AMERICAN KITSCH

**American Kitsch**

Kitsch is a German word meaning “bad taste.”

In art it is used to describe art that is pretentious, vulgar, and/or overly sentimental

Although we’ll use this term in class, it’s actually more typical to refer to it as “50s art”

B/c this style is considered “outsider art,” this particular graphic style is not recorded in history books, nor is it taught in design schools.

Yet graphic designers seem to have a deep affection for this graphic style.

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| **THEMES**  Anything dramatic  Anything atomic  Comic books  Hollywood movie posters  Pulp fiction | **DESIGNS**  Exaggerated facial expressions  Casual Script  Hand-drawn type  Neon signs  Dramatic, semi-geometric curved shapes  Organic curves  Kidney shapes  Sexy, sensual shapes  dramatic poses  Hollywood-style lighting techniques  Exaggerated overstatement in copy  Caricatured cartoon drawings  Bright and loud  Disembodied heads |