a purpose in defeating his nemesis, a dark wizard, Lord Voldemort, who wants to take over the wizard world.

Rowling sold the movie rights to Warner Brothers which resulted in the series of Harry Potter block buster movies. Harry Potter popularity opened a vast market of merchandise to its fans. Warner Brothers has an Internet site, [wbshop.com](http://wbshop.com), where people can order their favorite Harry Potter “ official” merchandise ranging from coffee mugs, t-shirts, wands, wizard hats, posters, necklaces, sculptures, ring tones, etc. (Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc. , 2011). The Harry Potter hype also caused controversial views, such as

beliefs from some Christian groups that the stories were causing children to indulge in practicing witchcraft.

Some also believe that the stories teach adults and children to have over-glorified expectations toward other novels, as accompanied by the sensational mass media effect in this pop culture experience. Another popular culture trend would be that of people following famous music stars, like Britney Spears. She came onto the U. S. Billboard 200 at number one with her song, “Baby One More Time,” in 1999. The song’s popularity rose and Spears became the youngest female vocalist to have a million hit seller in the United States. Spears’ popularity had a huge following and as a result she had become very wealthy in a short period of time.

In 2001, she signed a promotional deal with Pepsi. Her 2002, “Dream within a Dream” tour grossed \$43.7 million dollars as a result of her popularity and following. She even starred in a role in a movie titled *Crossroads*, which was also very successful. Spears’ popularity also attracted attention to her struggles with drugs and alcohol over the years and became the target of paparazzi. This further reached the mass media and Spears’ private life could be seen by the nation, such as the image of her shaving her head, “while the scale of her mental and professional collapse fascinated global media audiences” (Lockett, 2010, p. 9). Her actions in her personal life and in her performances became the topic of much discussion across the country and many fan sites and blogs on the internet. A third popular culture trend would be that of preferred current technology gadgets, such as cell phones, smart phones, netbooks, etc. A popular example in this area would be that of the Apple Computer products with their “i” devices such as iPod, iPhone, <https://assignbuster.com/popular-american-culture-paper-soc-105/>

and iPad. This popular line started with the iPod in 2001 and took off with huge success and popularity that customers preferred in a digital music player that was very compact and reasonably affordable.

This technological innovation was so popular the company capitalized on it by applying the same principles in technology to streaming videos, looking at pictures, and even playing video games on the other devices, like the iPhone and iPad. The popularity of the iPod alone had escalated to an Apple recorded revenue in 2008 of \$9.6 billion, 42% of which was from iPod sales (Apple, Inc. , 2011). The popularity of these products has created many other marketing areas such as accessory devices like ear pieces, chargers, carriers, and even designer stickers to place on the covers.

Apple has captured a great deal of value from the popularity of the iPod (Dedrick, Kraemer, & Linden, 2010). Popular American culture affects our decision making in many ways. In today's modern technological mass media environment we are constantly bombarded with advertisements marketing all of these popular trends. People generally enjoy taking pride in the things they like and our socio-economic environment reflects this in the way business uses these "likes" to sell items that support that desire. It might be in the form of products we wear s clothing, perfumes, the foods we eat, or even something as simple as a bumper sticker representing our popular culture likes or even dislikes. Most of society in American culture is largely affected by popular culture in one form or another. References Apple, Inc. (2011). Apple Reports First Quarter Results. Retrieved from <http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2008/01/22results.html> Dedrick, J. , Kraemer, K. L. , & Linden, G. (2010). Who profits from innovation in global value chains? : a <https://assignbuster.com/popular-american-culture-paper-soc-105/>

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