

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

**SOCI 4860B**  
**WINTER 2023**  
**POP CULTURE**

**Course Description**

This seminar considers the creation, use and influence of popular culture. The specific emphasis of SOCI 4860B is entertainment, which is a group as well as an individual phenomenon: performers and audiences. Topics may include reality or scripted television, fiction or film noir, such as “The Walking Dead” or “Game of Thrones”; science fiction or fictional science; stand-up comedy, fads, such as Fidget Spinners or social media. Spectacles, such as concerts, sports or the WWE, are recurring examples of pop culture and worthy of much attention. Legends and lore, such as the movie “Alien,” Jack the Ripper, Slenderman or the Hook-handed Killer, are enduring forms of entertainment steeped in universal fears and fascinations. Fast becoming an important issue in pop culture is why and how some celebrities, such as Marilyn Monroe, John Lennon or Kurt Cobain, take on a religious status, after dying young, and others, such as Jimi Hendrix, Heath Ledger or Janis Joplin, do not. The course is driven by student presentations and visits by expert guests.