

# The term "popular culture"

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



The term 'pop or popular culture' refers to things that a large number of people say, do, or are familiar with at a certain place, in a certain time. It can be anything from games to fashion, technology, music, T. V. shows, toys, sports and even the way people speak. It is mainly based in urban areas, in large groups of people. It is also a job of the producers to keep up with these popular cultures. Even though it is constantly changing through decades, only the most popular trends and icons remain unchanged. Among these trends in the last 50 years, the three most important ones are mini-skirts, internet and the 'Simpsons'.

These three have not only affected and changed the mankind; it has also changed the way people think. The miniskirt was invented in 1965. During the 1960's, the women in Europe and America were going through many changes. It was the first decade in which all young women received full-time secondary education up to the age of 15 and this produced a huge boost to the numbers of now rapidly expanding universities. This not only meant a huge increase of working women, it also meant that women were now completely free and there was no need to depend on men.

There were legal changes afoot too. The 1967 Abortion Act legalized abortion and in 1969 the divorce law was reformed. The contraceptive pill was also widely available in 1961. These all lead to a huge movement and revolution in women's liberation act. The miniskirt was both a symbol of women's liberation and a tool of it. Although lots of designers have claimed to have invented it, the most popular one is Mary Quant. In 1960's, Mary Quant ran a popular clothes boutique in London or 'Swinging London' as it was called in those days.

She felt the young females were ready for something daring, something new and exciting to support this sudden new feeling of freeness. She made this miniskirt with a hemline well above knees (generally 20 cm- about 8 inches or more above knee level). It was an emblem of rebellion for the young generation against the old. They were rejecting the beliefs and standards of their parents, as well as their fashion. It was a huge female revolution. Unfortunately, in the 1970's the fashion industry largely returned to longer skirts such as midi or maxi.

This was mainly because the miniskirts could go no higher and the women wanted to be taken seriously by men for their brains, not for their looks or sexuality. But, these miniskirts had such an impact on women that it re-emerged in the 1980's. Women realized that they could be both smart and sexy, and many began to incorporate the miniskirt into their business attire. However, it was more commonly worn by cheerleaders at sporting and other events. Therefore, it was also labelled the 'puff ball' skirt in the 1980's.

They were also featured in many T. V. shows and films like 'Sex and the City'. Miniskirts also aroused many controversies. Many countries like Madagascar, banned miniskirts as the government felt the women more vulnerable and exposed, especially in public. Miniskirts are also regarded as 'sexy' items of clothing. The fashion gives the impression that the wearers are sexually 'up for it' or in other words 'asking for it'. Although these negative issues have caused lots of controversies in many countries, this trend or rather this icon has always left a huge impact in the female's revolution.

In the past 30 years or so, there have been immense changes that have come about through technology. People today take for granted the great impact the computer has on our lives, making things easier, faster, and more convenient for them. Computers helped the world a lot and helped us take a large step to the future. Today, computers have been modified so significantly that they can do functions that may not have been perceived years ago. But, the most significant change in computer technology was the internet. The internet is a new revolution to mankind.

The first internet was introduced in 1969, during the Cold War. It was called the ARPA net and was invented to protect the flow of information to and from the military installations by creating a network of geographically separated computers that could exchange information via the NCP (Network Control Protocol). But, who built this network? ARPA stands for the Advanced Research Projects Agency, a branch of military that developed top secret systems and weapons during the Cold War. Four computers were the first connected in the original ARPA net.

But, as the network expanded different models of computers were connected, creating compatibility problems. But, to solve this problem, a better set of protocols called the TCP/IP was invented. However, this was just the start of the worldwide internet. The e-mail or electronic mail introduced the ability to send simple messages to other person in the network in 1971, followed by the file transfer protocol (FTP), which allowed information to be sent from one computer to another in bulk in 1973. However, as non-military uses of the network increased, more and more people had access.

Internet protocol software was soon being placed in every computer, many universities and research groups began using in-house networks known as Local Area Networks or LAN's. Although, the ARPA net created the backbone of today's internet, the internet we see today was only fully introduced in the 1990's. Nevertheless, what impact did this internet have on our society? The internet took only four years to reach well over 50 million users. It has become the most important tool to humans today. Everyone has a use for it from the very young to the very old.

Not only do they allow us to send messages or files to any other person in the world, it also provides us with search engines that allow us to be able to find information on any topic imagined. Online banking and online shopping are also few of the other uses of the internet. Therefore, 30 years ago, the military introduced such a useful network of communication that today's world would not be the same without it. In fact, it is one of the major contributors of 'globalization'. There have been several animated T. V. shows introduced in the past 50 years.

But, these like the Disney were mainly aimed at children and generally had a typical cartoonish storyline. However, with the Simpsons it was a different story. The Simpsons was created by Mark Groening as shorts for the 'Tracey Ulman Show' and was bought by the Fox Network which began screening it as half-hour shows in 1989. Initially, its success was also restricted to the 9-16 years old age group. However, as new episodes started dealing with a lot of political issues, it drew many adults towards it. In fact, it was one of the

first animated shows that were focused on issues dealt in the adult world, but, through an amusing, humorous way.

The Simpsons stereotypes and satirizes the typical lower middle class American family. As a matter of fact, one of the reasons it had such a major impact on society was mainly because it was the family that people dreaded to have. The level of humour used in it makes it like no other cartoon made before. It can be seen as both a remarkable piece of global culture and hugely successful piece of global television. It has also been translated into many languages around the world. The Simpsons, themselves are a simple family in a small town called Springfield. All the characters in Simpsons are far more complex than in traditional animation.

Homer, the loyal but stupid father, Marge, the stereotypical housewife/mother, Bart, the rebellious son, Lisa, the unappreciated genius daughter and Maggie, the silent baby. They all play a huge role in making the Simpsons such a hilarious TV show. However, making it a stereotypical family show and dealing with lots of issues in the adult world has not only made it famous, the humour used and the way it is used from the dialogues to the on-screen action and even making it as cartoon figures has made it the show that is one of the most popular animated series, especially in America.

In conclusion, we can say the pop culture have made a huge impact in our lives. Miniskirts, internet and the 'Simpsons' is only few of the things that have significantly changed our view of different things in life. Fashion,

technology, media and other pop culture will continue changing and who knows what significant trend and icon it will bring next to the world.