4

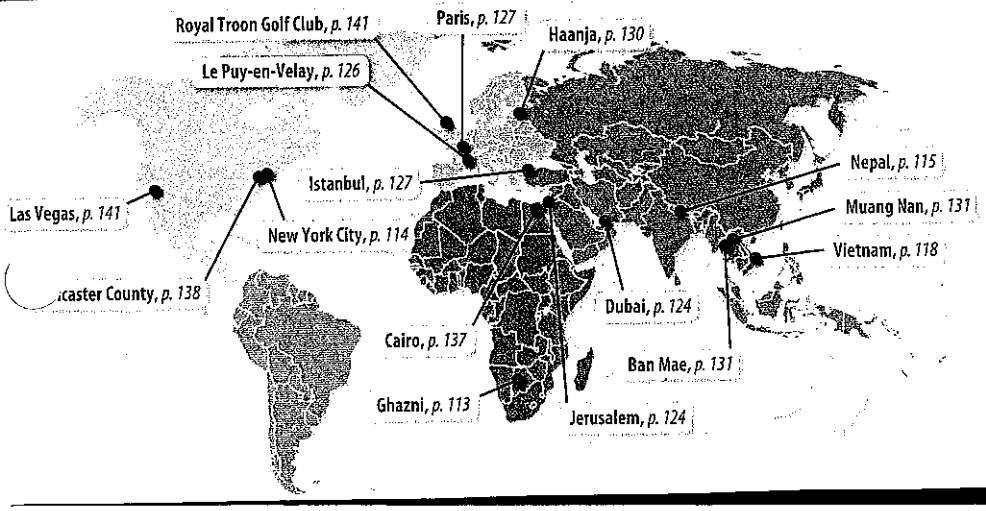
Folk and Popular Culture

What did you do today? What did you wear? After studying or finishing work, what leisure activities did you do? Did you watch TV or play sports? Geographers describe similarities and differences in how people meet their daily needs and make use of their leisure time.

A consideration of culture follows logically from the discussion of migration in Chapter 3. Two locations have similar cultural beliefs, objects, and institutions because people bring along their culture when they migrate. Differences emerge when two groups have limited interaction.

Surfing the web at a cafe in Jaisalmer, India.

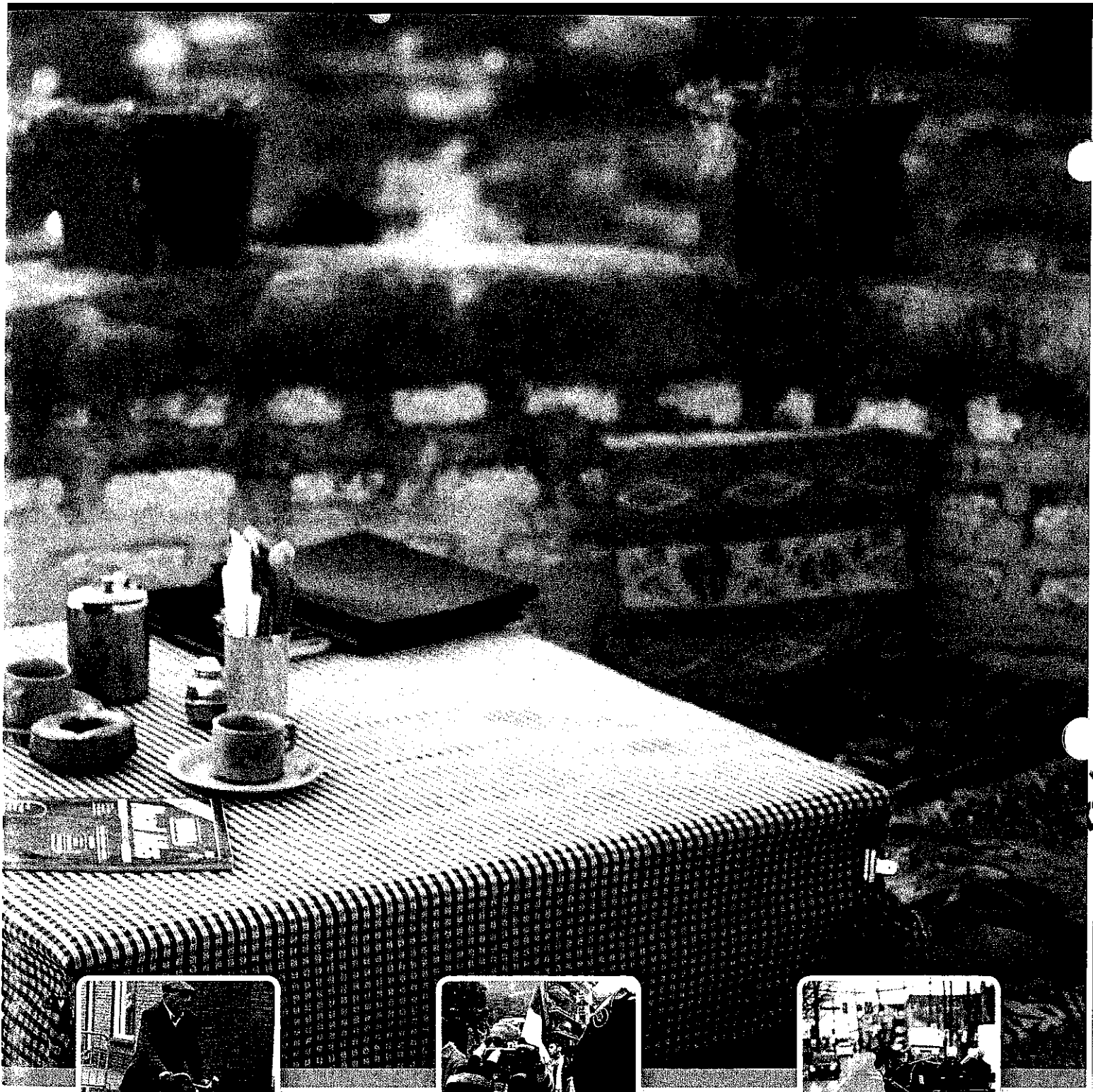
LOCATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER



KEY ISSUES

1 Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

Leisure and recreation elements of folk culture and popular culture are distributed across Earth's ***space***. Compared to folk culture, popular culture is more likely to originate at a specific time and place and to diffuse over a wider ***region***.



2 here Are Folk and pular Material ılture Distributed?

erial folk culture and popular ure include food, shelter, and ning. Folk culture is more likely ary between ***places***, whereas ular culture is more likely to vary veen points in time.

3 Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

Folk culture and popular culture have different distributions. Popular culture has ***connections*** among people, especially through electronic communications.

4 Why Do Folk and Popular Culture Face Sustainability Challenges?

The global ***scale*** of popular culture raises sustainability concerns. The diffusion of popular culture threatens the maintenance of local diversity in folk customs.

KEY ISSUE 1

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- Introducing Folk and Popular Culture
- Origin, Diffusion, and Distribution of Folk and Popular Culture
- Geographic Differences Between Folk and Popular Culture
- Origin and Diffusion of Folk and Popular Music
- Origin and Diffusion of Folk and Popular Sports

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.1.1

Introduce concepts of folk and popular culture.

Culture was defined in Chapter 1 as the body of material traits, customary beliefs, and social forms that together constitute the distinct tradition of a group of people. Geographers are interested in all three components of the definition of culture:

- The first part of this definition—the visible elements that a group possesses and leaves behind for the future (its material traits)—is discussed in this chapter.
- Two important components of a group's beliefs and values—language and religion—are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.
- The social forms that maintain values and protect the artifacts (ethnicity and political institutions) are discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

A consideration of culture follows logically from the discussion of migration in Chapter 3. Two locations have similar cultural beliefs, objects, and institutions because people bring along their culture when they migrate. Differences emerge when two groups have limited interaction.

Geographers search for where various elements of culture are found in the world and for reasons why the observed distributions occur. How does culture influence behavior? To answer this question, habit must be distinguished from custom:

- A **habit** is a repetitive act that a particular individual performs, such as wearing jeans to class every day.

▲ **FIGURE 4-1 HABIT AND CUSTOM** After their election in 2015, Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis (left) and Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras (right) had a habit of wearing informal clothes. 1. Why do world leaders usually dress in suits? 2. Why might leaders choose to dress informally? 3. How might other world leaders react?

- A **custom** is a repetitive act of a group, performed to the extent that it becomes characteristic of the group, such as many students typically wearing jeans to class.

Unlike custom, habit does not imply that the act has been adopted by most of the society's population. A custom is therefore a habit that has been widely adopted by a group of people (Figure 4-1).

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.1.1

Can you think of an entertainer, a politician, or another public figure who displays a distinctive habit in choice of clothing?

A collection of social customs produces a group's material culture; for example, jeans typically represent American informality and a badge of youth. In this chapter, custom may be used to denote a specific element of material culture, such as wearing jeans, whereas culture refers to a group's entire collection of customs.

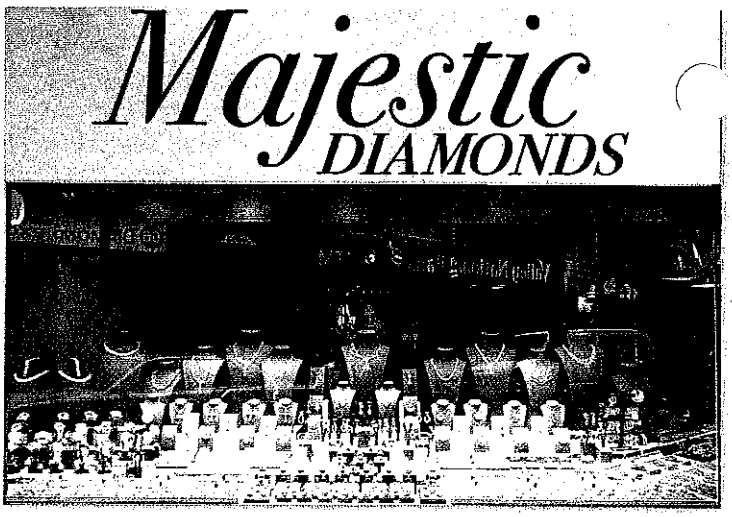
Introducing Folk and Popular Culture

Geographers divide culture into two types:

- **Folk culture** is traditionally practiced primarily by small, homogeneous groups living in isolated rural areas (Figure 4-2).
- **Popular culture** is found in large, heterogeneous societies that share certain habits despite differences in other personal characteristics (Figure 4-3).

Each cultural element has a distinctive origin, diffusion, and distribution. Geographers observe that folk culture and

▲ **FIGURE 4-2 FOLK CULTURE** The Gadaba people of eastern India wear jewelry that reflects local folk culture, including large, heavy rings that are not removed until death.



▲ **FIGURE 4-3 POPULAR CULTURE** Jewelry store on 47th Street in New York City. This street is known as Diamond Row because of the clustering of diamond stores.

popular culture typically differ in their processes of origin, diffusion, and distribution.

Landscapes dominated by folk culture change relatively little over time. In contrast, popular culture is based on rapid simultaneous global connections through communications systems, transportation networks, and other modern technology. Rapid diffusion facilitates frequent changes in popular culture. Thus, folk culture is more likely to vary from place to place at a given time, whereas popular culture is more likely to vary from time to time at a given place.

At a global scale, popular culture is becoming more dominant—at least for people with the income to have access to it—threatening the survival of unique folk culture. The disappearance of local folk culture reduces local diversity in the world and the intellectual stimulation that arises from differences in backgrounds.

The dominance of popular culture can also threaten the quality of the environment. Culture and the physical environment are interrelated. Each cultural group takes particular elements from the environment into its culture and in turn constructs landscapes (what geographers call "built environments") that modify nature in distinctive ways. Some of these landscapes are sustainable, and some are not. Folk culture derived from local natural elements may be more sustainable in the protection and enhancement of the environment. Popular culture is less likely to reflect concern for the sustainability of physical conditions and is more likely to modify the environment in accordance with global values.

Two elements of culture are emphasized in this chapter:

- **Daily necessities, including food, clothing, and shelter.** All people must consume food, wear clothing, and find shelter, but different cultural groups do so in distinctive ways (Figure 4-4).
- **Leisure activities, such as arts and recreation.** Each cultural group has its own definition of meaningful art and stimulating recreation. For example, people in the United States and Pakistan do not allocate their leisure time in the same way.

◀ **FIGURE 4-4 MATERIAL CULTURE** Roots are being cooked near Ghazni, Botswana.

Origin, Diffusion, and Distribution of Folk and Popular Culture

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.1.2

Compare processes of origin, diffusion, and distribution of folk and popular culture.

Each cultural element has a unique spatial distribution, but in general, distribution is more extensive for popular culture than for folk culture. Two basic factors help explain the different spatial distribution of popular and folk cultures: the process of origin and the pattern of diffusion.

ORIGIN

Culture originates at a hearth, a center of innovation:

- Folk culture often has anonymous hearths, originating from anonymous sources, at unknown dates, through unidentified originators. It may also have multiple hearths, originating independently in isolated locations.
- Popular culture is typically traceable to a specific person or corporation in a particular place. It is most often a product of developed countries, especially in North America and Europe.

For example, hip hop is considered to have originated on August 11, 1973, at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue, in New York City's Bronx Borough, during a block party with DJ Kool Herc (Figure 4-5). Kool Herc, whose birth name was Clive Campbell, had been born in Jamaica and moved to the Bronx with his family in 1967. Geographers understand that the hearth of hip hop was significant because the music reflected conditions prevailing in the neighborhood. These included violent street gangs, arson, and other crime, as well as extensive demolition of housing and forced relocation of people to build the Cross Bronx Expressway.

Popular music and other elements of popular culture, such as food and clothing, arise from a combination of advances in industrial technology and increased leis time. Industrial technology permits the uniform reprod tion of objects in large quantities (iPods, T-shirts, pizza Many of these objects help people enjoy leisure time, whi has increased as a result of the widespread change in t labor force from predominantly agricultural work to p dominantly service and manufacturing jobs.

DIFFUSION

Folk and popular cultures go through different processes diffusion:

- Folk culture is transmitted from one location to another relatively slowly and on a small scale, primarily through relocation diffusion (migration).
- Popular culture typically spreads through a process of hierarchical diffusion, diffusing rapidly and extensively from hearths or nodes of innovation with the help of modern communications.

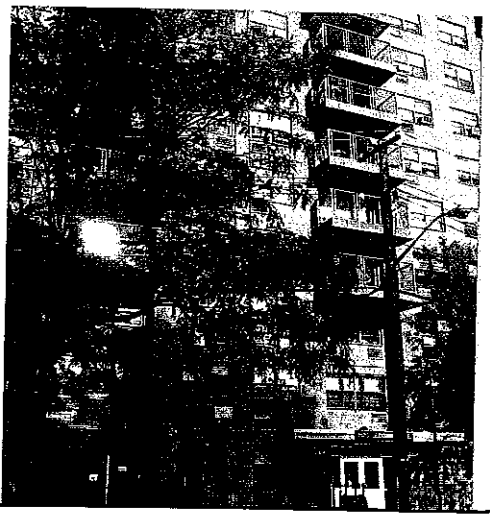
For example, in the late twentieth century, Weste dance music diffused rapidly from the United States Europe, especially Detroit's techno music and Chicag house music. Techno music was heavily influenced soul, gospel, and ultimately African folk music. Hou music was heavily influenced by hip hop that emerged New York and other urban areas, which in turn diffus from funk, jazz, and again ultimately African folk musi

Hip hop music diffused from the Bronx to nearby Ph adelphia during the 1970s and to other U.S. cities duri the 1980s. The music was introduced into Western E rope and Japan and diffused back to Caribbean countrie a principal source of inspiration. In more recent decade hip hop reached Latin America, Asia, and Africa, whe local cultural styles influenced the music from the orig nal Bronx hearth. Meanwhile, as sometimes occurs wit popular culture, as the style diffuses around the world, can become less important in its hearth. In fact, sales hip hop music have declined sharply in the United Stat since 2005.

▼ **FIGURE 4-5 ORIGIN OF POPULAR CULTURE: HIP HOP** Hip hop is considered to have been founded in 1973 **(a)** by Kool Herc at **(b)** 1520 Sedgwick Avenue, the Bronx, New York.

(a)

(b)



DISTRIBUTION

Popular culture is distributed widely across many countries, with little regard for physical factors. The distribution is influenced by the ability of people to access the material elements of popular culture. The principal obstacle to access is lack of income to purchase the material.

A combination of local physical and cultural factors influences the distinctive distributions of folk culture. For example, in a study of artistic customs in the Himalaya Mountains, geographers P. Karan and Cotton Mather revealed that distinctive views of the physical environment emerge among neighboring cultural groups that are isolated. The study area, a narrow corridor of 2,500 kilometers (1,500 miles) in the Himalaya Mountains of Bhutan, Nepal, northern India, and southern Tibet (China) contains four religious groups: Tibetan Buddhists in the north, Hindus in the south, Muslims in the west, and Southeast Asian folk religionists in the east (Figure 4-6). Despite their spatial proximity, limited interaction among these groups produces distinctive folk customs.

Through their choices of subjects of paintings, each group reveals how its culture mirrors the religions and individual views of the group's environment:

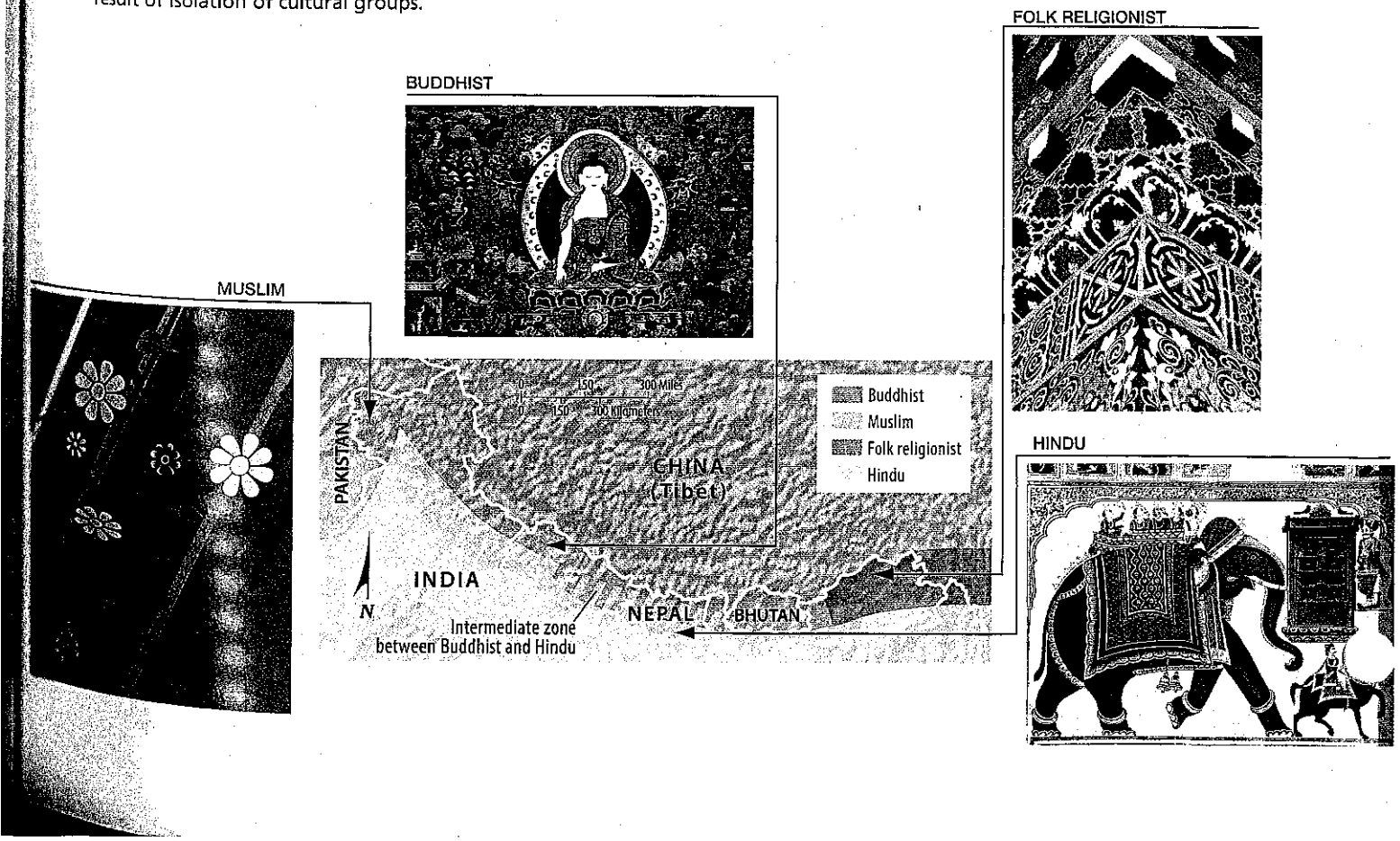
- **Buddhists.** In the northern region, Buddhists paint idealized divine figures, such as monks and saints. Some of these figures are depicted as bizarre or terrifying, perhaps reflecting the inhospitable environment.
- **Hindus.** In the southern region, Hindus create scenes from everyday life and familiar local scenes. Their paintings sometimes portray a deity in a domestic scene and frequently represent the region's violent a. extreme climatic conditions.
- **Muslims.** To the west, folk art is inspired by the region's beautiful plants and flowers. In contrast with the paintings from the Buddhist and Hindu regions, these paintings do not depict harsh climatic conditions.
- **Folk religionists.** People from Myanmar (Burma) and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, who have migrated to the eastern region of the study area, paint symbols and designs that derive from their religion rather than from the local environment.

The distribution of artistic subjects in the Himalayas shows how folk customs are influenced by cultural institutions such as religion and by environmental processes such as climate, landforms, and vegetation. These groups display similar uniqueness in their dance, music, architecture, and crafts.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.1.2

What geographic factors account for the diversity of cultures in the Himalayas?

▼ **FIGURE 4-6 DISTRIBUTION OF FOLK CULTURE: ART** Distinct folk painting traditions are distributed within the Himalayas, a result of isolation of cultural groups.



Geographic Differences Between Folk and Popular Culture

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.1.3

Compare patterns of regions and connections between folk and popular culture.

Geographers observe that cultural features display distinctive regional distributions. Cultural regions are often vernacular, that is perceived by people to exist as part of their cultural identity. In other cases, a cultural region may be formal or functional. Regions of supporters of sports teams may be considered functional, because the percentage of supporters of the team is typically higher near where the team plays (Figure 4-7).

The region covered by a folk culture is typically much smaller than that covered by a popular culture. The reason the distributions are different is connection or lack of it. group's distinctive culture derives from experiencing loc social and physical conditions in a place that is isolat from other groups. Even groups living in close proximi to one another may adopt different folk cultures because limited connections.

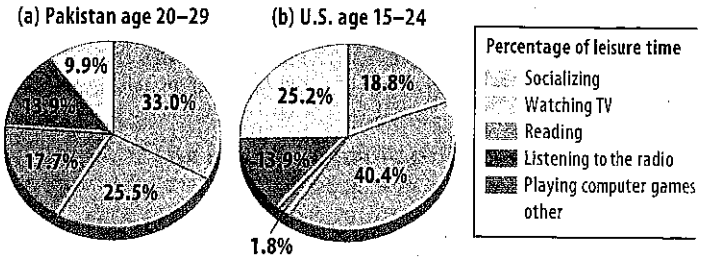
For example, according to Richard Florida, Charlot Mellander, and Kevin Stolarick, folk musicians once clu tered in particular communities according to shared i terest in specific styles, such as Tin Pan Alley in New Yor Dixieland jazz in New Orleans, country in Nashville, ar Motown in Detroit. Now with the globalization of pop lar music, musicians are less tied to the culture of particul places. As with other elements of popular culture, popul musicians have more connections with performers of sir lar styles, regardless of where in the world they happen live, than they do with performers of different styles wh happen to live in the same community.

Figure 4-9 illustrates this point by depicting popular mu cians on a map like that of the London Underground (subwa

DOING GEOGRAPHY Time Use Surveys

Time use surveys are conducted in a number of countries to determine how people spend their day. The results can be analyzed to identify similarities and differences between people in various countries, as well as among various groups within a country. Obvious differences in the use of time depend on whether an individual is in school or employed.

Cultural geographers are especially interested in variations in the use of leisure time. Distinctive patterns can be observed, depending on age, gender, ethnicity, and place of residence. In the United States, for example, young people are less likely than Americans of all other ages to watch TV and read but more likely to play computer games (Figure 4-8). Young people in Pakistan are less likely than young people in the United States to watch TV or play computer games and are more likely to read, socialize with friends, and listen to the radio.



▲ **FIGURE 4-8 ALLOCATING LEISURE TIME** (a) Young Pakistanis and (b) Americans spend time doing different activities.

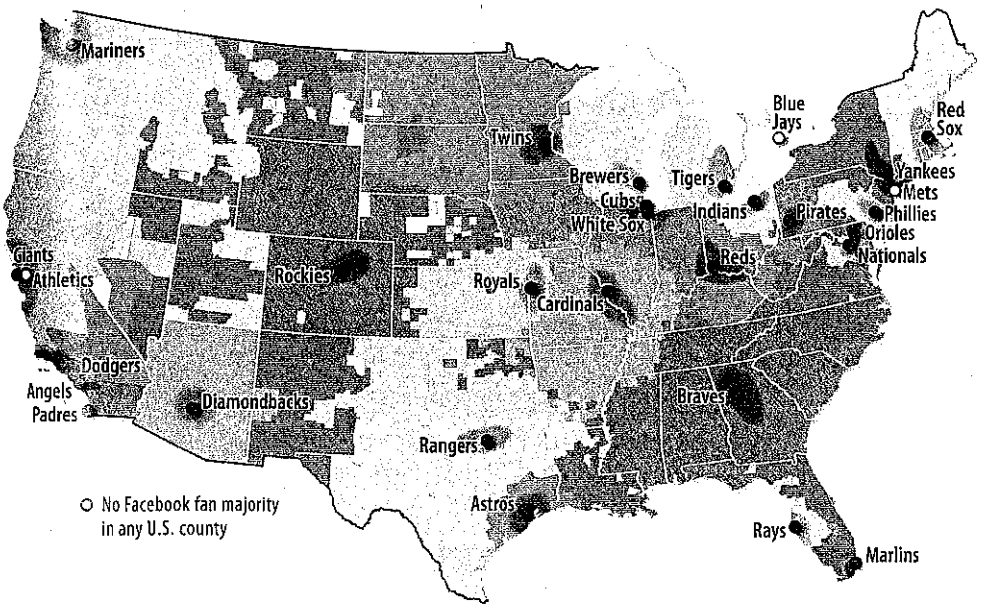
What's Your Leisure Activity?

1. Keep a diary of your activities through a weekend. Record the number of hours you spent on Saturday and Sunday on:
   - Socializing with friends (including communicating by telephone or social media).
   - Watching TV shows.
   - Reading.
   - Listening to the radio.
   - Playing computer games.
   - Doing other things (excluding sleeping).
2. Convert the hours on each of these six activities to percentages.
3. Compare the percentages you spent on each of these six activities with all Americans, with young Americans, and with young Pakistanis. In what ways does your time survey vary from those of others?
4. What might account for the similarities and differences between your time survey and those of others?

Subway "lines" represent styles of popular music, and "interchanges" represent individuals who cross over between two styles. For example, Kanye West is placed at the interchange between hip hop and soul and Jimi Hendrix at the interchange between rock and blues and country.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.1.3

What type of music do you like? On what "line" in Figure 4-9 does it fit?



◀ **FIGURE 4-7 REGIONS OF BASEBALL FANS** The area of support for a baseball team, based on the number of Facebook fans, is an example of a functional region. The Yankees and Red Sox have support in regions of the country outside the Northeast. The Athletics, Blue Jays, and Mets do not have a fan majority in any U.S. county. The darker color at the center of some regions, such as the Braves and Rockies, shows the extent of a supermajority supporting the team.

▲ **FIGURE 4-9 POPULAR MUSIC CONNECTIONS** This map showing relationships among musical styles is designed to look like the map of the London Underground (subway) system.

Origin and Diffusion of Folk and Popular Music

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.1.4

Compare differences in geographic dimensions of folk and popular music.

Every culture in human history has had some tradition of music, argues music researcher Daniel Levitan. As music is a part of both folk and popular culture traditions, it can be used to illustrate the differences in the origin, diffusion, and distribution of folk and popular culture.

FOLK MUSIC

According to a Chinese legend, music was invented in 2697 B.C., when the Emperor Huang Ti sent Ling Lun to cut bamboo poles that would produce a sound matching the call of the phoenix bird. In reality, folk songs usually originate anonymously and are transmitted orally. A song may be modified from one generation to the next as conditions change, but the content is most often derived from events in daily life that are familiar to the majority of the people. As people migrate, folk music travels with them as part of the diffusion of folk culture.

Folk songs may tell a story or convey information about life-cycle events, such as birth, death, and marriage, or environmental features, such as agriculture and climate. For example, in Vietnam, where most people are subsistence farmers, information about agricultural technology was traditionally conveyed through folk songs. The following folk song provides advice about the difference between seeds planted in summer and seeds planted in winter:

> Ma chiêm ba tháng không già
>
> Ma mùa tháng ruổi ắt la'không non.[1]

This song can be translated as follows:

> While seedlings for the summer crop are not old when they are three months of age, Seedlings for the winter crop are certainly not young when they are one-and-a-half months old.

The song hardly sounds lyrical to a Western ear. But when English-language folk songs appear in cold print, similar themes emerge, even if the specific information conveyed about the environment differs.

Festivals throughout Vietnam feature music in locally meaningful environmental settings, such as hillsides or on water. Singers in traditional clothes sing about elements of daily life in the local village, such as trees, flowers, and water sources (Figure 4-10).

[1]From John Blactking and Joann W. Kealiinohomoku, eds., *The Performing Arts: Music and Dance* (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), 144. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

▲ **FIGURE 4-10 FOLK MUSIC: VIETNAM** Singers perform Quan Ho folk songs as part of the annual Lim Festival, which is held annually on the 13th to 15th days of the first lunar month. Quan Ho folk music dates back more than 500 years and is recognized by UNESCO as part of humanity's intangible heritage.

POPULAR MUSIC

In contrast to folk music, popular music is written by specifi individuals for the purpose of being sold to or performe in front of a large number of people. It frequently displays high degree of technical skill through manipulation of so phisticated electronic equipment.

For example, popular music as we know it today origi nated around 1900. At that time, the main popular musica entertainment in North America and Europe was the vari ety show, called the music hall in the United Kingdom an vaudeville in the United States. To provide songs for musi halls and vaudeville, a music industry was developed in district of New York that became known as Tin Pan Alley The diffusion of American popular music worldwide begar in earnest during the 1940s, when the Armed Forces Radi Network broadcast music to American soldiers and to citi zens of countries where American forces were stationed o fighting during World War II.

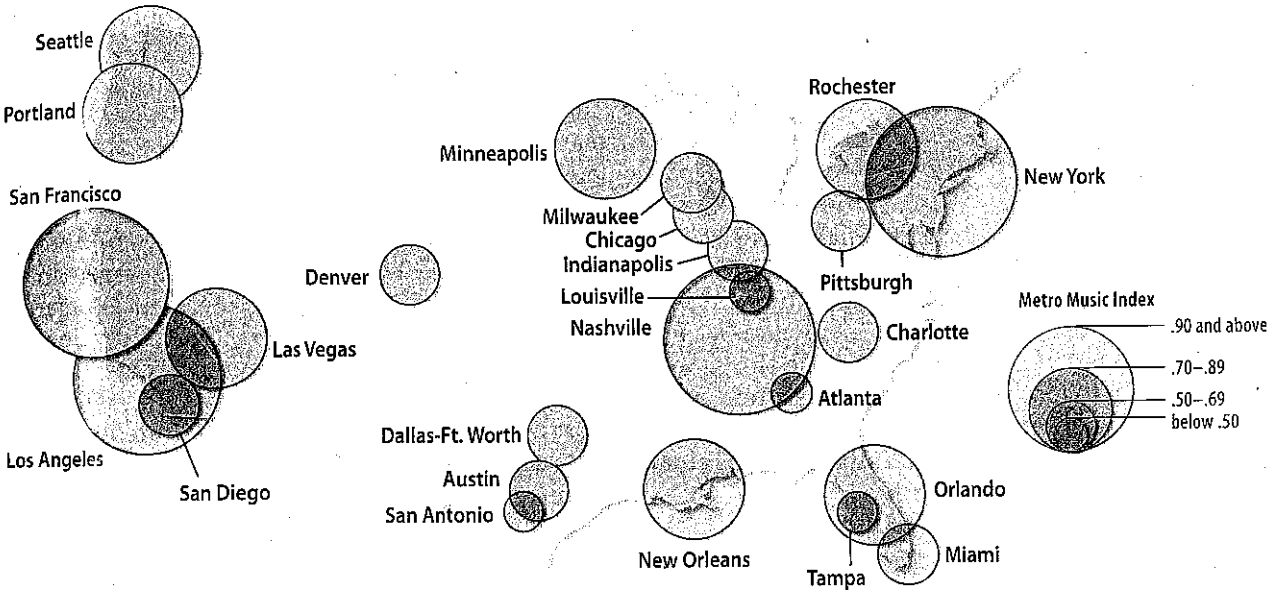
Popular musicians increasingly cluster in communi ties where other creative artists reside, regardless of the particular style. Nashville has the highest concentration of popular musicians, especially those performing coun try and gospel (Figure 4-11). New York, Los Angeles, an San Francisco, which are much larger metropolitan area than Nashville, have relatively high total numbers of mu sicians, as well as high concentrations. Musicians cluste in these places so they can be near sources of employ ment and cultural activities that appeal to a wide variet of artists, not just performers of a specific type of music Popular musicians are also attracted to these places fo

better access to agencies that book live performances, an increasingly important component of the popular music industry.

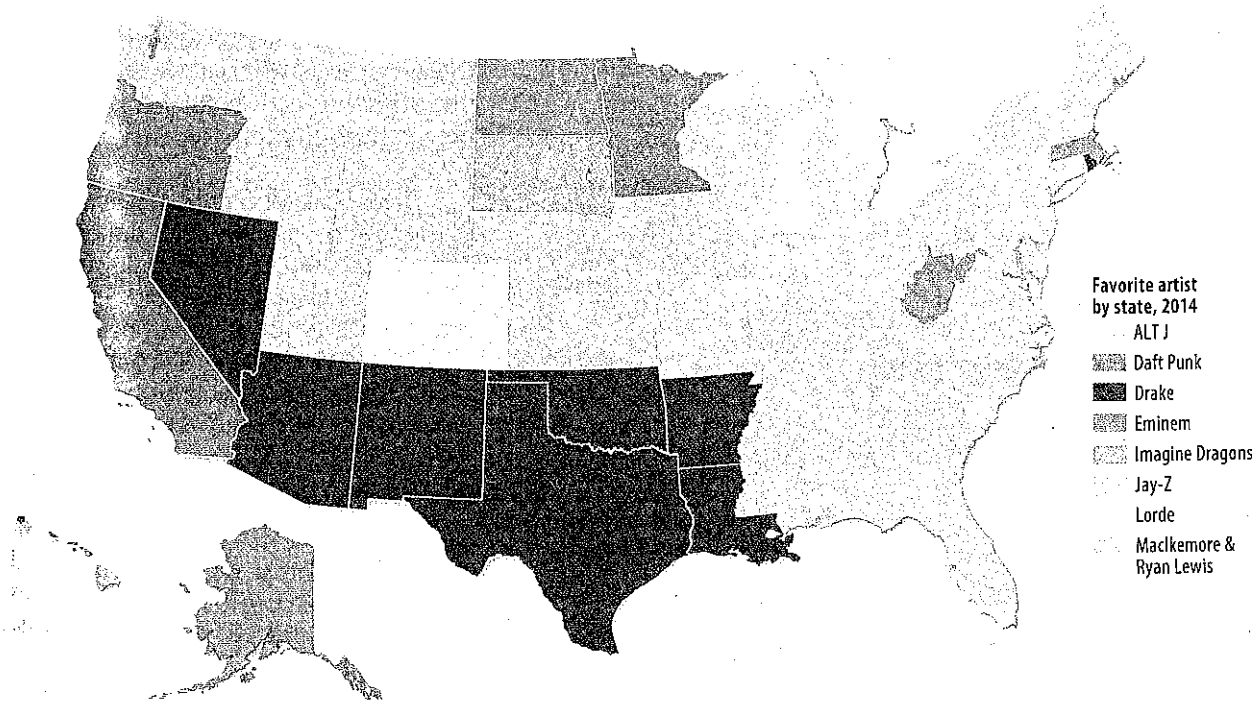
Regional variations can be observed in popular music preferences. For example, the favorite artist in each state during 2014 was identified by Music Machinery on the basis of streaming data from The Echo Nest. The most-played artists in 2014 were Jay Z east of the Mississippi River, Drake in the southwest, and Macklemore & Ryan Lewis in the northwest (Figure 4-12).

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.1.4

Do you like your state's favorite artist?



▲ **FIGURE 4-11 POPULAR MUSIC: U.S. CLUSTERS** Nashville has the highest concentration of popular musicians and recording studios.



▲ **FIGURE 4-12 FAVORITE ARTIST BY U.S. STATE, 2014** The most-streamed artist varies by region of the country.

Origin and Diffusion of Folk and Popular Sports

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.1.5

Describe the transformation of sports from folk to popular culture.

Many sports originated as isolated folk customs and were diffused like other folk culture, through the migration of individuals. The contemporary diffusion of organized sports, however, displays the characteristics of popular culture.

FOLK CULTURE: ORIGIN OF SOCCER

Soccer, the world's most popular sport—known in most of the world as football—originated as a folk custom in England during the eleventh century. It was transformed into a part of global popular culture beginning in the nineteenth century.

As with other folk customs, soccer's origin is obscure. The earliest documented contest took place in England in the eleventh century. According to football historians, after the Danish invasion of England between 1018 and 1042, workers excavating a building site encountered a Danish soldier's head, which they began to kick. "Kick the Dane's head" was imitated by boys, one of whom got the idea of using an inflated cow bladder. Early football games resembled mob scenes. A large number of people from two villages would gather to kick the ball. The winning side was the one that kicked the ball into the center of the rival village.

POPULAR CULTURE: DIFFUSION OF SOCCER

The transformation of football from an English folk custom to global popular culture began in the 1800s. Football and other recreation clubs were founded in the United Kingdom, frequently by churches, to provide factory workers with organized recreation during leisure hours. Sport became a subject that was taught in school.

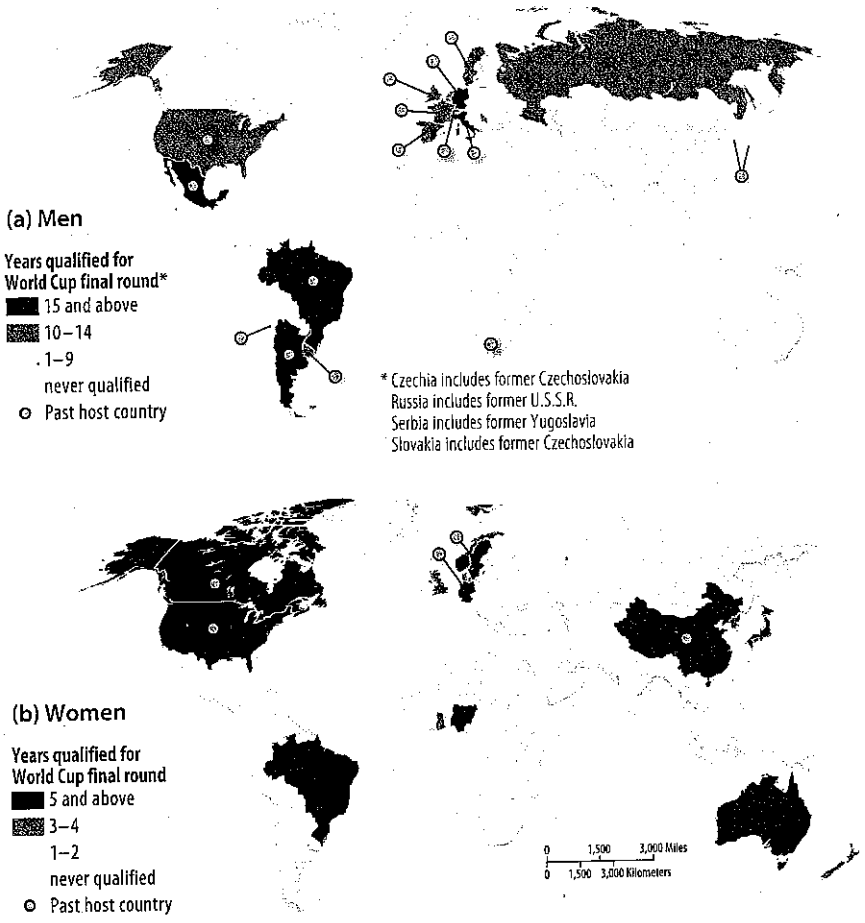
Increasing leisure time permitted people not only to participate in sporting events but also to view them. With higher incomes, spectators paid to see first-class events. To meet public demand, football clubs began to hire professional players. Several British football clubs formed an association in 1863 to standardize the rules and to organize professional leagues. The word *soccer* originated when the word *association* was shortened to *assoc*, which ultimately became twisted around into the word *soccer*. Organization of the sport into a formal structure in the United Kingdom marks the transition of football from folk to popular culture.

Beginning in the late 1800s, the British exported association football around the world, first to continental Europe and then to other countries. For example, Dutch students returning from studies in the United Kingdom were the first to play football in continental Europe in the late 1870s. In Bilbao, Spain, miners adopted the sport in 1893, after seeing it played by English engineers working there. British citizens further diffused the game throughout the worldwide British Empire. In the twentieth century, soccer, like other sports, was further diffused by new communication systems, especially TV.

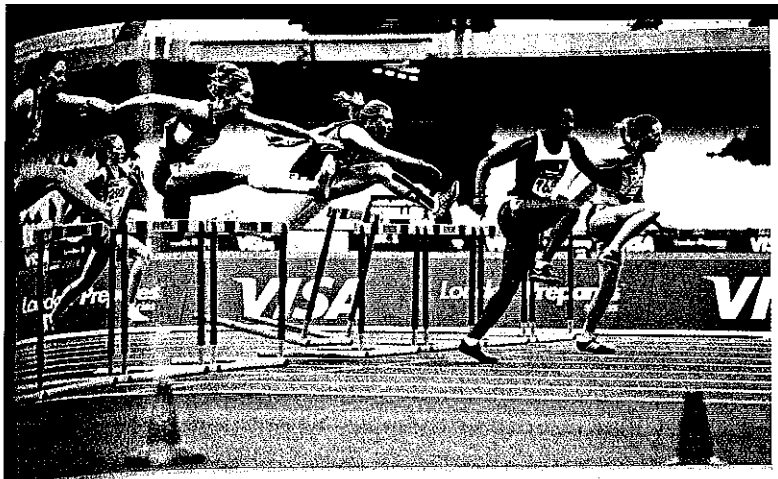
The global popularity of soccer is seen in the World Cup, in which national soccer teams compete every four years, including in Russia in 2018 for men and in France in 2019 for women (Figure 4-13). Thanks to TV, each men's final breaks the record for the most spectators of any event in world history.

OLYMPIC SPORTS

To be included in the Summer Olympics, a sport must be widely practiced in at least 75 countries (50 countries for women) and on four continents.



◀ FIGURE 4-13 POPULAR SPORTS: WORLD CUP SOCCER Participating countries and past hosts for **(a)** men and **(b)** women.



▲ **FIGURE 4-14 GLOBALIZATION OF SPORTS: OLYMPICS** Practicing for 100-meter hurdles.

The 2016 Summer Olympics included competition in 28 sports: archery, aquatics, athletics, badminton, basketball, boxing, canoeing/kayaking, cycling, equestrian, fencing, field hockey, football (soccer), golf, gymnastics, handball, judo, modern pentathlon, rowing, rugby, sailing, shooting, table tennis, taekwondo, tennis, triathlon, volleyball, weightlifting, and wrestling (Figure 4-14). The two leading team sports in the United States—American football and baseball—are not included.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.1.5

How many of the Olympic sports are played at your school?

SURVIVING FOLK SPORTS

Most other sports have diffused less than soccer. Cultural groups still have their own preferred sports, which are often unintelligible to people elsewhere. Consider the following:

- Cricket is popular primarily in the United Kingdom and former British colonies, especially in South Asia, the South Pacific, and Caribbean islands.
- Ice hockey prevails, logically, in colder climates, especially in Canada, the northern United States, northern Europe, and Russia.
- Wushu, martial arts that combine forms such as kicking and jumping with combat such as striking and wrestling, is China's most popular sport.
- Baseball, once confined to North America, became popular in Japan in the late nineteenth century after it was introduced by American Japanese returning from studies in the United States, as well as Americans working in Japan.
- Australia rules football is a sport distinct from soccer and the football played in North America. Distinctive forms of football developed in Australia, as well as the United States and Canada, as a result of lack of interaction among sporting nations during the nineteenth century.

▲ **FIGURE 4-15 SURVIVING FOLK SPORT: LACROSSE** In Maryland, lacrosse is played by women in many high schools.

- Lacrosse was traditionally played by the Iroquois, who called it guhchigwaha, which means "bump hips." European colonists in Canada picked up the game from the Iroquois and diffused it to a handful of U.S. communities, especially in Maryland, upstate New York, and Long Island (Figure 4-15).

Despite the diversity in distribution of sports across Earth's surface and the anonymous origin of some games, organized spectator sports today are part of popular culture. The common element in professional sports is the willingness of people throughout the world to pay for the privile of viewing, in person or on TV, events played by professional athletes.

At the same time, sports can be a strong force for cultural and regional identity. For example, Major League Baseball teams have strong regional identities. Lacrosse has fostered cultural identity among the Iroquois Confederation of Six Nations (Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, and Tuscarora) because they have been invited by the International Lacrosse Federation to participate in the Lacrosse World Championships, along with teams from sovereign states, such as Australia, Canada, and the United States.

CHECK-IN KEY ISSUE 1

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- ✓ **Folk culture and popular culture have distinctive patterns of origin, diffusion, and distribution.**
- ✓ **Folk leisure activities typically have anonymous origins, diffuse through relocation diffusion, and have limited distribution.**
- ✓ **Popular music and sports typically originate with identifiable individuals or corporations, diffuse rapidly through hierarchical diffusion, and have widespread distribution.**

KEY ISSUE 2

Where Are Folk and Popular Material Culture Distributed?

- Elements of Material Culture
- Folk and Popular Clothing
- Folk Food Customs
- Popular Food Preferences
- Folk and Popular Housing

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.2.1

Introduce environmental and cultural features of material culture.

Material culture includes the three most important necessities of life: clothing, food, and shelter. As is the case with leisure, material elements of folk culture typically have unknown or multiple origins among groups living in relative isolation, and they diffuse slowly to other locations through the process of relocation diffusion.

Popular clothing, food, and shelter vary more in time than in place. They originate through the invention of a particular person or corporation, and they diffuse rapidly across Earth to locations with a variety of physical conditions. Access depends on an individual having a sufficiently high level of income to acquire the material possessions associated with popular culture.

Some regional differences in food, clothing, and shelter persist in popular culture, but differences are much less than in the past. Go to any recently built neighborhood on the outskirts of an American city from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon: The houses look the same, the people wear jeans, and the same chains deliver pizza.

Elements of Material Culture

Folk culture is more likely to be influenced by environmental conditions, but popular culture is not immune to these influences. Geographers also observe that folk and popular culture can come into conflict with each other.

WINE GEOGRAPHY

The spatial distribution of wine production shows the influence of both environmental and cultural elements. Grapes suitable for making decent wine grow better in some places than in others. At the same time, wine is made today primarily in locations that have a tradition of excellence in making it and people who like to drink it and can afford to purchase it.

WINE PRODUCTION: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS. The distinctive character of a wine derives from a vineyard's terroir—the unique combination of soil, climate, and other physical characteristics at the place where the grapes are grown:

- **Climate.** Vineyards are best cultivated in temperate climates of moderately cold, rainy winters and fairly long, hot summers. Hot, sunny weather is necessary in the summer for the fruit to mature properly, whereas winter is the preferred season for rain because plant diseases that cause the fruit to rot are more active in hot, humid weather.
- **Topography.** Vineyards are planted on hillsides, if possible, to maximize exposure to sunlight and to facilitate drainage. A site near a lake or river is also desirable because water can temper extremes of temperature.
- **Soil.** Grapes can be grown in a variety of soils, but the best wine tends to be produced from grapes grown in soil that is coarse and well drained—a soil that is not necessarily fertile for other crops.

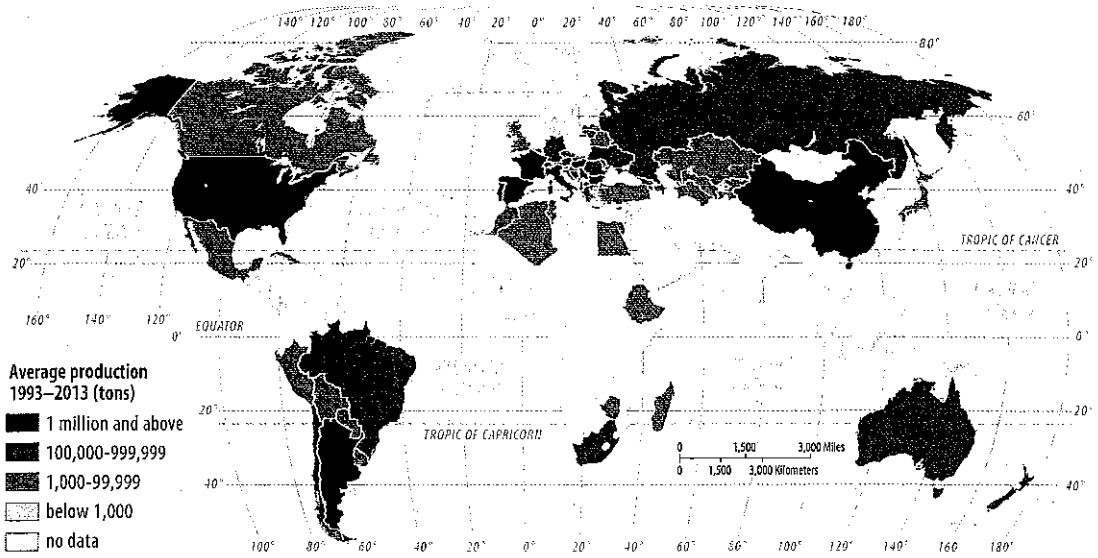
WINE PRODUCTION: CULTURAL FACTORS. Although grapes can be grown in a wide variety of locations, the production of wine is based principally on cultural values, both historical and contemporary. The distribution of wine production shows that the diffusion of popular customs depends less on the distinctive environment of a location than on the presence of beliefs, institutions, and material traits conducive to accepting those customs (Figure 4-16).

The social custom of wine production in much of France and Italy extends back at least to the Roman Empire. Wine consumption declined after the fall of Rome, and many vineyards were destroyed. Monasteries preserved the wine-making tradition in medieval Europe for both sustenance and ritual. Wine consumption has become extremely popular again in Europe in recent centuries, as well as in the Western Hemisphere, which was colonized by Europeans. Vineyards are now typically owned by private individuals and corporations rather than religious organizations.

Wine production is discouraged in regions of the world dominated by religions other than Christianity. Hindus and Muslims in particular avoid alcoholic beverages. Thus wine production is limited in South Asia and Southwest Asia & North Africa (other than Israel) primarily because of cultural values, especially religion.

CONFLICTING FOLK AND POPULAR CULTURAL VALUES

Conflicts can arise between folk and popular culture. For example, wearing folk clothing in countries dominated by



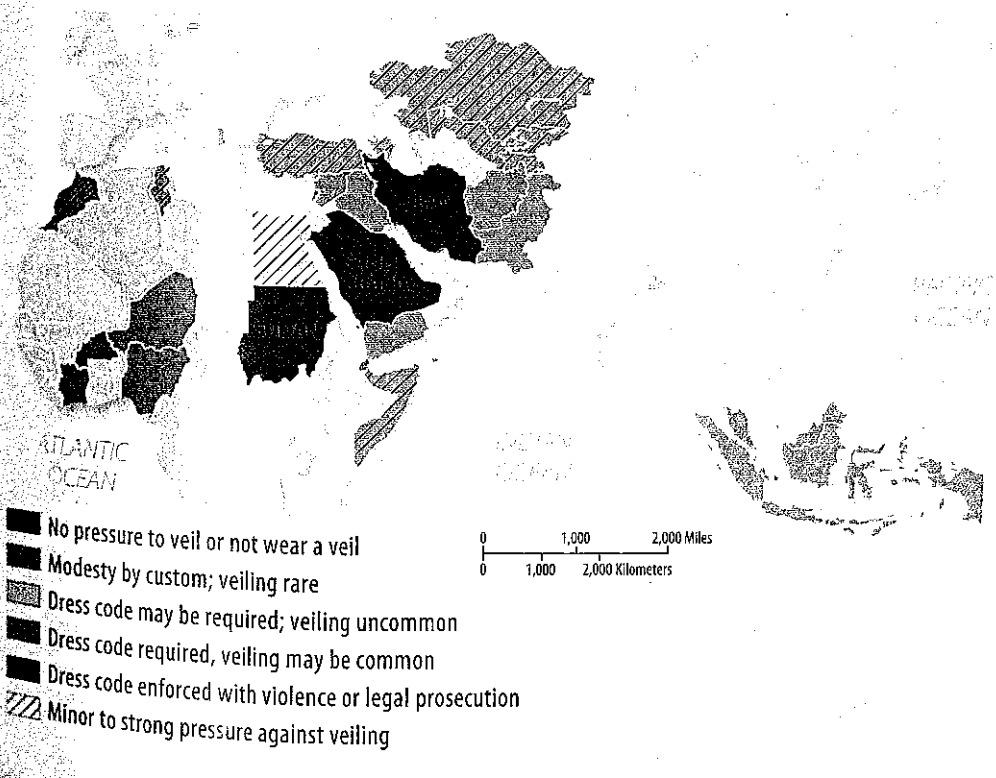
▶ FIGURE 4-16 WINE PRODUCTION The distribution of wine production is influenced in part by the physical environment and in part by social customs. Most grapes used for wine are grown near the Mediterranean Sea or in areas of similar climate. Income, preferences, and other social customs also influence the distribution of wine consumption, as seen in the lower production levels of predominantly Muslim countries south of the Mediterranean.

popular culture can be controversial, and conversely so can wearing popular clothing in countries dominated by folk-style clothing. Men must decide whether to wear Western-style suits, especially if they occupy positions of leadership in business or government.

Especially difficult has been the coexistence of the loose-fitting combination body covering, head covering, and veil traditionally worn by women in Southwest Asia & North Africa with casual Western-style popular women's clothing, such as open-necked blouses, tight-fitting slacks, and revealing skirts. Garments that cover the face are typically worn by women who adhere to traditional folk customs in Southwest Asia & North Africa. The practice of covering the head is called hijab (Figure 4-17). The niqab is a veil that covers the bottom half of the face. The burqa covers the entire face and body, leaving a mesh screen to see through. European countries, including France and Belgium, prohibit women from wearing them in public.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.2.1

Can you think of other restrictions on clothing styles in developed countries, perhaps in schools?



◀ FIGURE 4-17 FOLK CLOTHING: WOMEN'S DRESS CODES In some countries of Southwest Asia & North Africa, women are required to wear clothing that partially or completely covers the face.

Folk and Popular Clothing

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.2.2

Compare reasons for distribution of clothing styles in folk and popular culture.

People living in folk cultures have traditionally worn clothing in part in response to distinctive agricultural practices and climatic conditions. In popular culture, clothing preferences generally reflect occupations rather than particular environments.

FOLK CLOTHING PREFERENCES

People wear distinctive folk clothing for a variety of environmental and cultural reasons. The folk custom in the Netherlands of wearing wooden shoes may appear quaint, but it still has practical uses in a wet climate (Figure 4-18). In arctic climates, fur-lined boots protect against the cold, and snowshoes permit walking on soft, deep snow without sinking in. People living in warm and humid climates may not need any footwear if heavy rainfall and time spent in water discourage such use. Cultural factors, such as religious beliefs, can also influence clothing preferences (Figure 4-19).

Increased travel and the diffusion of media have exposed North Americans and Europeans to other forms of dress, just as people in other parts of the world have come into contact with Western dress. The poncho from South America, the dashiki of the Yoruba people of Nigeria, and the Aleut parka have been adopted by people elsewhere in the world. The continued use of folk costumes in some parts of the globe may persist not because of distinctive environmental conditions or traditional cultural values but to preserve past memories or to attract tourists.

◀ **FIGURE 4-18 FOLK CLOTHING: WOODEN SHOES** A man wearing wooden shoes bikes on a flooded street in Stellendam, the Netherlands.

(a)

(b)

▲ **FIGURE 4-19 FOLK CLOTHING: RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS** Many devout Muslims and Jews wear modest black clothes. **(a)** Muslim woma in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. **(b)** Jewish teenagers in Jerusalem.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.2.2

What sort of folk or popular clothing do you typically wear?

RAPID DIFFUSION OF POPULAR CLOTHING STYLES

Individual clothing habits reveal how popular culture can be distributed across the landscape with little regard for distinctive physical features. Instead, popular clothing habits reflect:

- **Occupation.** A lawyer or business executive, for example, tends to wear a dark suit, light shirt or blouse, and necktie or scarf, whereas a factory worker wears jeans and a work shirt. A lawyer in New York is more likely to dress like a lawyer in California than like a factory worker in New York.
- **Income.** Women's clothes, in particular, change in fashion from one year to the next. The color, shape, and design of dresses change to imitate pieces created by clothing designers. For social purposes, people with sufficient income may update their wardrobe frequently with the latest fashions.

Improved communications have permitted the rapid diffusion of clothing styles from one region of Earth to another. Original designs for women's dresses, created in Paris, Milan, London, or New York, are reproduced in large quantities at factories in Asia and sold for relatively low prices in North American and European chain stores. Speed is essential in manufacturing copies of designer dresses because fashion tastes change quickly.

In the past, years could elapse from the time an original dress was displayed to the time that inexpensive reproductions were available in the stores. Now the time lag is only a few weeks because of the diffusion of electronic communications. Buyers from the major retail chains can view fashions electronically and place orders. Sketches, patterns, and specifications can be sent instantly from European fashion centers to American corporate headquarters and then on to Asian factories.

DEBATE IT! Should Europe accept face covers for women?

Some European countries, including France and Belgium, prohibit women from wearing garments such as the burqa and niqab that cover the face. These are typically worn by devout Muslim women who have migrated to Europe from Southwest Asia & North Africa.

PROHIBIT BURQA AND NIQAB IN PUBLIC

- The coverings obliterate personal identity and treat women like second-class citizens.
- The ban protects gender equality and the dignity of women.
- Complete covering of the face poses a security risk by preventing identification of an individual.

▲ FIGURE 4-20 POSTER SUPPORTING THE BURQA AND NIQAB BAN

PERMIT BURQA AND NIQAB IN PUBLIC

- Governments have no business determining clothing preferences.
- The ban shows lack of understanding and intolerance of Muslim cultural traditions.
- The ban infringes on a woman's religious, free speech, and privacy rights.

▲ FIGURE 4-21 HIJAB SUPPORTERS DEMONSTRATE IN LONDON

Folk Food Customs

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.2.3

Understand reasons for folk food preferences and taboos.

According to the nineteenth-century cultural geographer Vidal de la Blache, "Among the connections that tie [people] to a certain environment, one of the most tenacious is food supply; clothing and weapons are more subject to modification than the dietary regime, which experience has shown to be best suited to human needs in a given climate."

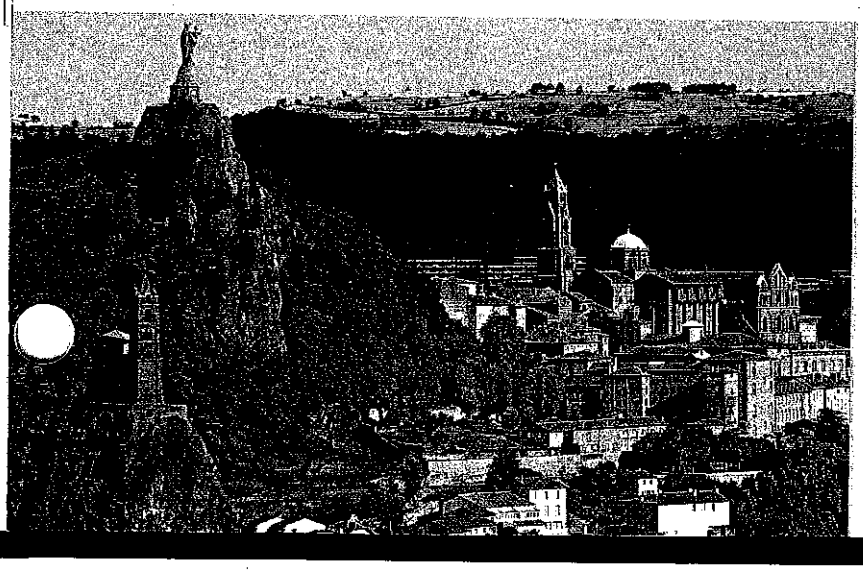
Food preferences are inevitably affected by the availability of products, but people do not simply eat what is available in their particular environment. Food preferences are strongly influenced by cultural traditions. What is eaten establishes one's social, religious, and ethnic memberships. The surest way to identify a family's ethnic origins is to look in its kitchen.

FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Folk food habits are embedded especially strongly in the environment. Humans eat mostly plants and animals—living things that spring from the soil and water of a region. Inhabitants of a region must consider the soil, climate, terrain, vegetation, and other characteristics of the environment in deciding to produce particular foods.

The contribution of a location's distinctive physical features to the way food tastes is known by the French term **terroir**. The word comes from the same root as *terre* (the French word for "land" or "earth"), but terroir does not translate precisely into English; it has a similar meaning to the English expressions "grounded" and "sense of place." Terroir is the sum of the effects on a particular food item of soil, climate, and other features of the local environment. For example, a special type of lentil is grown only around the village of Le Puy-en-Velay, France (Figure 4-22). The lentil has a distinctive flavor because of the area's volcanic soil and dry growing season.

▼ **FIGURE 4-22 FOLK FOOD CUSTOMS: TERROIR** The village of Le Puy-en-Velay, France, is the home of a type of lentil that was the first vegetable to be registered and protected by the French government and the European Union.



People adapt their food preferences to conditions in environment. For example, in Asia, rice is grown in mil moister regions, whereas wheat thrives in colder, drier gions. In Europe, traditional preferences for quick-fry foods in Italy resulted in part from fuel shortages. In No ern Europe, an abundant wood supply encouraged the s stewing and roasting of foods over fires, which also p vided home heat in the colder climate.

Soybeans, an excellent source of protein, are widely gr in Asia. In the raw state they are toxic and indigestible. Leng cooking renders them edible, but fuel is scarce in Asia. Asi have adapted to this environmental challenge by deriv from soybeans foods that do not require extensive cooki These include bean sprouts (germinated seeds), soy sauce (mented soybeans), and bean curd (steamed soybeans).

Bostans, which are small gardens inside Istanbul, Tur have been supplying the city with fresh produce for h dreds of years (Figure 4-23). According to geographer H Kaldjian, Istanbul has around 1,000 *bostans*, run primarily immigrants from Cide, a rural village in Turkey's Kastamo province. *Bostan* farmers are able to maximize yields fr their small plots of land (typically 1 hectare) through w Kaldjian calls clever and efficient manipulation of spa season, and resources. In a *bostan*, 15 to 20 different ty of vegetables are planted at different times of the year, a the choice is varied from year to year, in order to reduce risk of damage from poor weather. Most of the work is do by older men, who prepare beds for planting, sow, irrig and operate motorized equipment, according to Kaldji Women weed, and both men and women harvest.

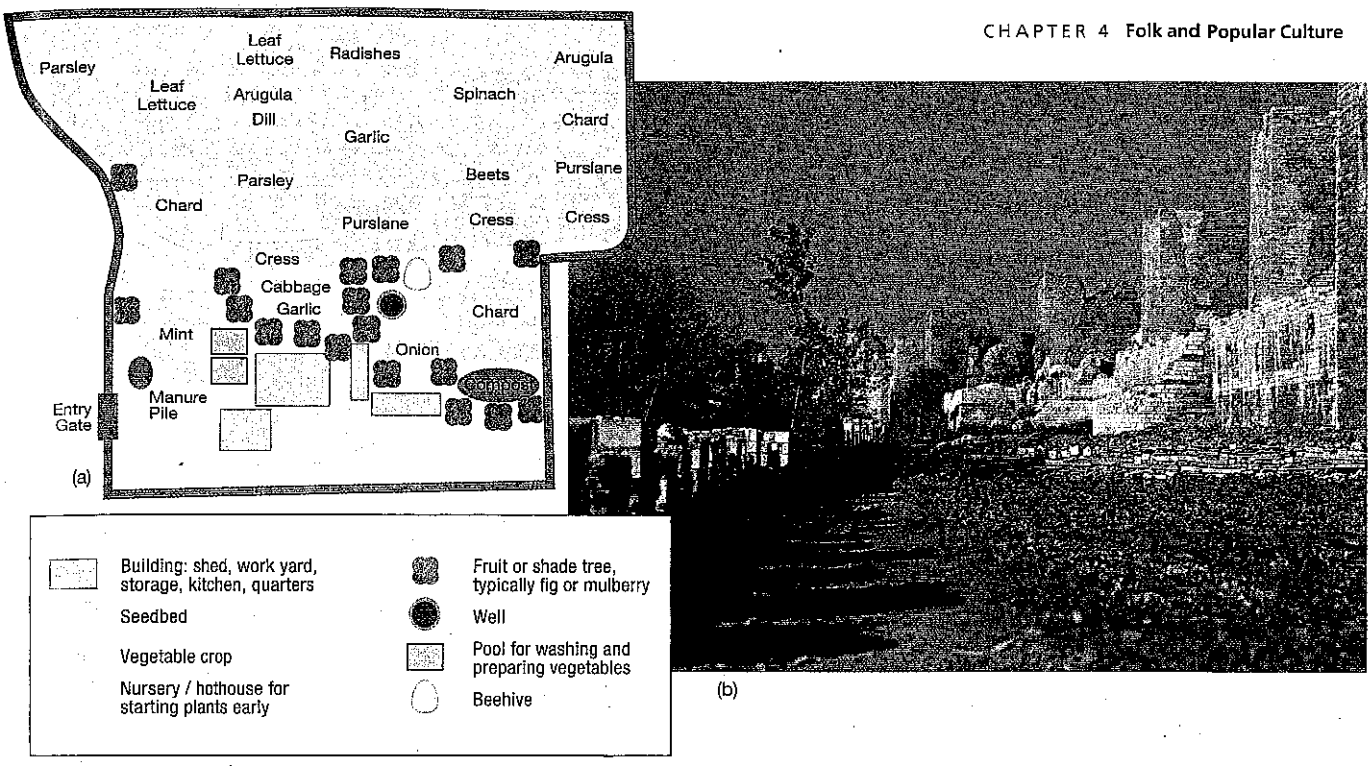
Certain foods are eaten in folk cultures because th natural properties are perceived to enhance qualities c sidered desirable by the society. Here are some examp

- The Abipone people in Paraguay eat bulls, jaguars, and stags to make them strong, brave, and swift. The Abipone believe that consuming hens or tortoises w make them cowardly.
- The Ainu people in Japan avoid eating otters becaus they are believed to be forgetful animals, and consuming them could cause loss of memory.
- The Mbum Kpau women in Chad do not eat chick or goat before becoming pregnant. Abstaining fro consumption of these animals is thought to help escape pain in childbirth and to prevent birth of a child with abnormalities. During pregnancy, the Mbum Kpau avoid meat from antelopes with twist horns, which could cause them to bear offspring with deformities.

FOOD TABOOS

According to many folk customs, everything in nature c ries a signature, or distinctive characteristic, based on appearance and natural properties. Consequently, peo may desire or avoid certain foods in response to percei beneficial or harmful natural traits.

People refuse to eat particular plants or animals fo variety of reasons. Such a restriction on behavior impo



▲ **FIGURE 4-23 ISTANBUL VEGETABLE GARDEN** **(a)** Geographer Paul Kaldijian sketched a typical *bostan*, a traditional vegetable garden, in the center of Istanbul, Turkey. *Bostans* provide residents of the large city of Istanbul with a source of fresh vegetables. **(b)** Outside the 500-year-old Yedikule Fortress, in Istanbul, a *bostan* dates back to 400 B.C. It is threatened with removal and replacement with a landscaped park.

by religious law or social custom is a **taboo**. Other customs or practices, such as sexual behavior, carry prohibitions, but taboos are especially strong in the area of food. Some folk cultures may establish food taboos because of concern for the natural environment. These taboos may help protect endangered animals or conserve scarce natural resources. To preserve scarce animal species, only a few high-ranking people in some tropical regions are permitted to hunt, and the majority cultivate crops.

Relatively well-known taboos against consumption of certain foods can be found in the Jewish Bible. The ancient Hebrews were prohibited from eating a wide variety of foods, including animals that do not chew their cud or that have cloven feet, and fish lacking fins or scales (Figure 4-24). These biblical taboos were developed through oral tradition and by rabbis into the kosher laws observed today by some Jews.

Muslims embrace a taboo against pork because pigs are unsuited for the dry lands of the Arabian Peninsula. Pigs would compete with humans for food and water, without offering compensating benefits, such as being able to pull a plow, carry loads, or provide milk and wool. Widespread raising of pigs would be an ecological disaster in Islam's hearth.

Hindu taboos against consuming cattle are also partly due to environmental factors. Cows are the source of oxen (castrated male bovine), the traditional choice for pulling plows as well as carts. A large supply of oxen must be maintained in India because every field has to be plowed at approximately the same time—when the monsoon rains arrive. Religious sanctions have kept India's cattle population large as a form of insurance against the loss of oxen and increasing population.

But the taboo against consumption of meat among many people, including Muslims, Hindus, and Jews,

▲ **FIGURE 4-24 KOSHER PIZZA RESTAURANT, PARIS**

cannot be explained primarily by environmental factors. Social values must influence the choice of diet because people in similar climates and with similar levels of income consume different foods. The biblical food taboos helped the Jewish people maintain their identity and communal affiliation. That Christians ignore the biblical food injunctions is consistent with Christianity as a religion that seeks to attract many adherents from many places (see Chapter 6).

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.2.3

What foods do you avoid? Do you avoid foods because of taboos or for other reasons?

Popular Food Preferences

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.2.4

Describe regional variations in popular food preferences.

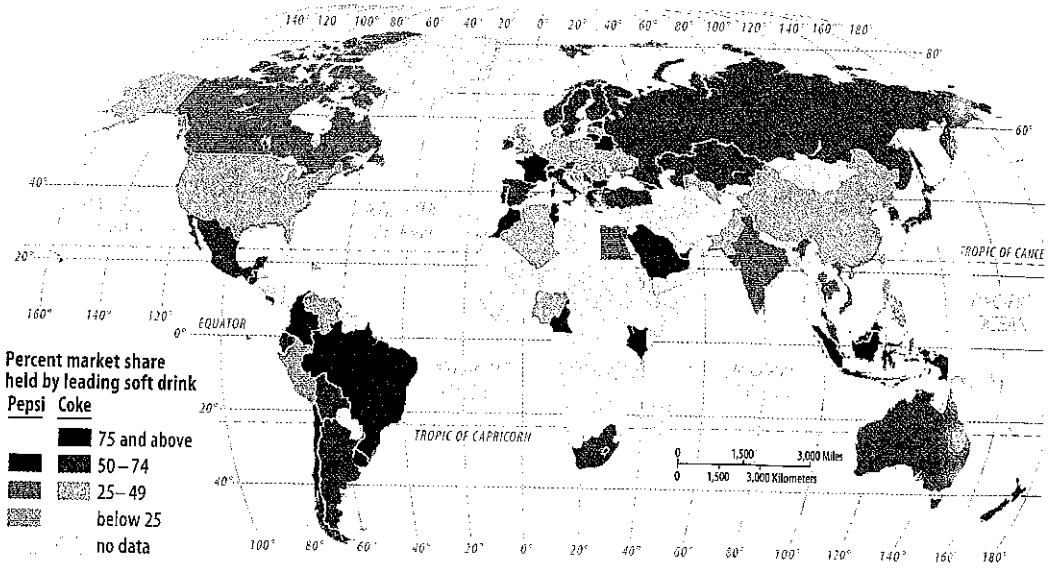
In the popular culture of the twenty-first century, food preferences seem far removed from folk traditions. Popular food preferences are influenced more by cultural values than by environmental features. Still, some regional variations can be observed between and within countries, and environmental influences remain important in selected items.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES: GLOBAL SCALE

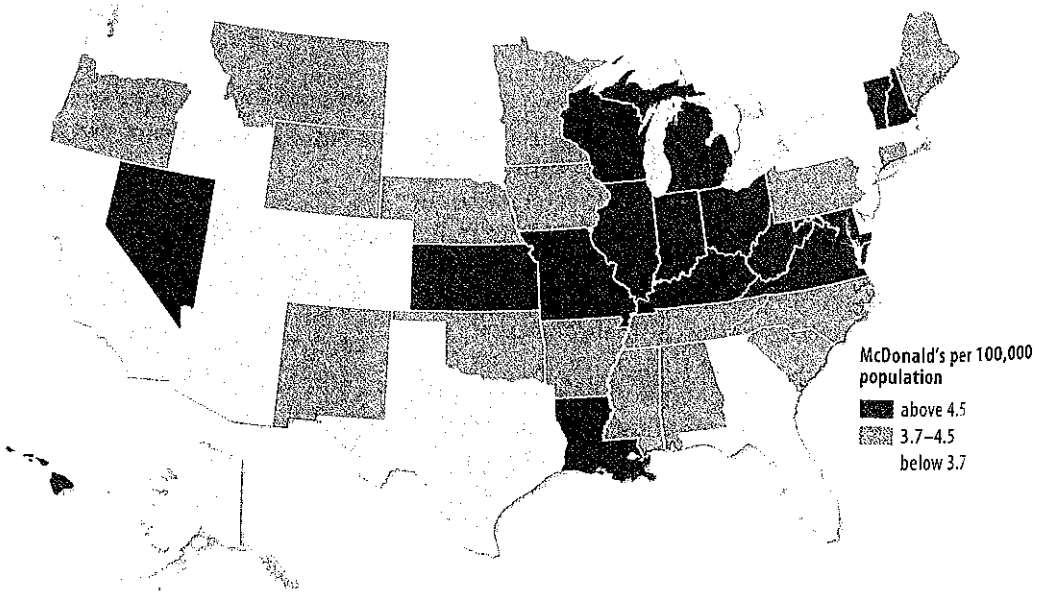
Why do Coca-Cola and Pepsi have different sales patterns (Figure 4-25)? The two beverages are similar, and many people are unable to taste the difference. Yet consume fer Coke in some countries and Pepsi in others.

Coca-Cola accounts for more than one-half c world's cola sales, and Pepsi for another one-fo Coca-Cola is the sales leader in most of the We Hemisphere. The principal exception is Canada's Fr speaking province of Québec, where Pepsi is pref Pepsi won over the Québécois with advertising tha Pepsi to elements of uniquely French Canadian cu The major indoor arena in Québec City is name Colisée Pepsi (Pepsi Coliseum).

Cola preferences are influenced by politics in sia. Under communism, government officials ma deal with Pepsi to allow that cola to be sold in the S Union. With the breakup of the Soviet Union and th of communism, Coke entered the Russian market. sians quickly switched their preference to Coke be



► **FIGURE 4-25 POPULAR FOOD PREFERENCES: COKE VERSUS PEPSI** Coca-Cola leads sales in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Russia. Pepsi leads in Canada and South and Southwest Asia.



► **FIGURE 4-26 REGIONAL VARIATION: CONCENTRATION OF MCDONALD'S** The highest concentration of McDonald's restaurants is in the Midwest.

was associated with the discredited Communist ment.
one time, Arab countries in Southwest Asia & North boycotted products that were sold in predominantly Israel. Because Pepsi was not sold in Israel until 1992, as the only choice in Israel, whereas in most of Israel's ors Pepsi was preferred.

ONAL DIFFERENCES: SNACK AND FAST FOOD

iphers observe regional variations in food preferwithin a developed country like the United States. of these variations can be attributed to cultural or nmental factors, whereas others do not have a clear ation.
re are some examples of the influence of cultural on regional variations in food preferences in the States:

ah has a low rate of consumption of all types alcohol because of a concentration there of embers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day ints, who abstain from all alcohol consumption.
e adjacent state of Nevada has a high rate of nsumption of all types of alcohol because of the avy concentration of gambling and other resort tivities there.

xans may prefer tortilla chips because of the large mber of Hispanic Americans there. Westerners may efer multigrain chips because of greater concern for e nutritional content of snack foods.

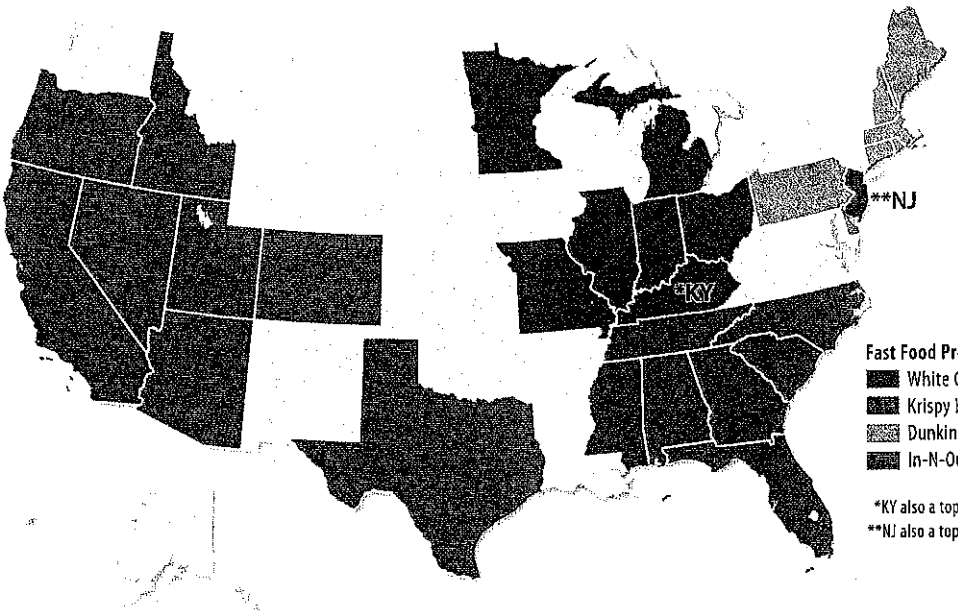
Americans may choose particular beverages or snacks in part on the basis of preference for what is produced, grown, or imported locally:

- Wine consumption is relatively high in California, where most of the U.S. production is concentrated, and beer consumption is relatively low there. Beer and spirits consumption are relatively high in the upper Midwest, where much of the grain is grown. Consumption of wine is low in that part of the country, where few grapes are grown.
- Southerners may prefer pork rinds because more hogs are raised there, and northerners may prefer popcorn and potato chips because more corn and potatoes are grown there.

On the other hand, many regional variations are not clearly linked to cultural or environmental factors. For example, the concentration of McDonald's varies among the 50 states from more than 5 to less than 3 per 100,000 population. The Midwest has the highest concentration of McDonald's (Figure 4-26). Dunkin' Donuts is especially popular in the Northeast, Krispy Kreme in the Southeast, White Castle in the Midwest, and In-N-Out Burger in the Southwest, based on the frequency with which they are cited on Twitter, according to Lexicalist (lexicalist.com) (Figure 4-27).

PAUSE & REFLECT4.2.4

Do your food preferences match the predominant ones in your region?



◀ **FIGURE 4-27 REGIONAL VARIATION: FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT PREFERENCES** According to Twitter feeds, Dunkin' Donuts is especially popular in the Northeast, Krispy Kreme in the Southeast, White Castle in the Midwest, and In-N-Out Burger in the Southwest.

Folk and Popular Housing

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.2.5

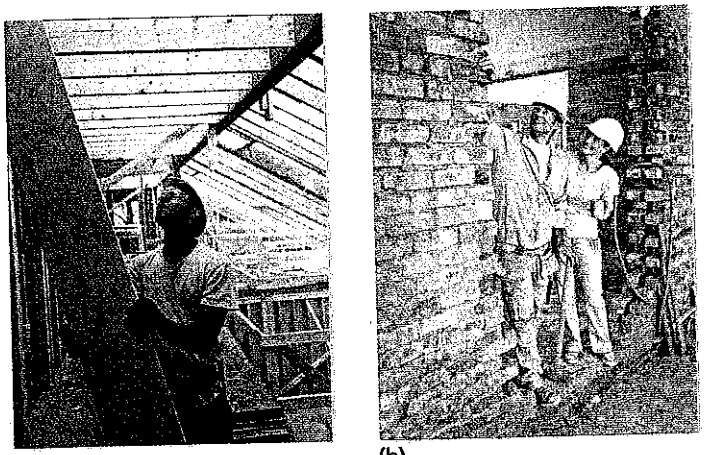
Understand factors that influence patterns of folk housing.

French geographer Jean Brunhes, a major contributor to the cultural landscape tradition, viewed the house as being among the essential facts of human geography. It is a product of both cultural traditions and natural conditions. American cultural geographer Fred Kniffen considered the house to be a good reflection of cultural heritage, current fashion, functional needs, and the impact of environment.

FOLK HOUSING

All humans need a place to live. Distinctive environmental and cultural features influence the provision of housing in folk cultures.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES. The type of building materials used to construct folk houses is influenced partly by the resources available in the environment. Stone, grass, sod, and skins may be used, but the two most common building materials in the world are wood and brick (Figure 4-28).



(a) (b)

▲ **FIGURE 4-28 HOUSES UNDER CONSTRUCTION** (a) Wood, (b) brick.

The style of construction can also be influenced by th environment. For example, the construction of a pitche roof is important in wet or snowy climates to facilita runoff and to reduce the weight of accumulated sno Windows may face south in temperate climates to take a vantage of the Sun's heat and light. In hot climates, on tl other hand, roofs may be flat, and window openings m be smaller to protect the interior from the full heat of tl Sun (Figure 4-29).

CULTURAL INFLUENCES. The distinctive form of fc houses may derive primarily from religious values a other customary beliefs. Some compass directions may more important than other directions.

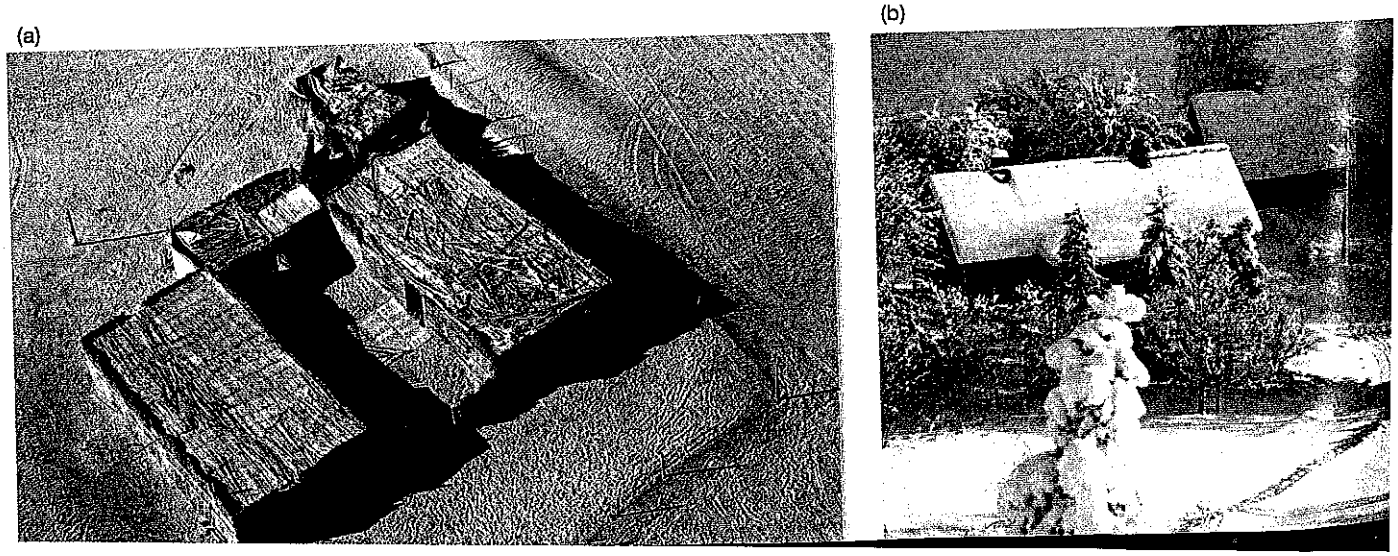
Houses may have sacred walls or corners. In the sou central part of the island of Java, for example, the front dc always faces south, the direction of the South Sea Godde who holds the key to Earth. The eastern wall of a hous considered sacred in Fiji, as is the northwestern wall in pa of China. Sacred walls or corners are also noted in parts the Middle East, India, and Africa.

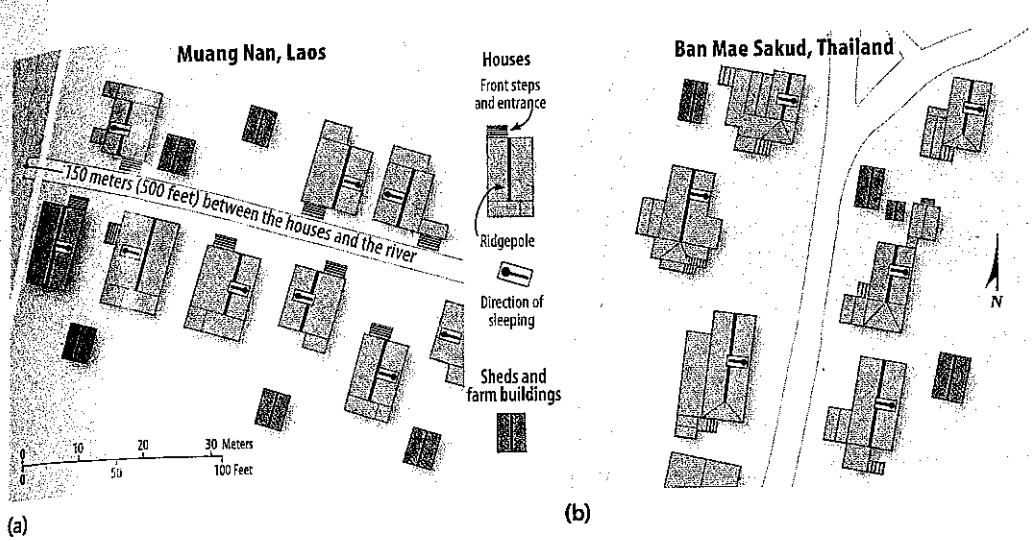
In Madagascar, the main door is on the west, which is c sidered the most important direction, and the northeast corner is the most sacred. The northern wall is for hono ancestors; in addition, important guests enter a room from north and are seated against the northern wall. The bed is pla against the eastern wall of the house, with the head facing no

The Lao people in northern Laos arrange beds perp dicular to the center ridgepole of the house (Figure 4-3 Because the head is considered high and noble and the low and vulgar, people sleep so that their heads will be posite their neighbor's heads and their feet opposite t neighbor's feet. There is one principal exception to thi rangement: A child who builds a house next door to h her parents sleeps with his or her head toward the par feet, as a sign of obeying the customary hierarchy.

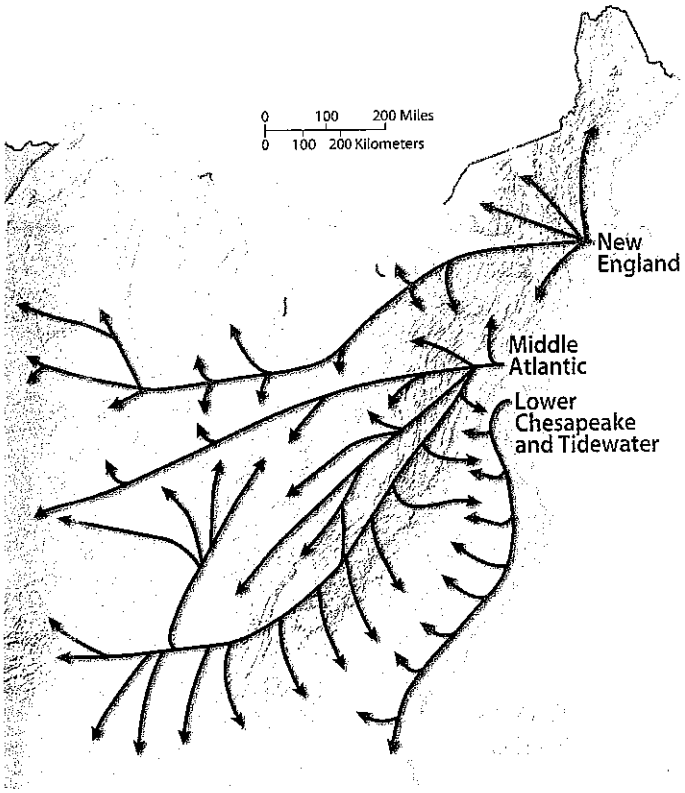
Although they speak similar Southeast Asian langu and adhere to Buddhism, the Lao do not orient their hc in the same manner as the Yuan and Shan peoples in ne northern Thailand (Figure 4-30b). The Yuan and Sha nore the position of neighbors, and all sleep with their h

▼ **FIGURE 4-29 FOLK HOUSING: ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES** (a) In the desert in Oman, (b) in the winter in Haanja, Estonia.





◀ **FIGURE 4-30 FOLK HOUSING: CULTURAL INFLUENCES** **(a)** The fronts of houses of Lao people, such as those in the village of Muang Nan, Laos, face one another across a path, and the backs face each other at the rear. Their ridgepoles (the centerline of the roof) are set perpendicular to the path but parallel to a stream, if one is nearby. Inside adjacent houses, people sleep in the orientation shown, so neighbors are head-to-head or feet-to-feet. **(b)** The houses of Yuan and Shan peoples in the village of Ban Mae Sakud, Thailand, are not set in a straight line because of a belief that evil spirits move in straight lines. Ridgepoles parallel the path, and the heads of all sleeping persons point eastward.



◀ **FIGURE 4-31 FOLK HOUSING: U.S. HEARTHS** U.S. house types in the United States originated in three main source areas and diffused westward along different paths. New England house types can be found throughout the Great Lakes region as far west as Wisconsin because this area was settled primarily by migrants from New England. Its distinctive style was box shaped with a central hall. Middle Atlantic migrants carried their house type westward across the Ohio Valley and southwestward along the Appalachian trails. The principal house type was known as the "I"-house, typically two full stories in height, one room deep and at least two rooms wide. Lower Chesapeake and Tidewater houses were spread by migrants along the Southeast Coast. The style typically comprised one story, with a steep roof and chimneys at either end.

toward the east, which Buddhists consider the most auspicious direction. Staircases must not face west, the least auspicious direction and the direction of death and evil spirits.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.2.5

What factors were considered in the arrangement of the bed in your bedroom?

U.S. FOLK HOUSES. Older houses in the United States display local folk culture traditions. In contrast, housing built in the United States since the 1940s demonstrates how popular customs vary more in time than in place.

Geographer Fred Kniffen identified three major hearths, or nodes, of folk house forms in the United States (Figure 4-31). When families migrated westward in the 1700s and 1800s, they cut trees to clear fields for planting and used the wood to build houses, barns, and fences. The style of pioneer homes reflected whatever style was prevailing at the place on the East Coast from which they migrated.

CHECK-IN KEY ISSUE 2

Where Are Folk and Popular Material Culture Distributed?

- **Regional variations in folk food, clothing, and shelter derive from the physical environment, as well as from religion and other cultural values.**
- **Popular preferences in food, clothing, and shelter vary more in time than in place. However, some regional variations in preferences persist.**

KEY ISSUE 3

Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- **Diffusion of TV and Internet**
- **Diffusion of Social Media**
- **Challenges in Accessing Electronic Media**

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.3.1

Compare the diffusion of TV and the Internet.

Geographic concepts help to understand the distribution and diffusion of popular culture. Popular culture diffuses rapidly around the world in the twenty-first century primarily through electronic media. The latest fashions in material culture and leisure activities can be viewed by anyone in the world who has access to one or more forms of electronic media. Electronic media increase access to popular culture for people who embrace folk culture and at the same time increase access to folk culture for people who are part of the world's popular culture scene.

However, the distribution of popular culture around the world is not uniform. The principal obstacle to popular culture is lack of access to electronic media. Access is limited primarily by lack of income. In some developing countries, access is also limited by lack of electricity.

Diffusion of TV and Internet

The world's most important electronic media format by far is TV. Television supplanted other formats, notably radio and telegraph, during the twentieth century. Into the twenty-first century, other formats have become popular, but they have not yet supplanted TV worldwide.

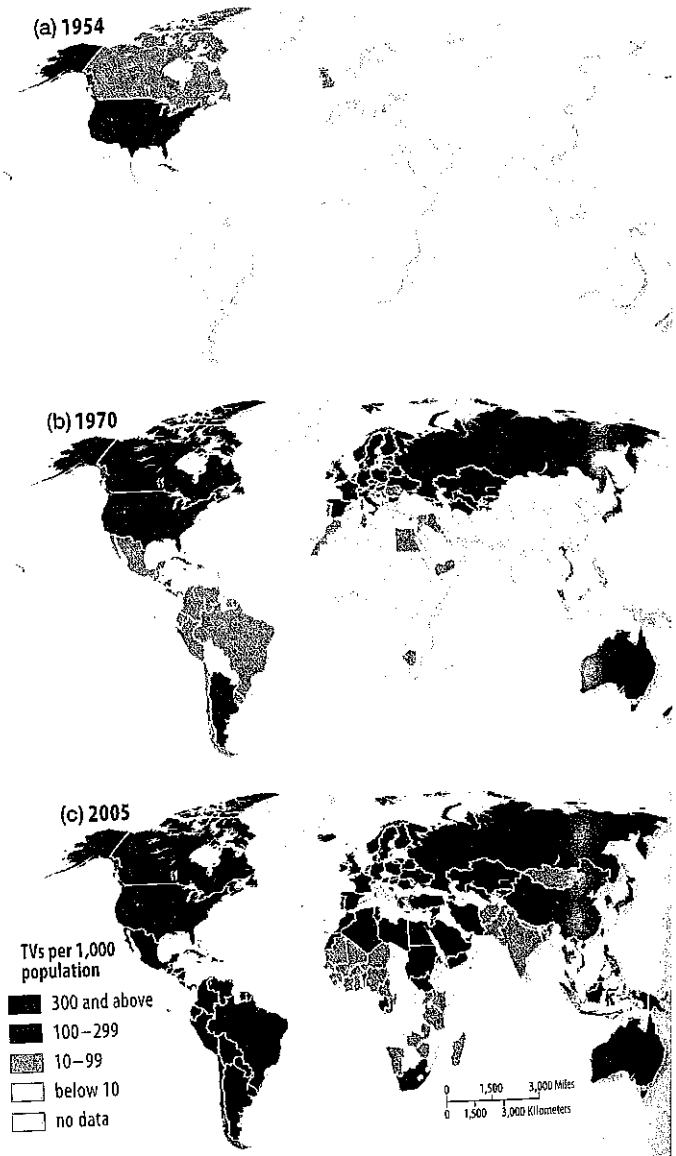
DISTRIBUTION AND DIFFUSION OF TV

Watching TV is especially important for popular culture for two reasons:

- Watching TV is the most popular leisure activity in the world. The average human watched three hours of TV per day in 2014, and the average American watched five hours.
- TV has been the most important mechanism by which popular culture, such as professional sports, has rapidly diffused across Earth.

Through the second half of the twentieth century, TV diffused from the United States to Europe and other developed countries and then to developing countries (Figure 4-32):

- **Early twentieth century: Multiple hearths.** TV technology was developed simultaneously in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union, as well as in the United States.
- **Mid-twentieth century: United States dominates.** In 1954, the first year that the United Nations published data on the subject, the United States had 86 percent of the world's 37 million TV sets.
- **Late twentieth century: Diffusion to Europe.** TV diffused to Europe by 1970, but most of Africa and Asia had little if any TV broadcasting.
- **Early twenty-first century: Near-universal access.** Ownership rates climbed sharply in developing countries.



▲ **FIGURE 4-32 DIFFUSION OF TV** Televisions per 1,000 inhabitants in (a) 1954, (b) 1970, and (c) 2005. Television has diffused from North America and Europe to other regions of the world. The United States and Canada had far more TV sets per capita than any other country as recently as the 1970s, but several European countries now have higher rates of ownership.

TABLE 4–1 Changing Distribution And Diffusion Of TV

	1954	1970	2005
Density: Number of U.S. TVs (millions)	32	82	219
U.S. diffusion: TVs per 1,000 population	196	395	882
Global diffusion: U.S. share of world's TVs (%)	86	25	16

Table 4-1 shows changes in the distribution and diffusion of TVs in the United States. The density of TVs in the United States has increased, as TV diffused through the U.S. population. At the same time, TV has diffused to the rest of the world, leaving the United States with an ever-decreasing concentration of the world's TV sets.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.3.1

The United States has slightly less than 1 TV per person. Does your household have more than 1 TV or less than 1 TV per person? Why might you have more or less than the national average?

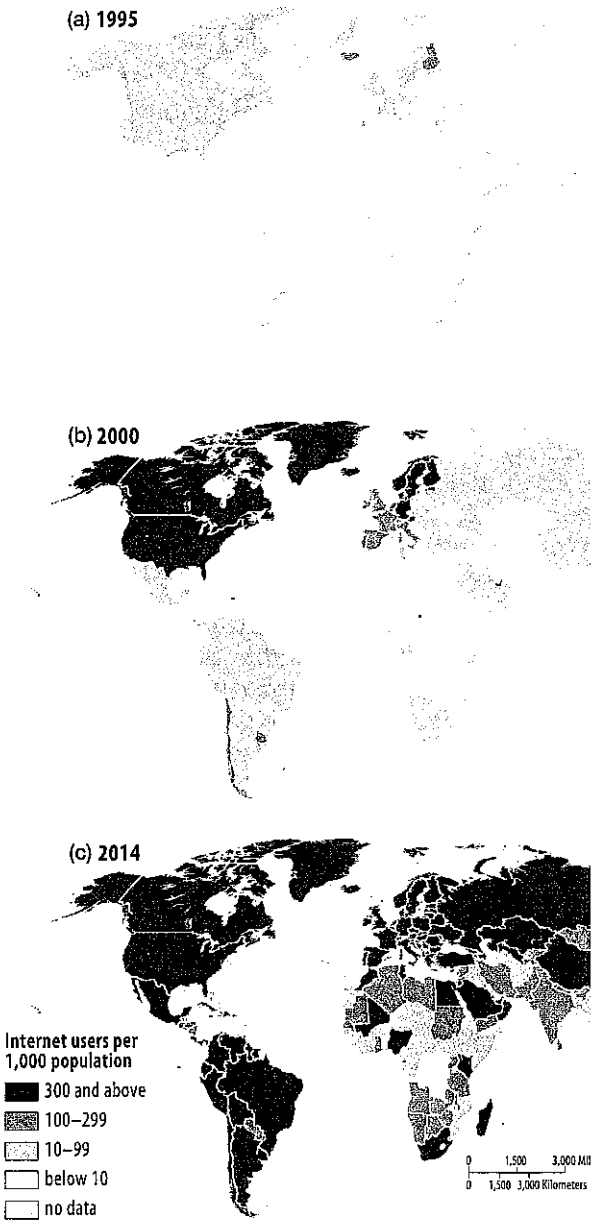
DIFFUSION OF THE INTERNET

The changing distribution and diffusion of Internet service follows the pattern established by television a generation earlier, but at a more rapid pace (Figure 4-33 and Table 4-2):

- In 1995, most countries did not have Internet service, and the United States had 63 percent of the world's users.
- Between 1995 and 2000, Internet users increased rapidly in the United States, from 9 percent of the population (25 million people) to 44 percent (124 million people). But the worldwide increase was much greater, so the share of the world's Internet users clustered in the United States declined from 63 percent to 35 percent.
- Between 2000 and 2014, Internet usage continued to increase rapidly in the United States, to 87 percent (280 million people). Again, the U.S. increase was more modest than in the rest of the world, and the share of the world's Internet users in the United States continued to decline, to less than 10 percent in 2014. China now accounts for 22 percent of the world's Internet users.

TABLE 4–2 Changing Distribution And Diffusion Of Internet

	1995	2000	2014
Density: Number of U.S. Internet users (millions)	25	124	280
U.S. diffusion: Internet users per 1,000 population	94	441	868
Global diffusion: U.S. share of world's Internet users (%)	63	35	10



▲ **FIGURE 4-33 DIFFUSION OF THE INTERNET** Internet u 1,000 inhabitants in **(a)** 1995, **(b)** 2000, and **(c)** 2014. Compa diffusion of TV (Figure 4-32). Internet service is following a in the twenty-first century similar to the pattern of diffusi television in the twentieth century. The United States star with a much higher rate of usage than elsewhere, until o countries caught up. The difference is that the internet di more rapidly than TV.

Note that all six maps in Figures 4-32 and 4-3 same intervals. For example, the highest class in a 300 or more per 1,000. And Tables 4-1 and 4-2 use units of measurement. What is different betwee figures and two tables is the time interval perioc fusion of TV from the United States to the rest of took a half-century, whereas the diffusion of th took only a decade. Given the history of TV, th is likely to diffuse further in the years ahead at a r

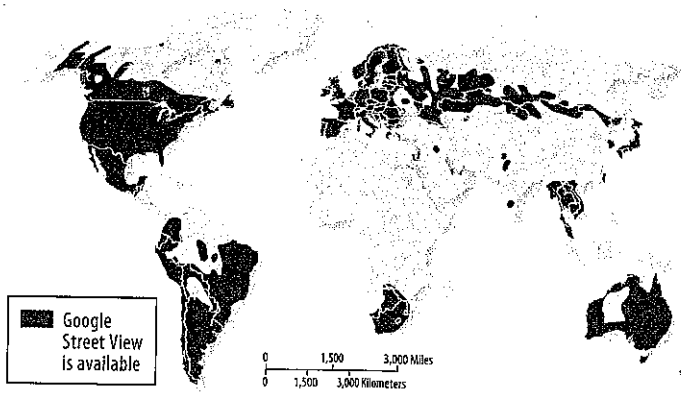
Diffusion of Social Media

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.3.2

Compare the distribution of social media with that of TV and the Internet.

The origin of social media in the twenty-first century has followed the pattern of electronic media in the late twentieth century. People based in the United States have dominated the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter so far. For example, many countries lack information such as Google street view (Figure 4-34).

Social media originating in the United States will undoubtedly diffuse to the rest of the world. However, the rate and extent of diffusion remain to be seen. Will U.S. dominance reduce rapidly, or will people elsewhere in the world embrace other forms of social media instead? Early evidence is mixed.



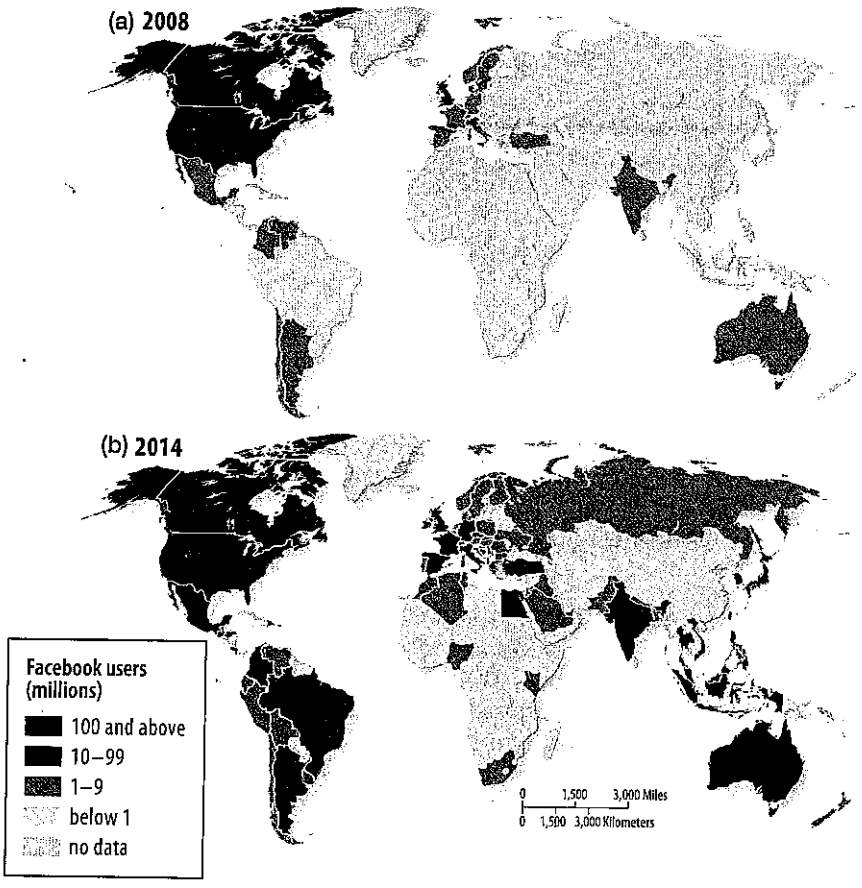
▲ **FIGURE 4-34 AVAILABILITY OF GOOGLE STREET VIEW**

DIFFUSION OF FACEBOOK

Facebook, founded in 2004 by Harvard University students, has diffused rapidly. As with the first few years of TV and the Internet, the United States started out with far more Facebook users than any other country (Figure 4-35). In 2009, five years after Facebook's founding, the United States had 34 percent of all users worldwide. The United States had 55 million Facebook users in 2009, well ahead of second-place United Kingdom, with 18 million.

The number of Facebook users continued to increa in the United States, to 152 million in 2014. But as Fac book has diffused to other countries, the share of use in the United States has declined, to 20 percent of tl worldwide total in 2011 and 10 percent in 2014. In 201 India became the second country to have more than 1(million Facebook users. Behind India were other develo ing countries, including Brazil, Indonesia, and Mexic Between 2009 and 2014, the United Kingdom fell fro second to sixth in number of users, and Canada fell fro third to eleventh.

Notably absent from the list of leading Facebo users is the world's most populous state, China. Also abse is Russia. In the first years of social media, numerous oth



◀ **FIGURE 4-35 DIFFUSION OF FACEBOOK**
Facebook users in (a) 2008 and (b) 2014.

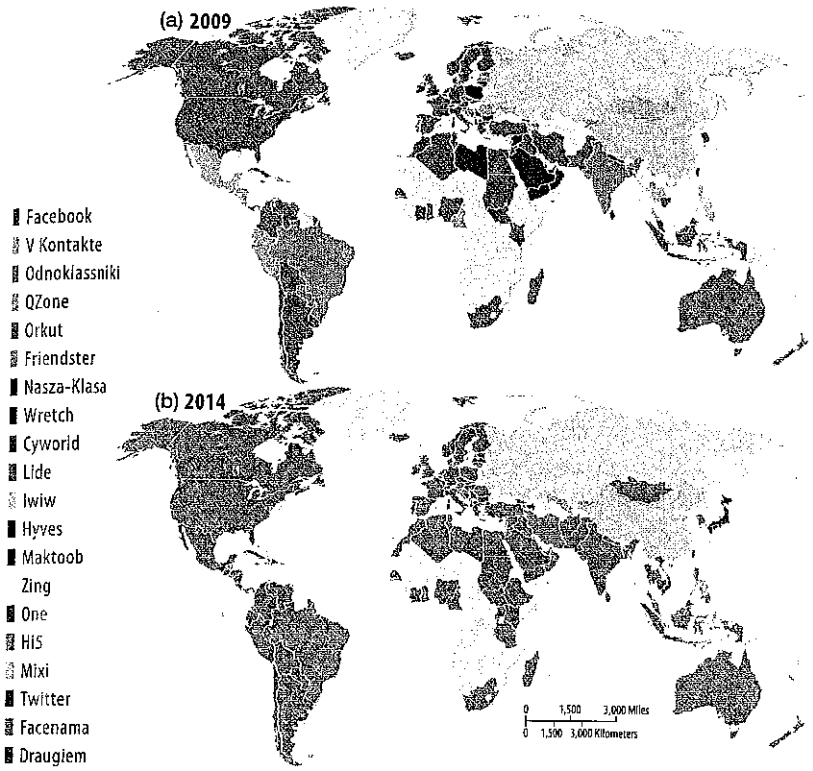


FIGURE 4-36 MOST POPULAR SOCIAL NETWORK (a) In 2009, in 2014.

etworks were popular in much of the world, especially in eveloping countries (Figure 4-36). Most of those competing cial networks were quickly supplanted by Facebook, espe-ally in Latin America. However, the world's most populous untry—China—is a holdout, preferring QZone. China's vernment has limited the ability of the Chinese people to e Facebook. Restricting the freedom to use the Internet is a ajor issue in some countries, as discussed on the next page.

IFFUSION OF TWITTER

ne United States was the source of one-third of all Twit-r messages in 2014. Another one-third originated in other countries—India, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, Brazil, and Canada (Figure 4-37). The second leading Twitter country is one of the world's poorest, India. This may be a preview of future trends, in which electronic communications advances diffuse rapidly to developing countries, not just to other developed countries (Table 4-3).

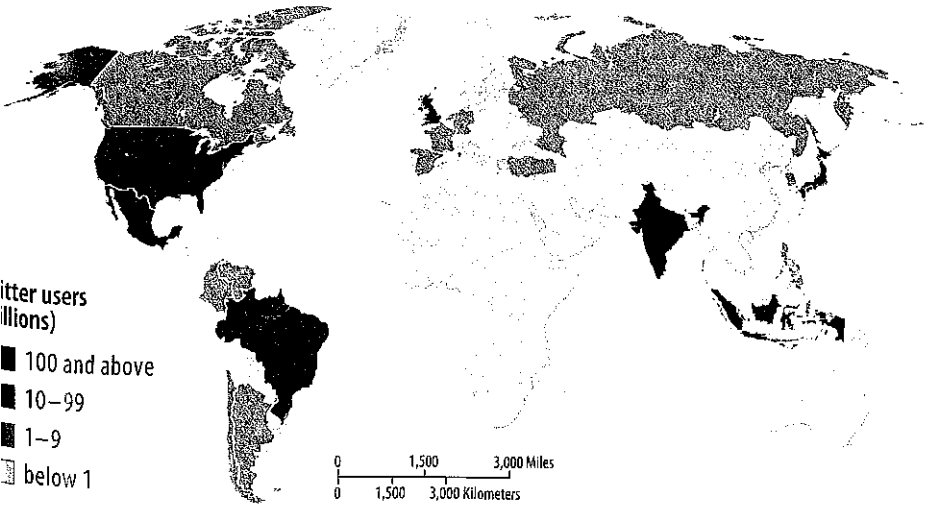
Americans dominate the most popular Twitter postings. Eight of the 10 Twitter posters with the largest numbers of followers in 2015 were Americans, including President Obama and seven entertainers (Katy Perry, Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga, Britney Spears, Justin Timberlake, and Ellen DeGeneres). The two non-Americans were the entertainer Rihanna (from Barbados) and the football (soccer) player Cristiano Ronaldo (from Portugal).

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.3.2

A recent study of University of Maryland students found that not using any electronics for 24 hours produced anxiety, craving, and other symptoms akin to withdrawal from alcohol or drugs. How do you think you would react to a 24-hour ban on all electronics?

TABLE 4–3 Changing Distribution and Diffusion of Facebook and Twitter

	Twitter 2009	Twitter 2014	Facebook 2009	Facebook 2014
Density: Number of U.S. users (millions)	7	108	55	152
U.S. diffusion: Users per 1,000 population	22	340	179	477
Global diffusion: U.S. share of world's users (%)	51	38	34	10



◀ FIGURE 4-37 DISTRIBUTION OF TWITTER, 2012

Challenges in Accessing Electronic Media

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.3.3

Understand threats to freedom of use of electronic media.

Most Americans take for granted access to information and communications through the Internet and cell phones. This free access is not found in many other countries.

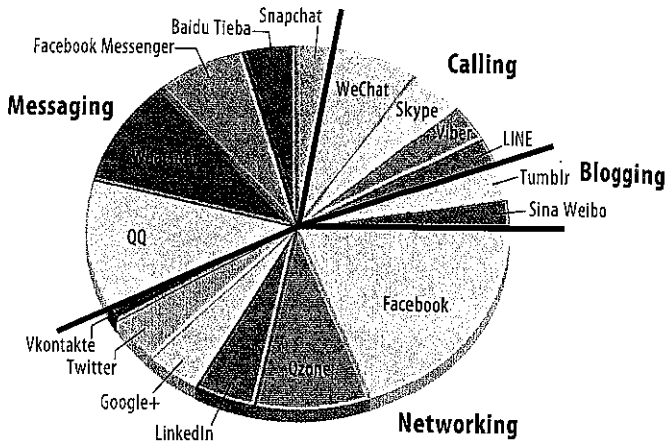
The organization Freedom on the Net measures the level of Internet and digital media freedom in 65 countries. Excluded are countries with limited Internet connectivity (mostly in Africa) and countries with connectivity but insufficient evidence (mostly in Europe). Each of the 65 countries receives a numerical score from 0 (the most free) to 100 (the least free). Countries are classified "free" if they have a score of 30 or below, "partly free" if they have a score between 31 and 60, and "not free" if they have a score above 60.

Only 19 of the 65 countries surveyed by Freedom on the Net were classified as "free." Thirty-one were "partly free," and 15 were "not free" (Figure 4-38). Freedom on the Net identifies three categories of restrictions on the free use of the Internet: banned technology, blocked content, and violated user rights.

BANNED TECHNOLOGY

Governments can effectively prevent unwanted electronic technology by regulating the underlying technology platforms that are supported by the infrastructure in the country. Some governments prohibit the sale of certain models of phones, tablets, and computers. Devices that are permitted must be configured to exclude certain applications and technologies. Even some travelers between free countries, such as from the United States to Western European countries, find that their electronic devices fail to operate because of incompatible cellular infrastructure.

China is especially aggressive at restricting foreign applications. The small number of Facebook and Twitter users in China, displayed in Figures 4-35 and 4-37, is evidence of those restrictions. Instead, electronic interaction in China is undertaken primarily through homegrown apps, such as QZone and QQ (Figure 4-39).

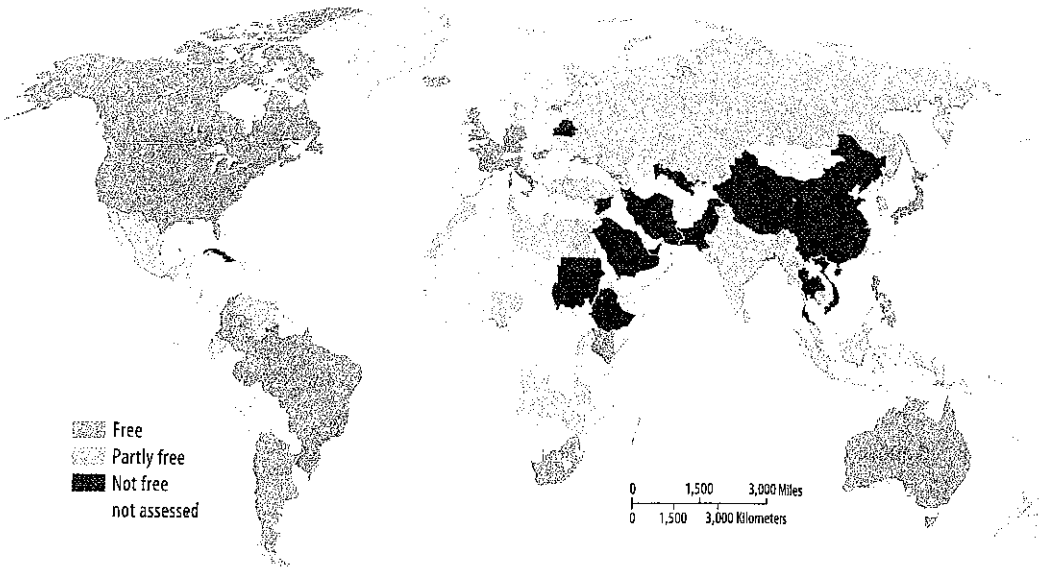


▲ **FIGURE 4-39 DIVERSITY OF THE WORLD'S SOCIAL NETWORKS** Social networking in China is undertaken with different applications than those predominating in other parts of the world.

BLOCKED CONTENT

Some websites are censored or prevented altogether from being seen on devices in a particular country. Blocking Internet content continues a widespread practice with TV.

Three developed countries—Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States—have dominated TV in developing countries, including supplying much of the programming. Leaders of many developing countries view



► **FIGURE 4-38 INTERNET FREEDOM 2014** Freedom on the Net determines the degree of Internet freedom based on a combination of inability to use technology, lack of access to electronic sites, and extent of violation of personal rights.

▲ **FIGURE 4-40 SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICAL PROTEST** An Egyptian woman documents an antigovernment protest in Cairo in 2012.

American control of much of the world's TV programming as a new method of economic and cultural imperialism. American TV programs present characteristically American beliefs and social forms, such as upward social mobility, relative freedom for women, glorification of youth, and stylized violence. These themes may conflict with and drive out traditional folk culture.

To avoid offending traditional folk culture, many satellite and cable providers in developing countries block offending networks such as MTV and censor unacceptable programs. The entertainment programs that are substituted emphasize family values and avoid controversial or edgy cultural, economic, and political content.

In the twenty-first century, concern with American-produced media content has spilled over into the Internet. OpenNet Initiative has identified three types of Internet content that are routinely censored in other countries.

- Political content that expresses views in opposition to those of the current government or that is related to human rights, freedom of expression, minority rights, and religious movements(Figure 4-40).
- Social content related to sexuality, gambling, and illegal drugs and alcohol, as well as other topics that may be socially sensitive or perceived as offensive.
- Security content related to armed conflicts, border disputes, separatist movements, and militant groups.

Google, the world's most widely used search engine, has come under especially strong criticism for failing to display or provide a link to websites that the government does not wish to be seen by users in that country. Google.cn, Google's search engine for Chinese online users, has been singled out for blocking websites considered unacceptable by the government of China.

VIOLATED USER RIGHTS

Governments are finding it increasingly difficult to stop the diffusion of technology. Their citizens are finding ways to circumvent government restrictions on ownership of hardware, use of software, and viewing of online content.

Instead, according to Freedom on the Net, governments are turning to harassing their citizens through physical attacks and imprisonment because of their Internet activity. In many countries, governments have enacted laws that provide a justification for attacks. For example, a law in The Gambia makes it a criminal offense to use the Internet to criticize public officials. A law in Ethiopia permits the government to search computers, Internet sites, and other social media for anything that it considers damaging to the country.

A number of countries require transnational corporations to maintain a local server in order to do business there. The government has the right to access the data that is stored on the local server.

Freedom on the Net has also determined that women and the LGBTI community have been targeted in a number of countries for their online activities. A woman was stoned to death in Pakistan in 2013 for possessing a cell phone. Gay men in Russia have been lured through social media to in-person meetings, where they have been assaulted by hate groups.

The three worst-offending countries, according to Freedom on the Net, are Iran, Syria, and China. In Iran, especially harsh punishments are imposed on people who promote causes opposed by the government. In Syria, government supporters have launched malware cyberattacks against the computers of thousands of antigovernment protestors. In China, individuals posting antigovernment messages on blogs and websites are arrested.

Russia and Turkey are considered the two countries where Internet freedom has suffered the most severe declines in recent years. In Russia, several laws have been enacted since 2012 to block online content critical of the government, and these laws have been used to arrest antigovernment leaders. In Turkey, government censorship of Internet content has increased, including shutting down YouTube and Twitter, and government protestors and journalists have been arrested for posting critical content online.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.3.3

If you lived in a "not free" country, what use of electronic media might get you into trouble? Why?

CHECK-IN KEY ISSUE 3

Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- ✓ **Popular culture diffuses primarily through electronic media.**
- ✓ **Many countries limit the ability of their citizens to access electronic media.**

KEY ISSUE 4

Why Do Folk and Popular Culture Face Sustainability Challenges?

- **Sustainability Challenges for Folk Culture**
- **Sustainability Challenges for Popular Culture**

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.4.1

Summarize challenges for folk culture from diffusion of popular culture.

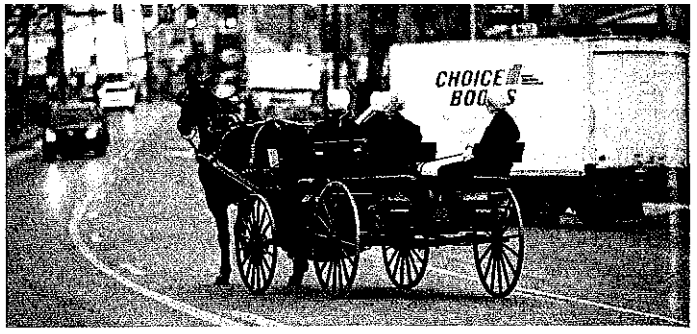
Elements of folk and popular culture face challenges in maintaining identities that are sustainable into the future. For folk culture, the challenges are to maintain unique local landscapes in an age of globalization. For popular culture, the challenges derive from the sustainability of practices designed to promote uniform landscapes.

Many fear the loss of folk culture, if rising incomes fuel demand for the possessions typical of popular culture. When people turn from folk to popular culture, they may also turn away from the society's traditional values. And the diffusion of popular culture from developed countries can lead to dominance of Western perspectives.

Sustainability Challenges for Folk Culture

For folk culture, increased connection with popular culture can make it difficult to maintain centuries-old practices. A folk culture group often undergoes a process of **assimilation**, which a process of giving up cultural traditions, such as food and clothing preferences, and adoption of the social customs of the dominant culture of the place.

Instead of assimilation, a folk culture group often undergoes **acculturation**, which a process of adjustment to the dominant culture, while retaining features of a folk culture, or syncretism, which was defined in Chapter 1 as the creation of a new cultural feature through combining elements of two groups. The Amish in the United States is an example of cultural group that is attempting to maintain cultural traditions in the midst of a dominant popular culture. Marriage customs in India are an example of a folk culture practice that is also undergoing acculturation, but many would like to see fuller assimilation into popular culture.



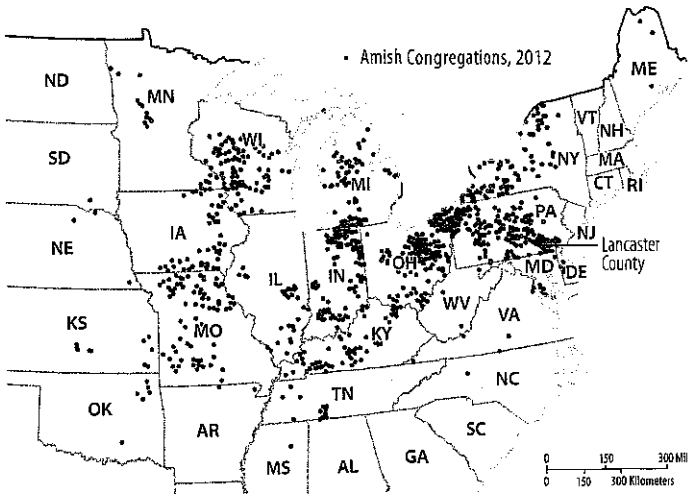
▲ **FIGURE 4-41 AMISH CULTURAL IDENTITY** An Amish buggy share the road with motor vehicles in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

PRESERVING CULTURAL IDENTITY: THE AMISH

The Amish provide an example of a cultural group that has re tained distinctive elements of folk culture despite living in country dominated by popular culture. Shunning mechanica and electrical power, the Amish travel by horse and buggy an continue to use hand tools for farming (Figure 4-41). The Amis have distinctive clothing, farming, religious practices, an other customs. Amish people do not wish to pose for photc because the act of posing is seen as fostering "graven images."

The contemporary distribution of Amish folk culture acro the U.S. landscape is explained through relocation diffusior Several hundred Amish families migrated to North Americ in two waves. The first group, primarily from Bern and the P latinate, settled in Pennsylvania in the early 1700s, enticed b William Penn's offer of low-priced land. Because of lower lan prices, the second group, from Alsace, settled in Ohio, Illinoi and Iowa in the United States and Ontario, Canada, in the earl 1800s. From these core areas, groups of Amish migrated to oth locations where inexpensive land was available.

Today Amish communities are visible on the landscap in at least 19 U.S. states (Figure 4-42). Living in rural and fro tier settlements relatively isolated from other groups, Amis communities have retained their traditional customs, even a other European immigrants to the United States have adopte new ones. Amish folk culture continues to diffuse slow through interregional migration within the United State



▲ **FIGURE 4-42 DISTRIBUTION OF AMISH** Amish settlements are clustered in Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

ı recent years, a number of Amish families have sold their rms in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania—the oldest and at ıe time largest Amish community in the United States—ıd migrated to southwestern Kentucky.

According to Amish tradition, every son is given a farm hen he is an adult, but land suitable for farming is expen-ve and hard to find in Lancaster County because of its oximity to growing metropolitan areas. With the average ice of farmland in southwestern Kentucky less than one-th that in Lancaster County, an Amish family can sell its rm in Pennsylvania and acquire enough land in Kentucky provide adequate farmland for all the sons. Amish fami-s are also migrating from Lancaster County to escape the flux of tourists who come from the nearby metropolitan eas to gawk at the distinctive folk culture.

Amish people have learned ways to retain a distinctive ıltural identity while living in a country dominated by ıpular culture. An Amish person will drive in a car for an ıportant purpose, such as visiting a distant doctor or fam-member. A telephone is not used for social chats but is ailable to summon a doctor or convey important infor-ation to distant relatives. The Amish do not use social edia such as the Internet for business or personal commu-cation but will permit friends and neighbors who are not nish to use social media on their behalf.

ıUSE & REFLECT 4.4.1

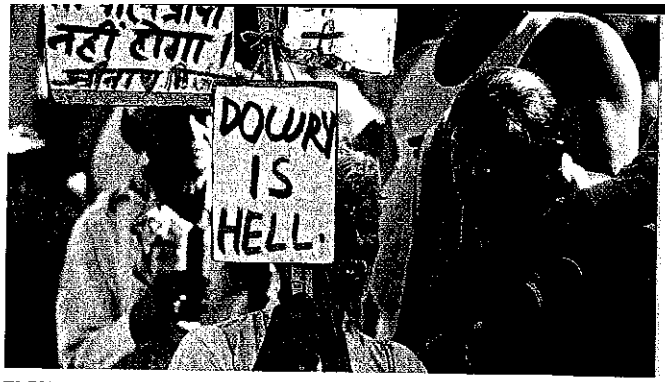
what ways might Amish people need to interact ith popular culture?

HALLENGING CULTURAL VALUES: OWRIES IN INDIA

pid changes in long-established cultural values can lead instability and even violence in a society. This threatens ıt just the institutions of folk culture but the sustainabil-of the society as a whole.

The global diffusion of popular culture has challenged e subservience of women to men that is embedded in me folk customs. Women may have been traditionally egated to performing household chores, such as cooking d cleaning, and to bearing and raising large numbers of ildren. Those women who worked outside the home were ely to be obtaining food for the family, either through ag-ultural work or by trading handicrafts.

Contact with popular culture has also had negative pacts for women in developing countries. Prostitution s increased in some developing countries to serve men ım developed countries traveling on "sex tours." These ırs, primarily from Japan and Northern Europe, include fare, hotels, and the use of a predetermined number of ımen. Leading destinations include the Philippines, Thai-ıd, and South Korea. International prostitution is encour-ed in these countries as a major source of foreign currency. rough this form of global interaction, popular culture may ard women as essentially equal at home but as objects that ney can buy in foreign folk societies.



▲ **FIGURE 4-43 ATTACK ON WOMAN IN INDIA** This woman's father-in-law was responsible for burning her and for throwing her and her son out of the family's house.

Global diffusion of popular social customs has had an unintended negative impact for women in India: an increase in demand for dowries. Traditionally, a dowry was a small gift from the groom to the bride's family, as a sign of respect. In the twentieth century, the custom reversed, and the family of a bride was expected to provide a substantial dowry to the husband's family.

The government of India enacted anti-dowry laws in 1961, but the ban is widely ignored. Dowries have become much larger in modern India and an important source of income for the groom's family. A dowry can take the form of cash or expensive consumer goods, such as cars and electronics. The alternative to paying a dowry—having an unwed daughter living with her parents—may be considered shameful.

India's government has tried to ban dowries because of the adverse impact on women. If the bride's family is unable to pay a promised dowry or installments, the groom's family may cast the bride out on the street, and her family may refuse to take her back. Husbands and in-laws angry over the small size of dowry payments have killed an average of 8,000 women per year in India since 2000. Disputes over dowries have led to 100,000 cases per year of torture and cruelty toward women by men, few of whom are prosecuted, let alone convicted, for their attacks (Figure 4-43).

To raise awareness of dowry abuses, shaadi.com, an Indian matrimonial website with several million members, created an online game called Angry Brides. Each groom has a high price tag. Every time the player hits the groom, money is added to the player's Anti-Dowry Fund on her Facebook page (Figure 4-44).

▲ **FIGURE 4-44 PROTESTING DOWRY: ANGRY BRIDES COMPUTER GAME**

Sustainability Challenges for Popular Culture

LEARNING OUTCOME 4.4.2

Summarize two principal ways that popular culture can adversely affect the environment.

Popular culture can significantly modify or control the environment, with little regard for local environmental conditions, such as climate and soil. It may be imposed on the environment rather than spring forth from it, as with many folk customs. The diffusion of some popular customs can adversely impact environmental quality in two ways: pollution of the landscape and depletion of scarce natural resources.

LANDSCAPE POLLUTION

For many popular customs, the environment is modified to enhance participation in a leisure activity or to promote the sale of a product. The desired result is often the creation of a uniform landscape. Even if the resulting built environment looks "natural," it is actually the deliberate creation of people in pursuit of popular social customs.

UNIFORM LANDSCAPES. The spatial expression of a popular custom in one location will be similar to another. To create a uniform landscape, hills may be flattened and valleys filled in. The same building and landscaping materials may be employed regardless of location.

Promoters of popular culture actually want a uniform appearance to generate "product recognition" and greater consumption (Figure 4-45). Uniformity in the appearance of the landscape is promoted by a wide variety of other popular structures in North America, such as gas stations, supermarkets, and motels. These structures are designed so that both local residents and visitors immediately recognize the purpose of a building, even if not the name of the company.

The diffusion of fast-food restaurants is a good example of the uniform landscape resulting from popular culture. Such restaurants are usually organized as franchises. A franchise is a company's agreement with businesspeople in a local area to market that company's product. The franchise agreement lets the local outlet use the company's name, symbols, trademarks, methods, and architectural styles. To both local residents and travelers, the buildings are immediately recognizable as part of a national or multinational company. A uniform sign is prominently displayed.

Much of the attraction of fast-food restaurants comes from the convenience of the product and the use of the building as a low-cost socializing location for teenagers or families with young children. At the same time, the success of fast-food restaurants depends on large-scale mobility: People who travel or move to another city immediately recognize a familiar place. Newcomers to a particular place know what to expect in the restaurant because the establishment does not reflect strange and unfamiliar local customs that could be uncomfortable.

Fast-food restaurants were originally developed to attract people who arrived by car. The buildings generally were brightly colored, even gaudy, to attract motorists. Recently built fast-food restaurants are more subdued, with brick facades, pseudo-antique fixtures, and other stylistic details. To facilitate reuse of the structure in case the restaurant fails, company signs are often freestanding rather than integrated into the building design.

Physical expression of uniformity in popular culture has diffused from North America to other parts of the world. American motels and fast-food chains have opened in other countries. These establishments appeal to North American travelers, yet most customers are local residents who wish to sample American customs they have seen on television.

▼ **FIGURE 4-45 UNIFORM LANDCAPE** U.S. Route 1, Miami, Florida.

PAUSE & REFLECT 4.4.2

What steps might fast-food restaurants take to reduce adverse impacts on the environment?

DEPLETION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Increased demand for the products of popular culture can strain the capacity of the environment. Creation of golf courses and consumption of animal products are two examples.

Golf courses consume large quantities of land (80 hectares [200 acres]). In Scotland, where golf originated as part of folk culture, courses are designed to modify the environment as little as possible (see Sustainability & Our Environment feature). Elsewhere in the world, courses may be designed partially in response to local physical conditions. Grass species may be selected to thrive in the local climate and still be suitable for the needs of greens, fairways, and roughs. Existing trees and native vegetation may be retained if possible.

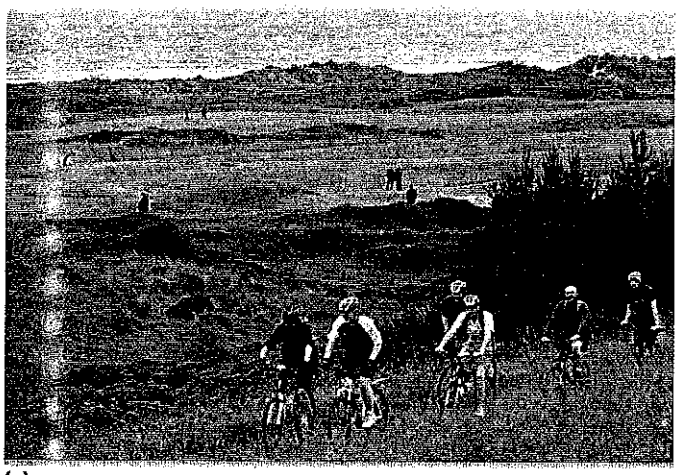
However, more often golf courses are designed to remake the environment by creating or flattening hills, carting in or digging up sand for traps, and draining or expanding bodies of water to create hazards. The courses are planted with nonnative grass species, fertilizers and pesticides are applied to the grass to ensure an appearance considered suitable for the game, and a large quantity of water is needed to maintain the grass, even in the desert.

SUSTAINABILITY & OUR ENVIRONMENT Golf Courses

The modern game of golf originated as a folk custom in Scotland in the fifteenth century or earlier and diffused to other countries during the nineteenth century. In this respect, the history of golf is like that of soccer, described earlier in this chapter. Early Scottish golf courses were primarily laid out on sand dunes adjacent to bodies of water.

Largely because of golf's origin as a local folk custom, golf courses in Scotland do not modify the environment to the same extent as those constructed in more recent years in the United States and other countries, where hills, sand, and grass are imported, often with little regard for local environmental conditions (Figure 4-46). The severe drought in the U.S. West in recent years has brought into question the environmental sustainability of using scarce water supplies for golf courses. Around Las Vegas, Nevada, for example, golf courses account for 20 percent of water usage.

Modern golf also departs from its folk culture roots by being an economically unsustainable sport to play in most places because of high cost.



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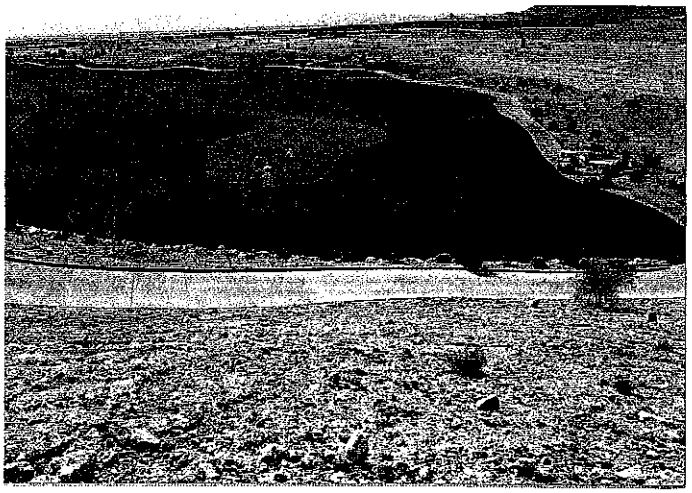


(b)

▲ FIGURE 4-46 **SCOTLAND AND U.S. GOLF COURSES** (a) Scotland's Royal Troon Golf Club was built into a seaside dune with little alteration of the landscape. (b) Bear's Best Course, located in the desert near Las Vegas, Nevada, uses much of the region's scarce water supplies to create grassy fairways and greens.

Diffusion of some popular customs increases demand for animal products, ranging from rare wildlife to common domesticated animals. Some animals are killed for their skins, which can be shaped into fashionable clothing and sold to people living thousands of kilometers from the animals' habitat. The skins of the mink, lynx, jaguar, kangaroo, and whale have been heavily consumed for various articles of clothing, to the point that the survival of these species is endangered. This makes unsustainable the ecological systems of which the animals are members. Folk culture may also encourage the use of animal skins, but the demand is usually smaller than for popular culture.

Increased meat consumption in popular culture has not caused extinction of cattle and poultry; we simply raise more. But animal consumption is an inefficient way for people to acquire calories: It is 90 percent less efficient than if people simply ate grain directly. To produce 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of beef sold in the supermarket, nearly 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of grain are consumed by the animal. For every kilogram of chicken, nearly 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) of grain are consumed by the fowl. This grain could be fed to people directly, bypassing the inefficient meat-production step. With a large percentage of the world's population undernourished, some question the inefficient use of grain to feed animals for eventual human consumption.

CHECK-IN KEY ISSUE 4

Why Do Folk and Popular Culture Face Sustainability Challenges?

- ✓ **Folk culture faces loss of traditional values in the face of rapid diffusion of popular culture.**
- ✓ **Popular culture can cause two environmental concerns: pollution of the landscape and depletion of scarce resources.**

Summary & Review

KEY ISSUE 1

Where are folk and popular leisure activities distributed?

Culture can be divided into folk and popular culture. Folk culture is traditionally practiced primarily by small, homogeneous groups living in isolated rural areas. Popular culture is found in large, heterogeneous societies that share certain habits despite differences in other personal characteristics. Folk culture is transmitted relatively slowly and primarily through relocation diffusion. Popular culture typically diffuses rapidly through a process of hierarchical diffusion.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

1. In what ways does age affect the distribution of leisure activities in folk or popular culture?

▲ **FIGURE 4-47 FOLK LEISURE CULTURE AND AGE** Older man plays boules (also known aspétanque and bocce), Provence, France.

KEY ISSUE 2

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

Material elements of folk culture typically have unknown or multiple origins among groups living in relative isolation, and they diffuse slowly to other locations through the process of relocation diffusion. Popular clothing, food, and shelter vary more in time than in place.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

2. In what ways might gender affect the diffusion of material culture in folk or popular culture?

▲ **FIGURE 4-48 POPULAR MATERIAL CULTURE AND GENDER** What do you typically wear to class?

KEY ISSUE 3

Why is access to folk and popular culture unequal?

Popular culture diffuses rapidly around the world in the twenty-first century primarily through electronic media. TV is by far the world's most important electronic media format. The Internet and social media appear to be following similar patterns of diffusion. Access to electronic media is not equal around the world, and in many places governments are trying to prevent or limit access to what is available.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

3. Why do many governments consider it important to limit the freedom to use social media?

▲ **FIGURE 4-49 PROTESTING CHINA'S INTERNET CENSORSHIP** A woman wears a monitor to protest internet censorship in China, in front of an international computer expo in Hanover, Germany.

KEY ISSUE 4

Why do folk and popular culture face sustainability challenges?

Elements of folk and popular culture face challenges in maintaining identities that are sustainable into the future. For folk culture, the challenges are to maintain unique local landscapes in an age of globalization. For popular culture, the challenges derive from the sustainability of practices designed to promote uniform landscapes.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

4. What types of folk customs might be able to be communicated through social media?

▲ **FIGURE 4-50 FOLK CULTURE MEETS POPULAR CULTURE** Amish boy uses a computer.

KEY TERMS

Acculturation *(p. 138)* The process of adjustment to the dominant culture.

Assimilation *(p. 138)* The process of giving up cultural traditions and adopting the social customs of the dominant culture of a place.

Custom *(p. 112)* The frequent repetition of an act, to the extent that it becomes characteristic of the group of people performing the act.

Folk culture *(p. 112)* Culture traditionally practiced by a small, homogeneous, rural group living in relative isolation from other groups.

Habit *(p. 112)* A repetitive act performed by a particular individual.

Popular culture *(p. 112)* Culture found in a large, heterogeneous society that shares certain habits despite differences in other personal characteristics.

Taboo *(p. 127)* A restriction on behavior imposed by social custom.

Terroir *(p. 126)* The contribution of a location's distinctive physical features to the way food tastes.

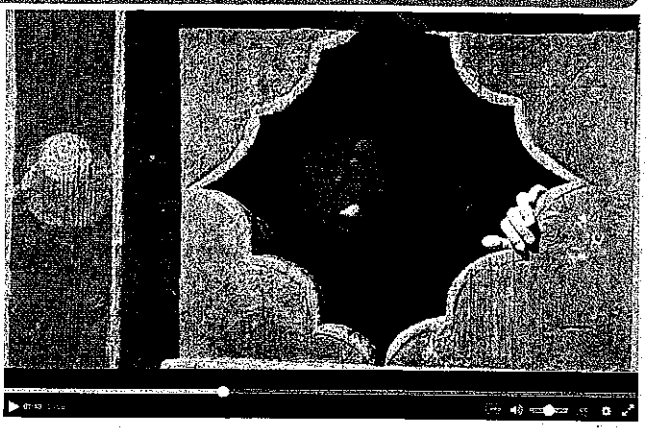
MG GeoVideo

Log in to the **MasteringGeography** Study Area to view this video.

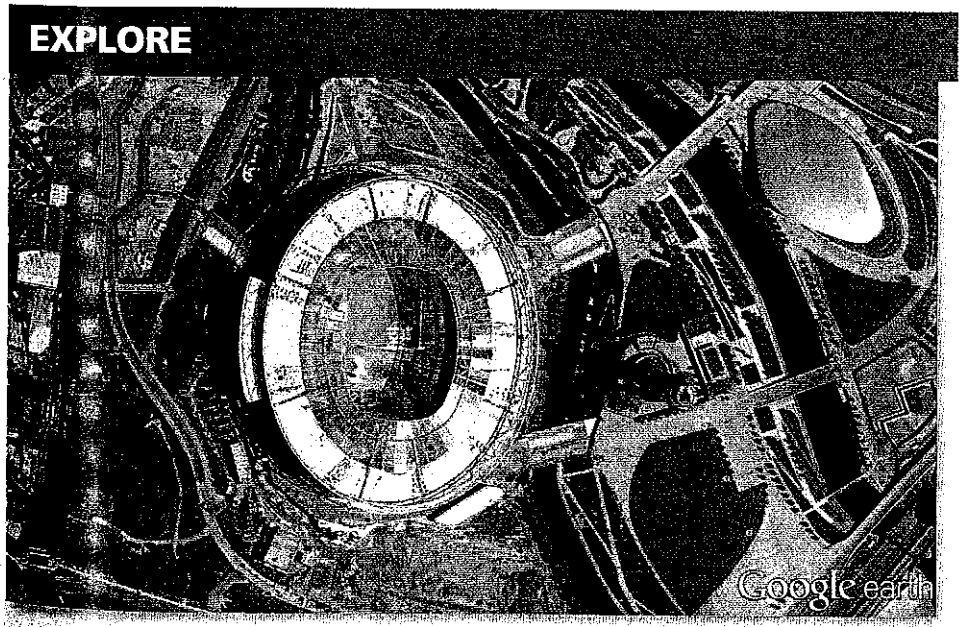
Bhutan

A small kingdom in the Himalaya Mountains between India and China, Bhutan is known for its distinctive folk culture.

1. How is the fact that mountain climbing is forbidden in Bhutan a reflection of the country's folk culture?
2. Based on the video, how prevalent is global, popular culture in Bhutan? Explain.
3. List and discuss at least three reasons for the survival of folk culture in Bhutan.



EXPLORE



Use **Google Earth** to explore the place in London where the 2012 Summer Olympics were held.

1. Fly to *Olympic Stadium, London*.
2. Click Historical Imagery. Move the time slider to 9/1999. What sort of structures occupied the site of the stadium then?
3. Click *More*, then *Transportation*. Zoom out until you see the nearest subway station. What is the straight-line distance from the station to the stadium? What feature prevents walking in a straight line from the station to the stadium?
4. Click *View in Google Maps*. What is the function of the football-shaped building immediately to the east of the stadium?

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