

# Folk and Popular Culture

# 4

## Learning Outcomes

*After reading, studying, and discussing the chapter, students should be able to:*

**Learning Outcome 4.1.1:** Compare the origin, diffusion, and distribution of folk and popular culture.

**Learning Outcome 4.1.2:** Compare the characteristics of folk and popular music.

**Learning Outcome 4.1.3:** Describe how sports have been transformed from folk to popular culture.

**Learning Outcome 4.2.1:** Compare reasons for distribution of clothing styles in folk and popular culture.

**Learning Outcome 4.2.2:** Understand reasons for folk food preferences and taboos.

**Learning Outcome 4.2.3:** Describe regional variations in popular food preferences.

**Learning Outcome 4.2.4:** Understand factors that influence patterns of folk housing.

**Learning Outcome 4.2.5:** Understand variations in time and space of housing in the United States.

**Learning Outcome 4.3.1:** Describe the origin, diffusion, and distribution of TV around the world.

**Learning Outcome 4.3.2:** Compare the diffusion of the Internet and social media with that of TV.

**Learning Outcome 4.3.3:** Understand external and internal threats to folk culture posed by electronic media.

**Learning Outcome 4.4.1:** Summarize challenges for folk culture from diffusion of popular culture.

**Learning Outcome 4.4.2:** Summarize the two principle ways that popular culture can adversely affect the environment.

**Learning Outcome 4.4.3:** Summarize major sources of waste and the extent to which each is recycled.

## Chapter Outline

### Key Issue 1: Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

**Culture** is defined as a collection of social **customs**; customs are repetitive acts of groups. Repetitive acts of individuals are called **habits**. Chapter 4 focuses on two facets of material culture: (1) culture deriving from the necessities of daily life such as food, clothing and shelter, and (2) leisure activities such as the arts and recreation.

The chapter discusses the two major categories of material culture: **folk** and **popular culture**. Folk culture and popular culture differ in their patterns of origins, diffusion, and distribution. Folk culture is practiced by small homogenous groups living in isolated rural areas. Popular culture is found in large heterogeneous societies that share certain customs despite differences in other personal characteristics.

**Origin** Customs originate from hearths. Folk customs are often anonymous while popular customs originate in more developed countries as part of the market for recreational (leisure) and disposable income to purchase these material goods.

**Diffusion** Popular culture diffuses (usually hierarchically) through rapid electronic communications and transportation networks. Folk culture diffuses through relocation diffusion.

**Distribution** Popular culture is distributed widely across many countries, with little regard for physical factors. Folk cultures often (though not always) incorporate elements of the local environment. Groups with relatively little contact with others develop unique folk cultures. Himalayan religious art is used as an example of how isolated religious groups depict the same environment much differently in their art.

**Folk Music** The purpose of folk music is to tell stories or to disseminating information. Folk music typically originates from an anonymous hearth. As people migrate, folk music travels with them as part of the diffusion of folk culture.

**Popular Music** Popular music is deliberately written to be sold and performed. While some forms of popular music contain references to local places or events, the purpose of the music is still to appeal to a variety of people across Earth. As with other elements of popular culture, popular musicians have more connections with performers of similar styles, regardless of where in the world they happen to live, than they do with performers of different styles who happen to live in the same community.

In the past musicians clustered in particular communities according to their shared interest in specific styles. Because of the globalization of popular music, musicians are less tied to the culture of a particular place. Now musicians cluster in communities where other musicians reside regardless of the style of music they play.

**Origin and Diffusion of Popular Sports** Soccer is an example of a popular folk custom that was popularized and then globalized. The hearth of soccer is believed to be in England in the eleventh century. In the 1800s, soccer transformed from a folk custom to a popular culture. Several English soccer clubs formed an association to standardize the rules and to organize professional leagues. Spectators started to pay to see first-class events. Soccer then diffused to other parts of Europe.

Soccer later diffused to other parts of the world by new communication systems such as the radio and TV. Other sports are similar to soccer as elements of popular culture, though the distribution of each sport is different. If a sport becomes popular enough worldwide, it becomes part of the Olympics. For a sport to be included in the Olympics it must be widely played in at least 75 countries (50 countries for women sports) and on four continents.

**Surviving Folk Sports** Most other sports have diffused much less than soccer. Cricket, wushu, baseball, and lacrosse are examples of sports that never became very popular globally.

## **Key Issue 2: Where Are Folk and Popular Material Culture Distributed?**

**Folk Clothing Preferences** People wear distinctive folk clothing for a variety of environmental and cultural reasons. Women who live in countries in Southwest Asia and Northern Europe are discouraged from wearing popular casual Western-style clothing because of religious reasons. On the other hand, some European countries prohibit women from wearing traditional clothing from Southwest Asia and North Africa because the leaders in government believe that those clothes make women seem like second class citizens.

**Rapid Diffusion of Popular Clothing Styles** Popular clothing habits have little regard for the climate or topography of an area. Because of the sufficient incomes, the social desirability of dressing for a particular job or social class, and rapid communications, popular clothing styles can change several times per year across the more developed world. Jeans are an example of how Western popular culture has diffused to other countries. Jeans retain local diversity because different regions of the world prefer a particular style of jeans.

**Folk Food Customs and the Environment** The local climate presents a major influence on what can and cannot be grown. The contribution of a location's distinctive physical features to the way food tastes is known as **terroir**. Folk cultures have had to adapt their food preferences to conditions in their local environment and this has created distinctive local cuisines around the world. Folk cultures will also eat certain foods that are believed to enhance qualities that are considered desirable by their society.

**Food Taboos** The development of food **taboos** are thought to be partly environmental and partly cultural. These taboos may help to protect endangered animals or to conserve scarce natural resources. Many religions have food taboos because they protected the environment of the religion's hearth. Social values can also influence what people eat because people in similar climates and with similar levels of income consume different foods.

**Popular Food Culture** Popular foods and beverages display regional variation depending on what can be locally produced and other cultural influences. Wine serves as a global example, as it is globally popular but not as common in areas which cannot support grapes or where a large part of the population does not consume alcohol. The distinctive character of a wine derives from the vineyard's unique combination of soil, climate, and other physical attributes.

**Environmental Influences on Folk Housing** Folk housing styles are another example of the influence of the physical environment, with housing design reflecting both cultural norms and environmental influences from the type of building material used to the shape of the house to more efficiently heat, cool,

or shed water. Even in areas that share similar climates and available building materials, folk housing can vary because of minor differences in environmental features.

**Sacred Spaces in Houses** Some folk housing distinctive design may also derive primarily from religious values and other customary beliefs. Houses in some folk cultures may have sacred walls or corners. Compass direction may play a big role in how the house was built and how the interior of the house is arranged.

**U.S. Folk Housing** Older houses in the United States from the east coast toward the Mississippi River display a local folk-culture tradition. The distribution of U.S. folk housing styles reflected whatever style was prevailing at the place on the East Coast from which the people migrated from. New housing styles in the United States are increasingly based on popular notions of what a house should look like, which changes over the decades.

**U.S. Popular Housing** The degree of regional differences in housing types in the United States has diminished because rapid communication and transportation systems provide people throughout the country with knowledge of the different styles. A variety of housing styles have come and gone in the United States since the end of World War II.

### **Key Issue 3: Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?**

**Diffusion of TV: Mid-Twentieth Century** Popular culture is diffused faster and further than ever with the invention and diffusion of forms of electronic communication like television. Television allows images and messages about popular culture to spread instantaneously across the globe. Several decades ago, a large percentage of the world's people did not have access to a television because of their lack of income, electricity, or service. Watching TV is now the most popular leisure activity in the world. The technology by which television is delivered is changing throughout the world.

**Diffusion of the Internet: Late Twentieth Century** Internet service has diffused at a rapid pace throughout the world. It has diffused much faster than TV did. It is likely to diffuse even further in the years ahead.

**Diffusion of Social Media: Twenty-First Century** People in the United States have dominated the use of social media during the early years. Social networking websites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube still enjoy their greatest popularity in the United States, but are quickly diffusing to other countries.

**External Threat: Developed Countries Control the Media** Since media outlets are largely Western (especially television programming), their content may present values or beliefs in conflict with those of a particular place receiving those broadcasts. Government may perceive this Western control as a threat to their national systems and attempt to restrict the programming available to the populace.

**Internet Threat: Social Media** In some places around the globe residents have sought out Western programming otherwise not available through the use of satellite dishes. Governments around the world are also trying to limit the Internet content in their countries. Social media has started to play an even more significant role in breaking the monopoly of government control over the diffusion of information.

#### **Key Issue 4: Why Do Folk and Popular Culture Face Sustainability Challenges?**

**The Amish: Preserving Cultural Identity** The Amish are an example of a group in the United States that shuns any mechanical or electrical power. The globalization of popular culture represents to many people in folk cultural societies a loss of traditional values. Many fear the loss of folk culture, especially because of the rising demand for possessions of a popular culture. For folk culture, increased connection with popular culture can make it difficult to maintain centuries-old practices. Folk societies are trying hard to maintain their unique culture in an age of globalization.

**Marriage in India: Challenging Cultural Values** The global diffusion of popular culture has challenged the subservience of women that is embedded in some folk cultures. This has been both a good thing and a bad thing for women in developing countries. The family of the bride in India is sometimes expected to provide the groom with a dowry. Some women in India have actually been killed because their family did not pay a large enough dowry to the groom.

**Landscape Pollution** Although folk culture is not automatically mild in environmental impact, popular culture tends to ignore local environments because of its spatial extent, including the modification of the natural environment. Another impact of popular culture is the creation of uniform landscapes, which many consider unattractive compared to locally diverse landscapes. Uniformity in appearance of the landscape is promoted by structures like gas stations, supermarkets, fast-food restraints, and motels.

Golf courses require large expanses of open, carefully managed grass. Some golf courses are designed partially in response to local physical conditions. Many courses have little regard for local conditions and usually dramatically alter the natural landscape of an area. Golf course remake the environment by creating of flattening hills, cutting grass, carting in or digging up sand for traps, and draining or expanding bodies of water to create hazards.

**Resource Depletion** Popular customs may also involve the overuse and depletion of scarce natural resources. The increased demand for meat is leading to a decrease in the total amount of grain available. Pollution often times results from popular cultural practices. Recycling consumer products is helping to alleviate all the unwanted by-products that usually end up in landfills or burned in incinerators.

### **Ice Breakers**

#### **Pop Culture Trivia**

An exercise in pop culture trivia will remind college students of how much they do know.

Organize a series of questions for the class on popular culture topics ranging from TV shows to Top 40 or “alternative” music, to sports, to Hollywood celebrities.

Now ask a series of questions on a folk-culture-based topic. You might have a favorite to pick from, such as bluegrass music or a lesser-known sport like Jai-Alai. It won't take long for the students to tire of these meaningless (to them) trivia questions.

Now a discussion can be started on the nature of one trivia contest versus the other. Why do so many students know so much about the first category of culture, and so little about the other examples from folk culture? The discussion will serve as an introduction to the differences between folk and popular culture.

## Challenges to Comprehension

### Norms and “Normal”

Younger students may not have previously encountered any discussion of cultural relativism or the construction of social norms. The text introduces this idea with a discussion of habits, customs, and taboos but does not explicitly address the challenge of understanding other material cultures from their own perspective.

Consider introducing a common North American custom in an unfamiliar context. For example, “A drug crop is grown in fields, where it is harvested and put into 100-pound bags. These bags are sold by the farmer for anywhere between \$70 and \$100. The product is then brought into another country, often using middlemen, where it is processed, refined, and sometimes mixed with other substances before being sold on the street. The final market value of the original bag can now be as high as seven to ten thousand dollars. What are we talking about?”

Some students will guess “cocaine”, many more “marijuana,” but few or none will guess the real subject of this word problem: **coffee!**

Ask your students how they reacted to the idea of the drug as an “illegal” or “abnormal” one versus a “normal” one; then discuss whether we bring these prejudices to bear on other material cultures.

### Uniform Landscapes

The Chamber of Commerce in your hometown wants to hire you to create a new town seal. Is there a symbol or symbols that reflect the unique identity of your town? Is the cultural and/or physical landscape of your town distinctive enough to create a real sense of place? Will you end up having to turn down the job because your hometown is the definition of “Anytown U.S.A.”?

## Assignments

### Review/ Reflection Questions

- Describe a distinctive food preference that your family has and trace its origins to a folk hearth. If you don’t have one, use an example that you’ve heard or seen (not from the book).
- List some of your food taboos and give an explanation for each. How many have to do with cultural traditions you’ve inherited, and how many have to do with cultural views you’ve adopted as an adult?
- Social websites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are changing the way that popular and folk cultures are diffused. Give and support an argument for how the Internet might aid the preservation, or even expansion, of some folk cultural elements.

- Describe one activity of popular culture that you engage in and evaluate its impact on the environment. What might a folk cultural alternative to your activity be?
- Describe a personal habit, a custom that you follow that is not generically “popular culture,” and a culture that you follow. Be sure to define and explain each one, and then try to explain where each one originated.
- Do you consider your culture to be part of the “dominant” culture at this school? If “yes,” explain how you observe other cultures and why you make these observations. If “no,” explain how the dominant culture influences your own culture.

### **Cultural Observation Assignment**

For this assignment, you’ll observe the *cultural landscape* of one part of our community. You can choose a location that represents popular culture (e.g., a mall, the campus bookstore, a coffee shop, a park, a street intersection) or folk culture (e.g., a folk art festival, a street market, a musical performance). You’ll need to use all five of your senses to study a particular/event and report on your observation.

### **Objectives**

First, prepare a plan of your objectives. Where will you be going? What are you planning to observe? How will you record your observations? Write this plan down to give your investigation a more direct focus.

### **Observations**

Go to the location you’ve selected for your observation and spend some time there. Your report should include detailed observations of the site and situation characteristics of your location, so take careful notes.

Find a good place to make your observations and stay for at least one hour. Take notes on what you’ve decided to observe. You may also change your mind about what is most important to observe.

Attach your observation notes to the end of your assignment.

### **Results**

Present the results of your observations. Depending on what and how you choose to observe some elements of culture, you might arrange your results in a table, or you might summarize your observations in several paragraphs.

### **Discussion**

Now write about 500 words discussing what you observed. Make sure to relate your observations to key concepts in Chapter 4 and earlier chapters.

Your final paper should have following section: Objective, Results, Discussion, and your observation notes attached after your bibliography.

For additional review and test prep materials, have your students visit *MasteringGeography™* to access a variety of resources, including interactive maps, videos, Google Earth activities, RSS feeds, flashcards, web links, and self-study quizzes.

## Thinking Geographically Questions

*4.1: In what ways might gender affect the distribution of leisure activities in folk or popular culture?*

Folk culture women may have limited access to many areas of the city. In fundamentalist Muslim societies women are typically not allowed out of the home without a male escort. Their leisure activities are mostly limited to the home.

Women in a popular culture are not restricted to where they can go. Many businesses in malls cater exclusively to women. Many women use the mall as a place to meet up with other women. Many female oriented businesses are also clustered around aerobics studios. Women spend time patronizing these businesses after working out. Women also tend to congregate in parks with large playgrounds because many are taking care of small children.

*4.2: Which elements of material culture do countries depict in campaigns to promote tourism?*

Countries generally depict the distinct food, clothing, architecture, as well as leisure activities of a country when promoting tourism. One example of a country that successfully promotes the material culture of a region in order to attract tourists is Mexico. Tourism is a huge part of Mexico's economy. Mexico is spending a lot of money promoting the Mayan ruins in the southern part of the country. When most people think of ancient pyramids they tend to think of Egypt, but Mexico has some pyramids that are just as impressive. Advertisements promote the rich history and culture of Mexico by showing images of the countries distinct architecture, art, and clothing.

You will often find pictures of vacationers lounging on the beach while eating a taco and sipping a margarita in Mexican tourism advertising. Many times Mexico's beautiful five star beachfront resorts are also shown. Images of bullfights, Mariachi bands, and wild dance clubs are also commonly found in their tourist brochures.

*4.3: Which elements of the physical environment are emphasized in the portrayal of places on TV?*

Many times imposing snow-capped mountains and sunny coastlines are emphasized on television. American's perception of what is a desirable physical environment has changed over time. Seventy-five years ago very few people permanently lived in the Rocky Mountains, with the exception of a small number of ranchers. Today some of the most expensive houses in the United States are in the Rocky Mountains. Cities like Vail, Aspen, and Steamboat Springs have extremely high-end real estate because of popularity of skiing in those areas. Many retirees are also moving to old mining towns in the Rocky Mountains because they find these towns rustic, nostalgic, and quaint.

Coastlines have always been a popular area to settle in the United States. Many people are moving from the frigid northeast coast to the temperate beaches of the Southeast and Gulf Coast. The Desert Southwest used to be viewed as a wasteland by most people, but more and more Americans are finding the Desert



Southwest to be scenic. Not as many Americans find the flat, treeless prairies of the Great Plains and Midwest desirable.

*4.4: Are there examples of groups in North America besides the Amish that have successfully resisted the diffusion of popular culture?*

The Hutterites are another group in North America that has successfully resisted the diffusion of popular culture. About 425 colonies of Hutterites exist across Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. The Hutterites fled Europe in the late nineteenth century because they wanted to avoid religious persecution. They are called Anabaptists, which is a form of Christianity that broke away from the Catholic Church and Protestant Churches. They live by themselves in rural areas and try to interact with the rest of society as little as possible.

The Hutterites accept technology to help them farm, but do not accept consumer goods which encourage individualistic behaviors. Television, computers, cell phones, and radios are not allowed. The Hutterites also live communally instead of with their individual families. The colonists eat every meal together and join together every night for a religious service that is spoken in archaic German. Marriages happen across colonies, and women move to their husband's colony after marriage. The children are raised not only by the parents, but by the whole colony.

### **Pause and Reflect Questions**

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

There is cultural diversity in the Himalayas because the different groups of people are geographically isolated from one another. The Himalayas feature many of the highest peaks in the world, and access to many areas is very difficult. There is almost no interaction among many of the inhabitants of the Himalayas.

*4.1.2: What type of popular music do you like? Where does it fit in the popular music maps?*

I like rock-n-roll music. There are several areas on the popular music map that have rock-n-roll listed.

*4.3.1: Are there any Olympic sports in which the United States does not even field a team?*

The U.S. fields a team in every Olympic sport.

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

Children in schools can't wear clothes with obscene images or words. Girls in school can't wear clothing that is too revealing and boys can't wear pants that are too baggy or expose their underwear. Clothing that is associated with gangs are also banned from most schools.

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

One food I really try to avoid is mushrooms. They are so gross! I hate their taste, their texture, and the way they look. Why would a person want to eat a piece of fungus? Yuk!

*4.2.3: Do your food preferences match the predominant ones in your region?*

I have lived in Southern California my whole life. I eat Mexican food almost every day. It is difficult to find any restaurants in my hometown that don't serve Mexican food. I am a product of my environment.

A few Asian restaurants have opened up in the area lately. This is due to the increasing Asian immigration into Southern California.

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

The way I arranged my bed was not based on any cultural or religious reasons. I try to keep my bed as far away from the window as possible. My window faces toward the east and it lets in a lot of sunlight in the morning. I have blinds on the window, but it still lets in some sun.

*4.2.5: Can you describe your house through reference to one of the past or present styles?*

I live in a neocolonial style house. Many of the houses in my city are the neocolonial style houses. I live in a suburban area and most everybody has a car. Having an attached garage on the side of the house seems to be very popular with people in suburban Southern California.

*4.3.1: How much TV do you watch? Which type of programs do you watch? Do you watch on a traditional TV set, or do you watch on a computer, tablet, or smart phone?*

I watch about an hour to two hours of TV a day. I get my television through an antenna. We get about 20 channels, though half of them are in Spanish. Sometimes certain channels won't come in, depending on the weather conditions. With limited programming options, I usually end up watching the news or old movies. We have a computer, but I never watch TV on it.

*4.3.2: Which social media do you prefer to use? Why?*

I use e-mail and the telephone. I don't text message or have a Facebook account. I am resistant to new technology unless it benefits my career.

*4.3.3: What would be a specific example of a distinctively American perspective on a U.S. TV show?*

All U.S. TV shows have some sort of an American perspective. You are not going to find an American situation comedy where the women are completely docile and can't leave the home without a male escort. You are also not going to find any shows where the male children forgo school to stay home and learn their father's trade. Lastly, you are not going to find an American situation comedy where marriages are prearranged by the parents and have nothing to do with romantic courtship.

*4.4.1: In what ways might the Amish need to interact with popular culture?*

I don't know what their policy is on seeking medical help. If somebody has a heart attack or stroke are they not allowed to be taken to a local hospital? Maybe their beliefs are so strong that they would rather die than interact with popular culture.

*4.4.2.: How might fast-food restaurants reduce adverse impacts on the environment?*

They could try to limit the amount of packaging they use. How often have you seen a McDonalds or Taco Bell bag or cup on the side of the road? Most litter seems to be from fast-food places.

*4.4.3: Which, if any, recycling systems operate in your community?*

California believes that recycling is very important. There are recycling centers behind most major grocery stores in the state. These recycling centers pay people for their used aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and glass bottles. These recycling centers are so popular that people will sometimes have to wait in line for an hour at these facilities.

## **Google Earth Questions**

*GOOGLE EARTH 4.1: Connections among Nepal's diverse folk culture groups are hindered by what feature of the physical environment? What does the white represent in the image of Nepal?*

The physical environment is rugged and mountainous; the white represents snow-covered mountain crests.

*GOOGLE EARTH 4.2: Rudesheim, Germany, a wine-producing community, is surrounded by hillside vineyards. Towards which direction (east, west, north, or south) do most of these vineyards slope, and how does this orientation maximize exposure to sunlight?*

The vineyards slope south, toward the river, unobstructed by hills or trees. This orientation maximizes exposure to the sun as it passes above Earth to the south.

*GOOGLE EARTH 4.3: Kathmandu, Nepal, situated at the foot of rugged mountains, is one of the world's most physically isolated capitals. TripAdvisor considers BoudhaNath Stupa to be the top attraction in Kathmandu. Using the Find Business and ruler features of Google Earth, how far is it from the stupa to the nearest Internet café?*

The nearest Internet café SB Communications & Cyber Café is 1.5 kilometers west of the stupa.

*GOOGLE EARTH 4.4: Paradise, Pennsylvania, is in the heart of Amish country. If you fly to 269 Old Leacock Road in Paradise and drag to street view, what distinctive feature of Amish culture is visible?*

The horse and buggy.

## **Resources**

**American Cultural History, 19th and 20th Centuries**

Entertaining and informative details of American popular culture from the last 200 years. Produced by Kingwood College Library references librarians, Kingwood, Texas.

[kclibrary.lonestar.edu/19thcentury.html](http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/19thcentury.html) (Note: not all pages currently link to the correct decade. You may have to append the directory yourself, e.g. [/19thcentury1860.htm](http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/19thcentury1860.htm)).

[kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decades.html](http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decades.html)

### **Encyclopedia Smithsonian: American Social and Cultural History**

[www.si.edu/encyclopedia\\_si/nmah/](http://www.si.edu/encyclopedia_si/nmah/)

Exhaustive resource for educators and students.

## **Connections between Chapters**

### **Back to Chapter 1**

The spread and influence of different elements of material culture can be understood in the discussion of diffusion. Remind students of the importance of these terms in understanding how folk and popular cultures spread. The globalization of culture is also referenced in Chapter 1.

### **Back to Chapter 3**

Remind your students that folk cultures are most often spread by relocation diffusion, so the link between Chapter 3 and 4 should be clearer. Students might reflect on whether it is simply migration that is a source of conflict, or whether culture plays a larger role.

### **Forward to Chapter 5**

Language and popular culture are interrelated in the formation of new slang and the creation of new words. As a transition to Chapter 5, have the students list words that did not exist 10 to 20 years ago. Numerous examples from the Internet and technology will be offered.

## **Cultural Geography Term Paper**

Ethnicity is identity with a group of people who share the cultural traditions of a particular homeland. Our own ethnicity (culture and experience) shapes our beliefs and also influences our perceptions of differing people and places encountered throughout our lives. Therefore, it is important to reflect on and understand our own opinions. Furthermore, we need to increase our awareness of the diversity of people and places not only in the world at large, but also in our own fascinating, multicultural Southern California environment. You must, however, get out and about to experience and taste this richness for yourself.

This assignment (fieldwork) is intended to be enjoyable. You choose the time and the place. Many students have combined this assignment with a family outing, a date, time with friends or even have formed informal groups with classmates to venture out together. It is your choice.

### **Procedure**

1. Choose one of the locations from the attached list. No passports are required to explore Southern California's many ethnic neighborhoods.
2. You need to thoughtfully answer the questions below using as much detail as possible in your descriptions. Be observant to the sights, sounds, and smells that create this unique sense of place. Your responses to the questions need to be typed (using 12 point font) and double spaced. Your responses need to be numbered and you should not write out the questions. You will be required to turn in at least two full pages, but most students usually need more than two pages to adequately respond to all the questions.
3. You need to write an essay discussing your visit from a geographical perspective. The essay needs to be at least one full page. Your essay must be typed (using twelve point font) and double spaced. Some possible topics in your essay could be: (1) how the landscape is arranged, (2) the creation of a cultural landscape (architecture), (3) characteristics of the homeland country (political, economic, environmental, cultural) that creates push factors for migration, and so on. Be sure to connect the attributes of the homeland your ethnic enclave represents. Include your internal reactions and feelings about this place briefly in your conclusion.

### **Questions**

1. Where did you go? Which ethnic, cultural group is dominant here?
2. Why do you think most of the people in this area migrated to the United States? What do you think are the push/pull factors?

3. What landscape elements do you think give this area a distinctive appearance from surrounding areas? **Be specific**—describe buildings, architecture, spatial arrangement, clothing, types of stores, and music that you encounter.
4. Try a new ethnic food (it doesn't have to be expensive, just a little exotic to you and typical of what is common in the homeland). What did you try? Did you like or dislike it? What ingredients were in it?
5. Do you see outward symbols of religious systems that are associated with the homeland? Look closely and describe. Does it help or hinder your cultural understanding of this ethnic group?
6. Do you see evidence of the convergence of traditional and modern worlds? If so describe them—look for impacts of communications and technological systems. What kind of connections are going on between the homeland and this region?
7. Look at products sold in stores and businesses. Do you see references to specific locations in the homeland? What cities and regions are on the labels of products? Where are the goods made?
8. What types of economic activities and businesses do you find here? Are there any surprises? Are there any specific businesses that reflect social customs from the homeland? Describe.
9. Any interesting (or perhaps strange to you) items for sale in these stores? People and cultures perceive and utilize resources differently—what is your cultural response to the unique items you see?
10. New immigrant groups have always tried to recreate their homelands when they migrated to the United States. Why do you think it is helpful for new arrivals to the United States to live in or near an ethnic enclave? Do you think you would be attracted to an American enclave if you moved to a foreign country?

**Due Date:** The day of the Final Exam. **No late papers will be accepted.**

#### AROUND THE WORLD: ETHNIC AREAS PROVIDE GLIMPSES OF OTHER CULTURES

Compiled by Lori E. Miller, Recreated from *Los Angeles Times*, Southland Funbook

***Alpine Village in Torrance:*** [www.alpinevillage.net](http://www.alpinevillage.net)

833 West Torrance Boulevard at Harbor (110) Freeway

Features: This Bavarian-style marketplace, started by German speaking shopkeepers is laced with stores, eateries, nightly entertainment, a market and a wedding chapel. An outdoor Oktoberfest is held September–October.

Hours: Shops generally open from 11 A.M.–6 P.M. daily with extended hours for restaurants

Parking: Free

***Chinatown in Los Angeles:*** [www.lachinesechamber.org](http://www.lachinesechamber.org)

Bounded by Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Bernard, Figueroa, and Alameda streets

Features: Central Plaza, guarded by its Filial Piety, is flanked with narrow walkways and tiny shops. Nearby are herb shops, fresh fish stores, and eateries.

Hours: Shops generally open from 10 A.M.–6 P.M. daily with extended hours for restaurants

Parking: Lots and metered parking along city streets

### ***El Pueblo de Los Angeles (Olvera Street) in Los Angeles***

Intersection of Main and Alameda Streets

Features: Considered to be the birthplace of Los Angeles, this historic enclave consists of 27 landmark buildings, as well as a strip of colorful shops and taquerias lining Olvera Street.

Hours: 10 A.M.- 9 P.M. daily. Docent-led walking tours are offered at 10 A.M., 11A.M., and noon Wednesday through Sunday

Parking: Various lots and metered parking along city streets

### ***Fairfax District in Los Angeles***

Fairfax Boulevard between Beverly Boulevard and Melrose Avenue

Features: Home to a large Jewish population. This district remains an intricate part of the city's Jewish community. Lining the pavement are storefronts containing mostly delicatessens and Kosher markets.

Hours: Stores generally open from 10A.M.–6 P.M. daily with extended hours for restaurants

Parking: Various lots and metered parking along city streets

### ***Koreatown in Los Angeles***

Between 4th Street and Olympic Boulevard, and Western and Vermont Avenue

Features: Colorful storefronts and restored bungalows can be found in this area that is home to the Korean Cultural Center (offering art exhibits and a resource library); Korean grocery, music, and clothing stores; and Korean restaurants.

Hours: Vary by establishment

Parking: Various lots and metered parking along city streets

### ***Leimert Park in Los Angeles***

Bounded by Crenshaw Boulevard, 43rd Street, Leimert Boulevard, and 43rd Place

Features: Consisting of nearly a dozen pedestrian-friendly blocks, this urban village offers a wealth of Afrocentric themed shops and services. Also a popular area for African-American artists, poets, and musicians.

Hours: Stores generally open from 10A.M.–6 P.M. daily with extended hours for restaurants

Parking: Various lots and metered parking along city streets

***Little India in Artesia***

Pioneer Boulevard between 183rd and 187th streets

Features: Among the flour-block stretch of mini malls and Indian eateries are shops laden with silk saris, jewelry, home accessories, and other exotic imports.

Hours: 11 A.M.–8 P.M. Tuesday through Sunday

Parking: Two-hour street parking is available along Pioneer Boulevard from 7am- 6pm

***Little Saigon in Westminster***

9200 block of Bolsa Avenue

Features: The Asian Garden and New Saigon Mall is the gateway to Orange County’s most exotic community. A variety of shops and restaurants, which number more than 200, contain healing herbs, imported wares, jewelry, and a variety of other items. A visit to the Cultural Court reveals a display of artwork and statues depicting Asian history.

Hours: Vary by establishment

Parking: Free

***Little Tokyo in Los Angeles:*** [www.janet.org](http://www.janet.org)

Bounded by Los Angeles Street, Central Avenue, and 1st and 3rd streets

Features: This historic neighborhood is home to a cultural center, theater, museum, Buddhist temple, plaza-style shopping center, boutiques, and restaurants.

Hours: Stores generally open from 10A.M.–6 P.M. daily with extended hours for restaurants

Parking: Various lots and metered parking along city streets

***Thai Town in Hollywood:*** [thaicdc.org](http://thaicdc.org)

Along Hollywood Boulevard (between Western and Normandie Avenues)

Features: Shops, marketplaces, bookstores, and cafes.

Hours: Most businesses operate from 8 A.M.–10 P.M.

Parking: Free parking at Thailand Plaza, as well as metered parking along Hollywood Boulevard and neighboring streets