

Chapter 4: Folk and Popular Culture

KEY ISSUE #1:

- Where are folk and popular leisure activities distributed?

Learning Outcomes

- Compare the origin, diffusion, and distribution of folk and popular culture.
- Compare the characteristics of folk and popular music.
- Describe how sports have been transformed from folk to popular culture.

A COMMON NORTH AMERICAN CUSTOM

“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?”

And the answer is....

Did you guess “cocaine?”

Did you guess “marijuana?”

Well...YOU'RE WRONG!!

The real subject of this word problem: **coffee!**

What do you think about the idea of the drug coffee as an “illegal” or “abnormal” one versus a “normal” one?

Do we bring these prejudices to bear on other material cultures?

Folk Culture

- Practiced by small, homogeneous groups living in isolated rural areas.
- Smaller Regions
- Derived from local natural elements
- More sustainable in the protection and enhancement of the environment
- Change relatively little over time
- More likely to vary from place to place at a given time

Popular Culture

- Found in large, heterogeneous societies that share certain habits despite differences in other personal characteristics.
- Global scale is becoming more dominant
- Less likely to reflect concern for the sustainability of physical conditions
- More likely to modify the environment
- More likely to vary from time to time at a given place

Elements of Culture

- Daily necessities: Food, clothing, and shelter
- Leisure activities: Arts and Creation

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- How culture influences behavior.
 - Habit vs. custom
 - **Habit** is a repetitive act performed by an individual.
 - One college student wears skinny jeans.
 - **Custom** is a repetitive act performed by a group.
 - All college students from the American South wear skinny jeans.

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- Social customs produces a group's material culture
- Custom may be used to denote a specific element of material culture (like wearing jeans)
- Culture refers to a group's entire collection of customs.

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- Characteristics of:

- ***Folk Culture***

- Anonymous hearths (center of innovation)
 - » Possible to have multiple hearths each originating independently
 - Anonymous sources
 - Unknown dates
 - Unidentified originators

- ***Popular Culture***

- Product of developed countries
 - » Typically North American or European
 - Origin often traceable to specific person or corporation in a particular place

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- Diffusion
 - ***Folk Culture***
 - Smaller scale and slower transmissions from one location to another primarily through **relocation diffusion** (migration)
 - ***Popular Culture***
 - Tends to be transmitted by way of **hierarchical diffusion**
 - » Diffuses rapidly and extensively from hearths or nodes of innovation with help of modern communications

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- Distribution

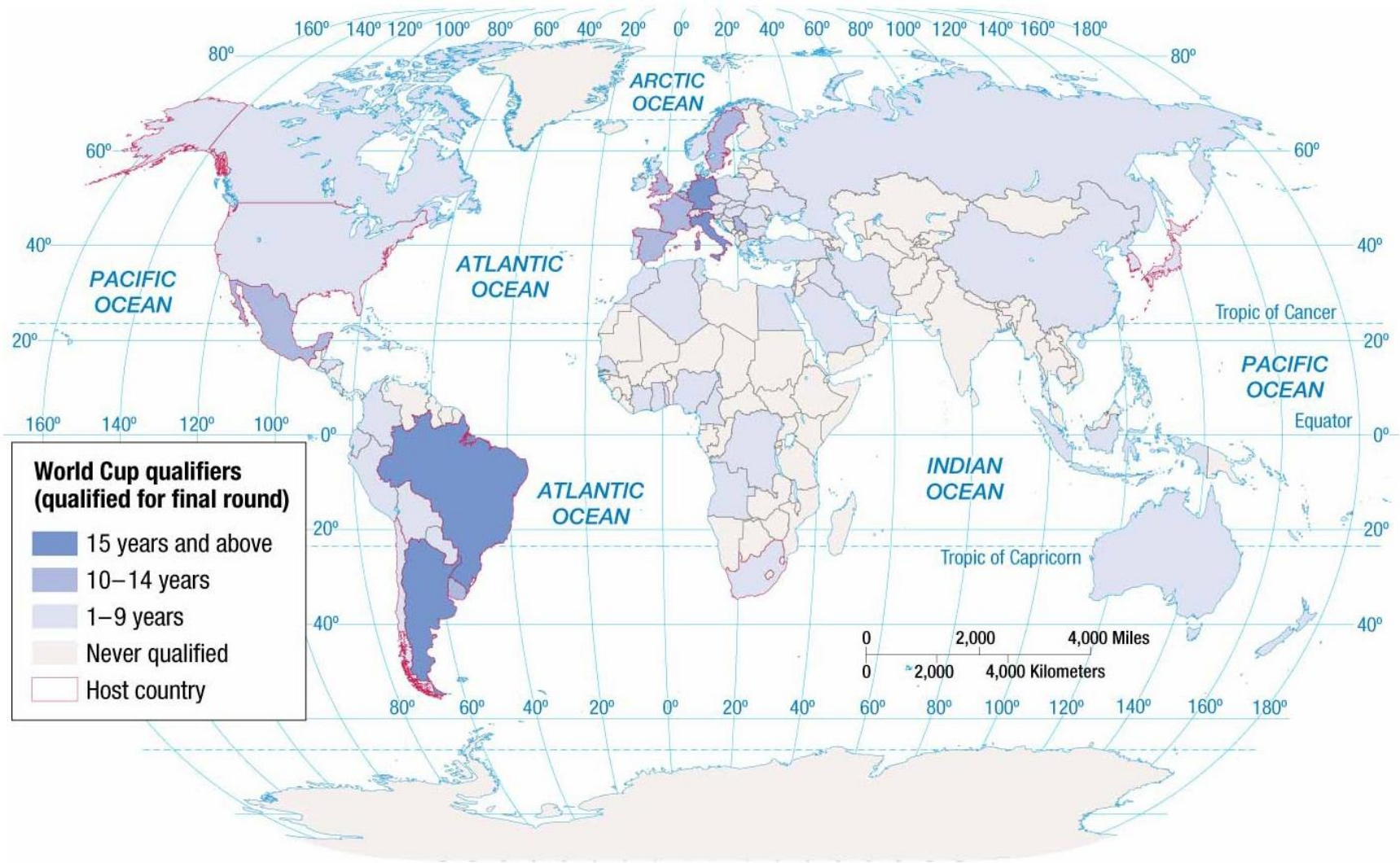
- ***Folk Culture***

- Combination of local physical and cultural factors influence distinctive distributions.
 - » Isolation from other cultures because of physical barriers—e.g., distance and mountain ranges
 - » Religion

- ***Popular Culture***

- Widely distributed across many countries with little regard for physical factors
 - » Principal obstacle to access is lack of income to purchase the material

Global Sports: World Cup



Most countries in Europe and Latin America have qualified for the World Cup finals. As soccer diffuses worldwide, qualification has increased in other regions.

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- Origin and Diffusion of **Folk Music**
 - Originates anonymously
 - Transmitted orally
 - Modifications to songs over successive generations to represent changes in conditions.
 - Content of songs centers on events in daily life that are familiar to the majority of people.
 - Life-Cycle events
 - » E.g., birth, death, or marriage
 - Environmental features
 - » E.g., agriculture or climate
 - Migration of people also diffuses the music.

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- Origin and Diffusion of **Popular Music**
 - Music written by specific individuals with the intent of being...
 - Sold
 - Performed in front of a paying audience
 - Often displays a high degree of technical skill
 - Musicians often have strong connections with other similar musicians that may span the globe.
 - Limited connections with local musicians of different genres

Where Are Folk and Popular Leisure Activities Distributed?

- **Origin and Diffusion of Folk and Popular Sports**

- Sports originated as isolated folk customs and diffused like other folk culture via relocation diffusion.

- **Example:**

- Football (soccer) originated in England in the eleventh century.
- Transformation from folk to popular sport began in 1800s when organized clubs were formed in the UK.
 - » Professional players hired
- Standardized rules and organized professional league established in 1863 in UK marks formal transition from folk sport to popular sport.

CRICKET: Boys play cricket in Katni, India.



Folk or Popular Sport?

Chapter 4: Folk and Popular Culture

KEY ISSUE #2:

- Where are folk and population material culture distributed?

Learning Outcomes

- Describe reasons for distribution of clothing styles in folk and popular culture.
- Describe reasons for folk food preferences and taboos.
- Describe regional variations in popular food preferences.
- Understand factors that influence patterns of folk housing.
- Understand variations in time and space of housing in the United States

Pop Culture Trivia

- 1. Create 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.
- 2. Next create 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.
- NOW: Let's see what the class knows...

Question to consider:

Why do so many students know so much about the first category of culture, and so little about the other examples from folk culture?

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Folk and Popular Material Culture
 - Include:
 - Clothing
 - Food
 - Shelter
 - Diffusion
 - ***Folk material culture diffuses slowly*** through process of migration.
 - ***Popular material culture diffuses rapidly.***
 - Access determined by having sufficient income to embrace it.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Clothing

- **Folk Clothing Preferences**

- Style of clothing worn in response to distinctive agricultural practices and climatic conditions

- Ex.

- » Folk custom in the Netherlands to wear wooden shoes because of practical uses in wet climates.
 - » Fur-lined boots protect against cold in arctic climates.

- **Popular Clothing Preferences**

- Style of clothing generally reflects occupation and income rather than particular environment.

- Ex.

- » Business suits worn by professionals
 - » Designer clothes worn by the affluent

DUTCH WOODEN SHOES A man wearing wooden shoes bikes on a flooded street in Stellendam, Netherlands.



Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Rapid Diffusion of Popular Clothing Styles
 - Improved communications central to rapid diffusion
 - Ex. Time for original designs for women's dresses to be designed in fashion capitals—e.g., Paris or London—and reproductions available in stores has diminished from years to a few weeks.
 - Jeans is an important symbol of the diffusion of Western popular culture.
 - Local Diversity may show folk culture
 - Japan: customized with patches and cutouts
 - Korea: frayed, ripped, or shredded
 - Italy: bleached on seat of jeans

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Folk Food Preferences

- People adapt their food preferences to conditions in the environment.

- Asia

- Rice: milder, moister regions
 - Wheat: drier regions

- Europe

- Italy: preference for quick-frying foods resulted from fuel shortages
 - Northern Europe: abundant wood supply encouraged slow stewing and roasting of foods

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Folk Food Taboos
- Many folk customs attribute a signature, or distinctive characteristic, to everything in nature.
- People may desire or avoid certain foods, as a result of perceived beneficial or harmful natural traits.
- Restriction imposed by a social custom to eat particular plants or animals that are believed to embody negative forces.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

DO NOT WRITE

- Taboos often related to environmental concerns.
 - Hebrews: Pig, for example, is more suited for sedentary farming not pastoral nomadism.
 - Muslims: Pigs are unsuited for the dry lands of the Arabian Peninsula. They would compete with humans for food and water and not be a beast of burden.
 - Hindu: Huge numbers of oxen are needed to for agriculture in India.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Popular Food Preferences
 - Differences among Countries
 - Cola preferences can be influenced by politics.
 - » Soviet Union: Pepsi permitted for sale in country
 - » Russia: Many former Soviets switched to Coke, because Pepsi was associated with communism.
 - Cola preferences can be influenced by religion.
 - » Southwest Asia: Predominantly Muslim countries boycotted products sold in Jewish Israel—e.g., Coke.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Folk and Popular Food Preferences

- Popular Food Culture

- Regional Differences within the United States

- Americans may choose beverages or snacks based on what is produced, grown, or imported locally.

- » Wine consumption relatively high in California where most of the U.S. production is located.

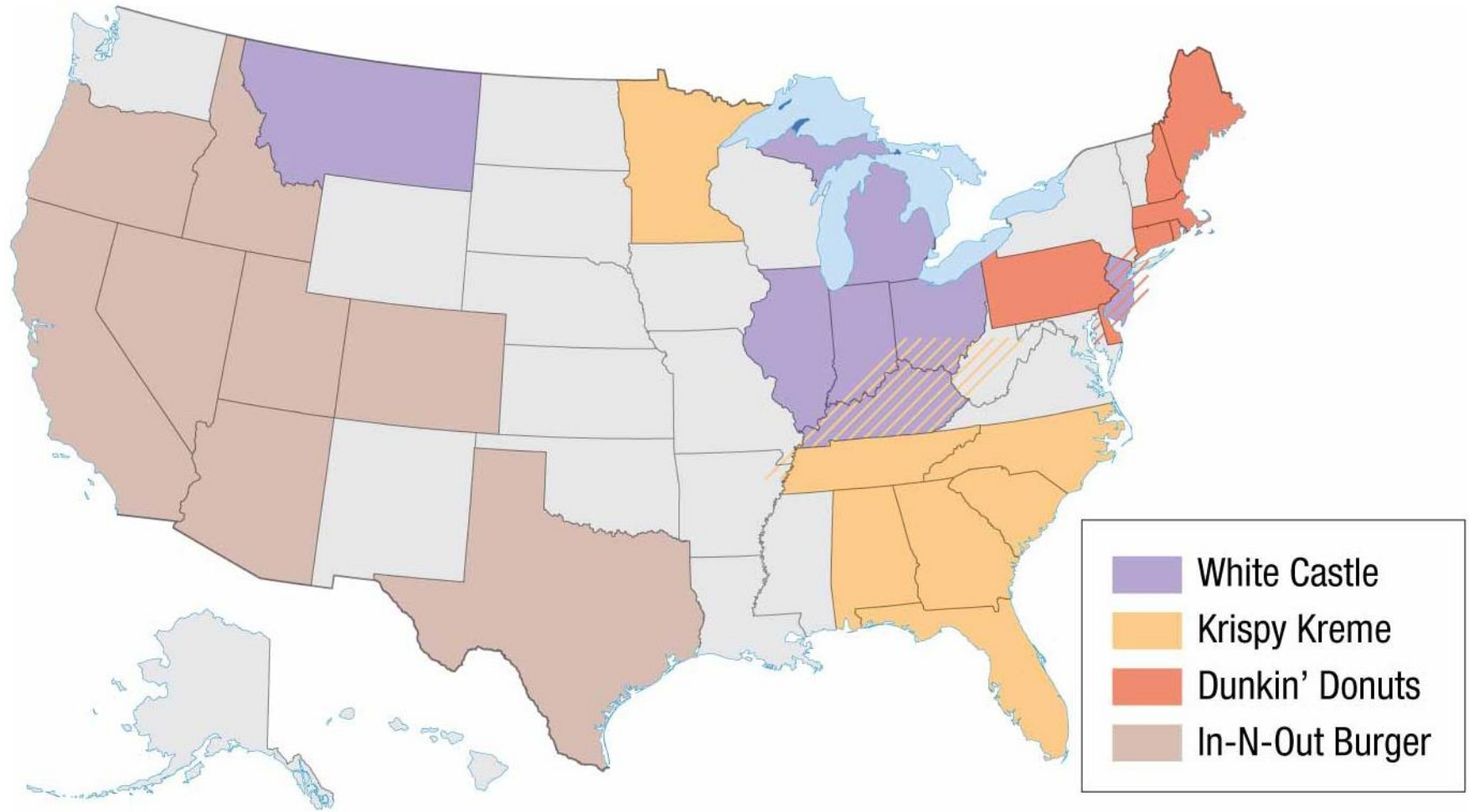
- Cultural backgrounds affect the amount and types of alcohol and snack foods consumed.

- » Relatively little alcohol is consumed in Utah because of the strong presence of the Church of Latter-day Saints that advocates against drinking alcohol.

- » High consumption in Nevada where resorts located.

- » Texans may prefer tortilla chips in greater numbers because of strong Hispanic American presence.

FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT PREFERENCES



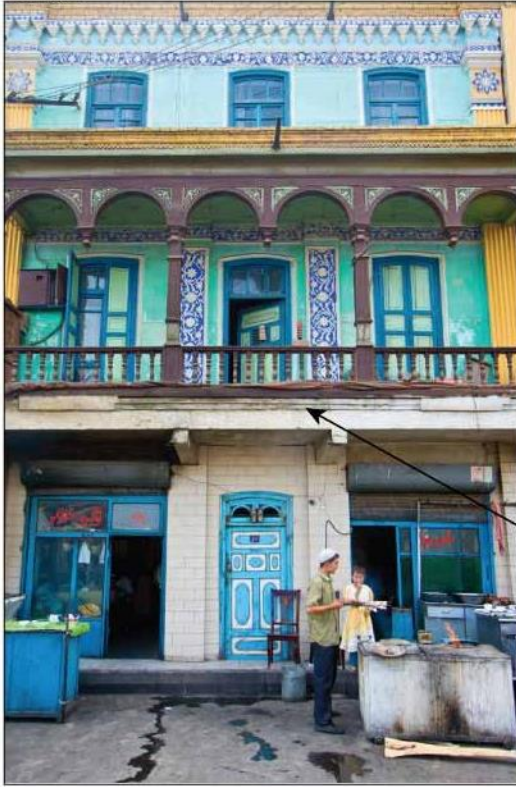
Dunkin' Donuts is especially popular in the Northeast, Krispy Kreme in the Southeast, White Castle in the Midwest, and In-N-Out Burger in the Southwest.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Distribution of Folk and Popular Housing
 - Environmental Influences on Folk Housing
 - Available resources influence building materials used on folk houses—e.g., stone, grass, sod, and skins.
 - Two Most Common
 - » Wood
 - » Brick
 - Climate and local topography influence design of housing structures.
 - R. W. McColl compared houses in four Chinese villages.
 - » All used similar building materials, including adobe and timber from desert poplar tree.
 - » Distinct designs in each location attributed to local cultural preference and local geography.

HOUSE TYPES IN FOUR WESTERN CHINA COMMUNITIES

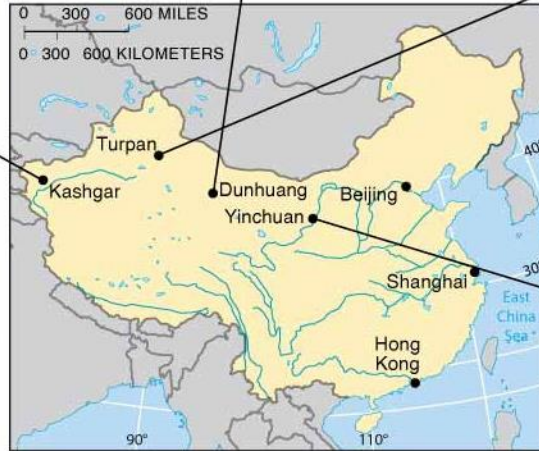
Kashgar



Dunhuang



Turpan



Yinchuan

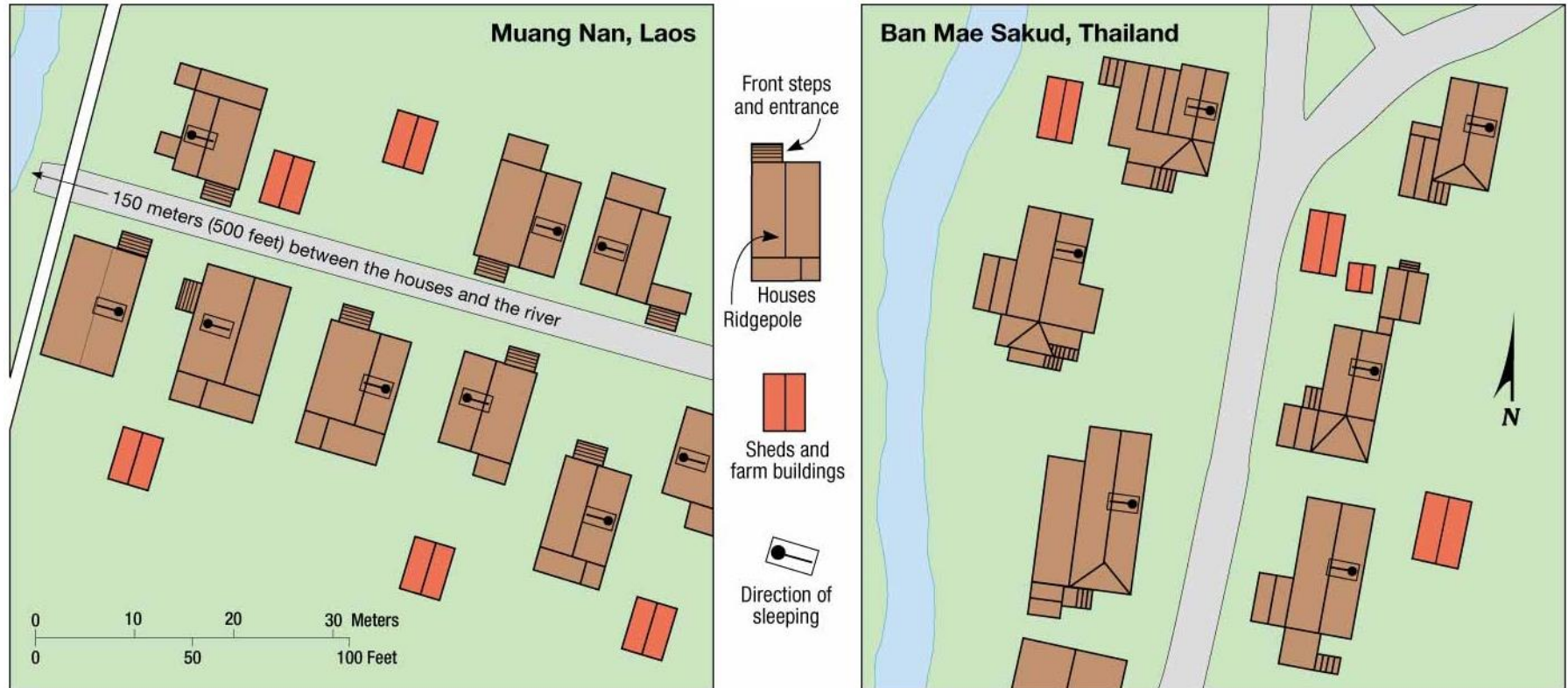


House types in four communities of western China. Houses have second-floor open-air patios in Kashgar, small open courtyards in Turpan, large private courtyards in Yinchuan, and sloped roofs in Dunhuang.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- Sacred Spaces in Houses
 - Distinctive form of folk houses may derive from religious or other customary beliefs.
 - Sacred Features—e.g., Walls, Door Orientation, Corners
 - » Houses in south central part of Java (Indonesia) face south—the direction of the South Sea Goddess who holds the key to Earth.
 - » Eastern wall of a house is sacred in Fiji.
 - » All directions except south have significance in folk houses in Madagascar.

SACRED HOUSING SPACE



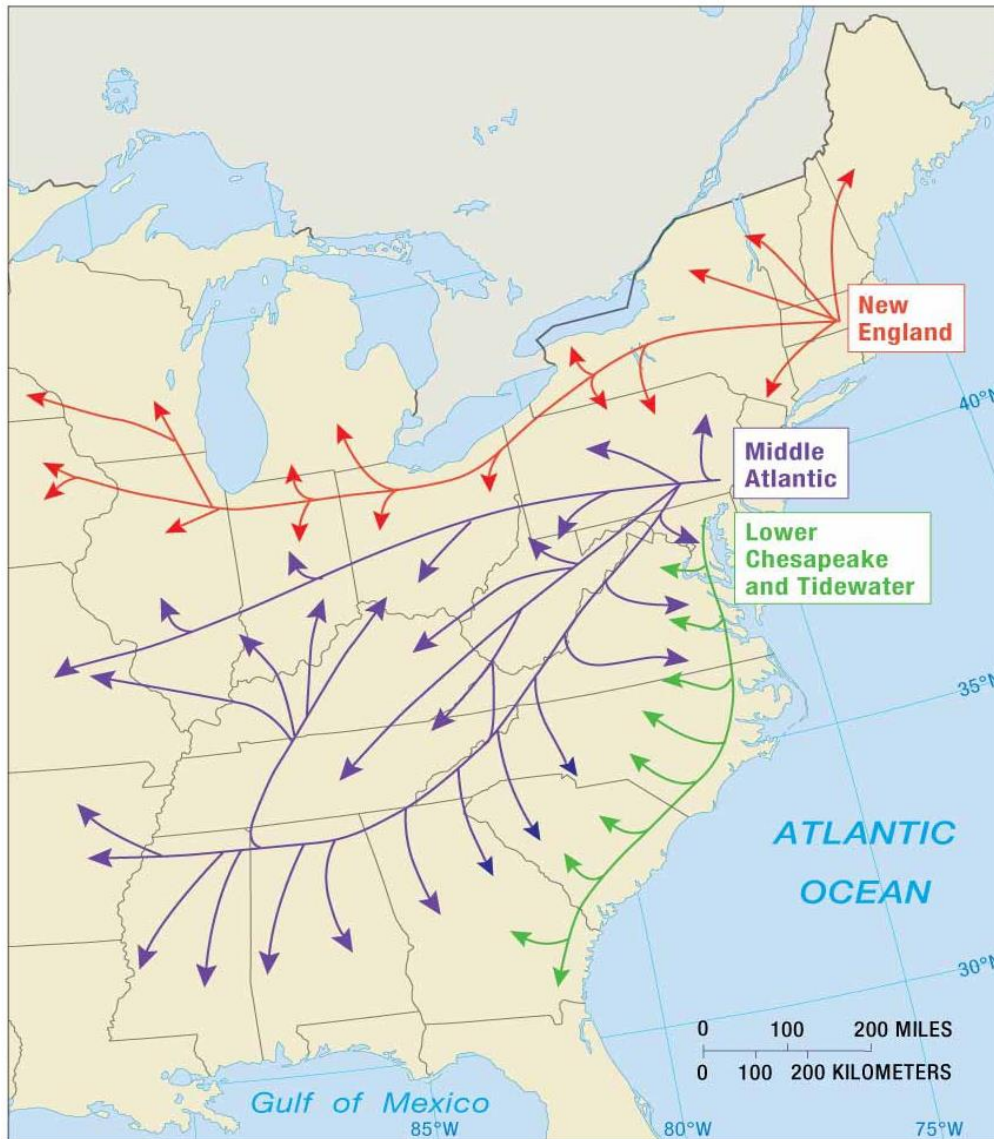
(top) Houses people in northern Laos. The fronts of Lao houses, such as those in the village of Muang Nan, Laos, face one another across a path, and the backs face each other at the rear. Their ridgepoles (the centerline of the roof) are set perpendicular to the path but parallel to a stream, if one is nearby. Inside adjacent houses, people sleep in the orientation shown, so neighbors are head-to-head or feet-to-feet. (bottom) Houses of peoples in northern Thailand--village of Ban Mae Sakud, the houses 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.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- U.S. Folk Housing

- Pioneer homes reflected whatever upscale style was prevailing at the place on the East Coast from which they migrated.
- Fred Kniffen identified three major hearths, or nodes, of folk house forms
 - **Middle Atlantic**: Principal house type known as an “I”-house with one room deep and at least two rooms wide.
 - **Lower Chesapeake/Tidewater**: Principal house type characterized by one story, with a steep roof and chimneys at either end.
 - **New England**: Principal house style was box shaped with a central hall.

HEARTHS OF U.S. FOLK HOUSING

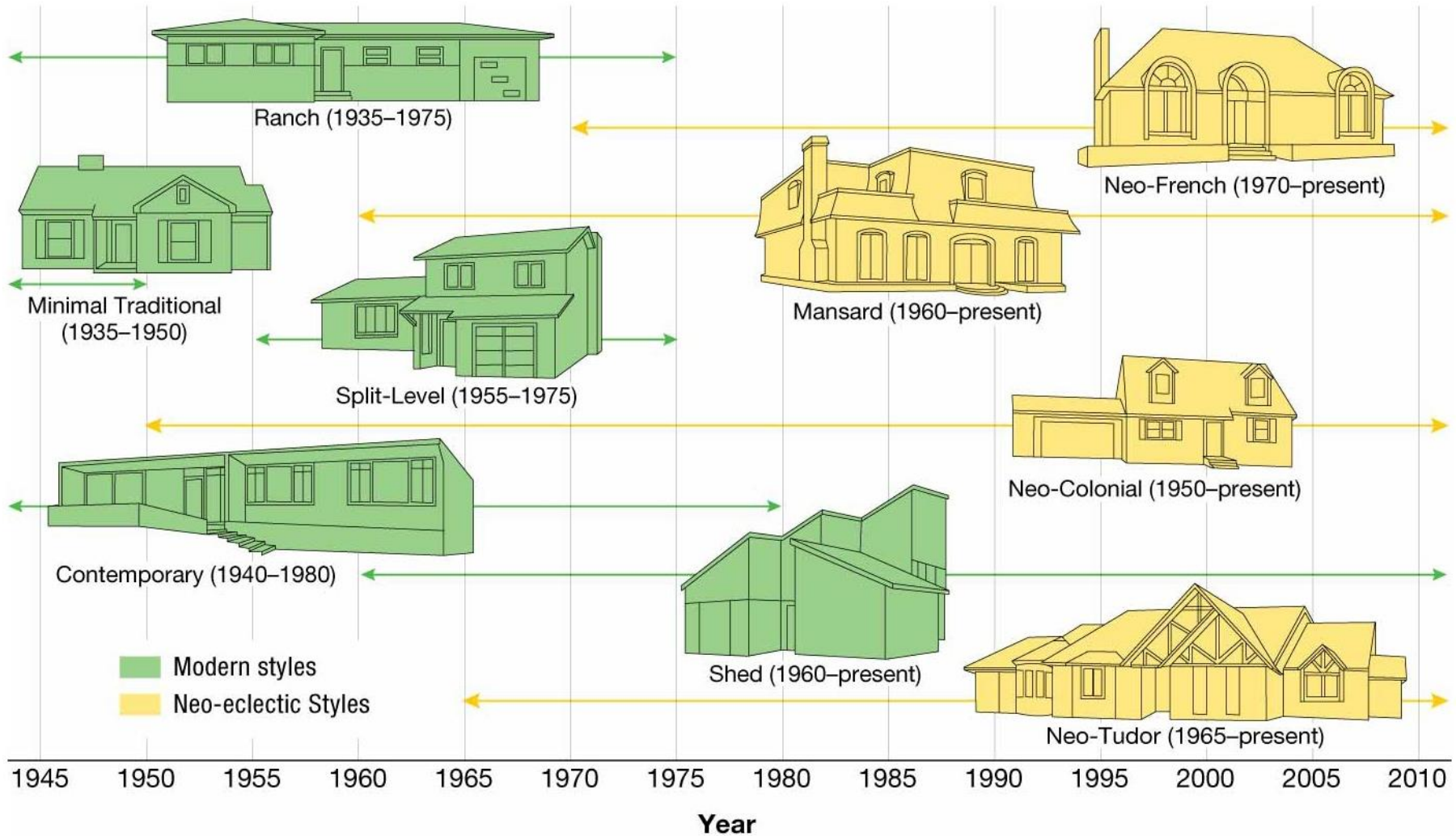


U.S. house types in the United States originated in three main source areas and diffused westward along different paths. These paths coincided with predominant routes taken by migrants from the East Coast toward the interior of the country.

Where are folk and popular material culture distributed?

- U.S. Popular Housing
 - Since mid-twentieth century, houses display popular culture rather than regional influences.
 - Most people no longer build their own houses but instead are mass-produced by construction companies.
 - Houses show the influence of shapes, materials, detailing, and other features of architectural style in vogue at any one point in time.

U.S. HOUSE TYPES, 1945 TO PRESENT



Chapter 4: Folk and Popular Culture

KEY ISSUE #3:

- Why is access to folk and popular culture unequal?

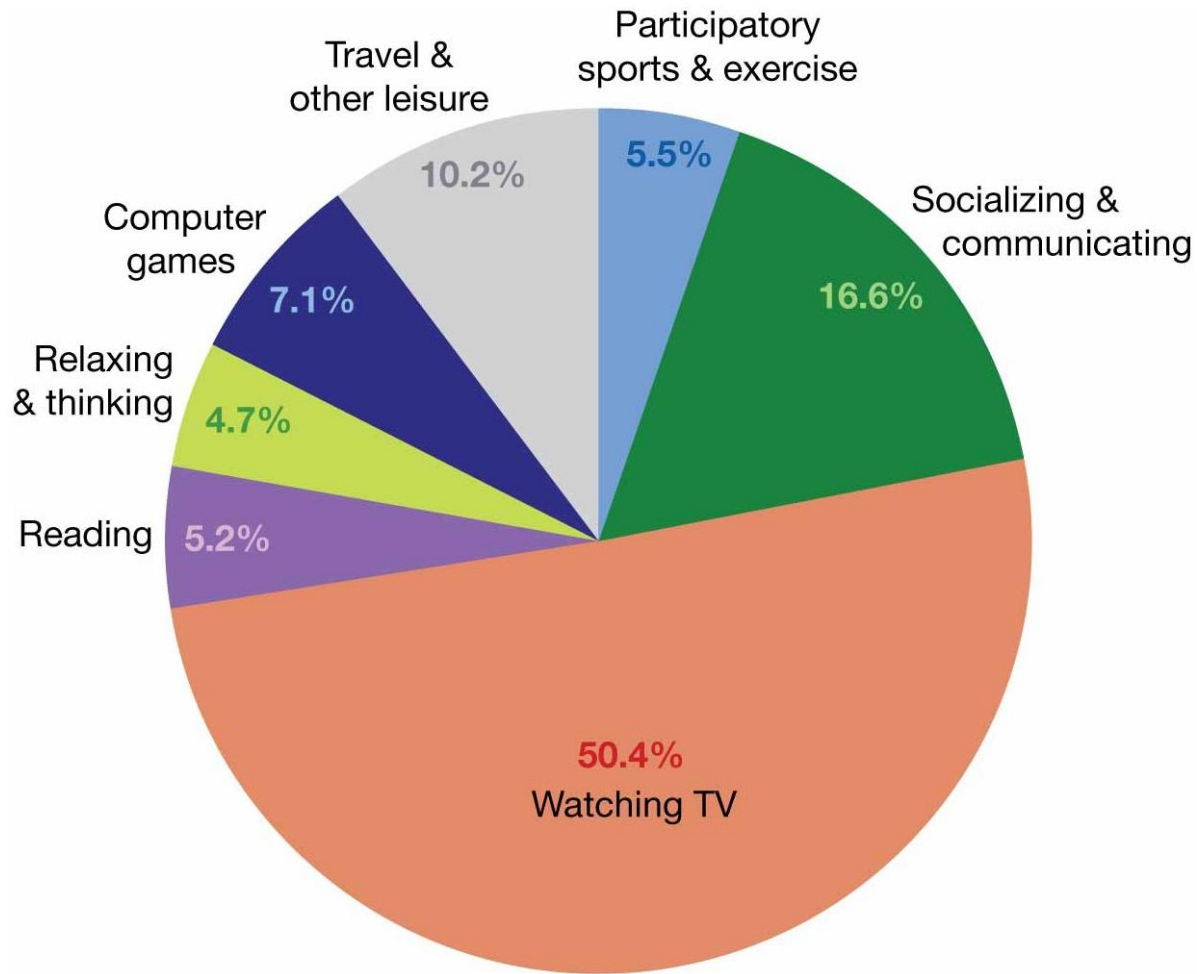
Learning Outcomes

- Describe the origin, diffusion, and distribution of TV around the world.
- Compare the diffusion of the Internet and social media with the diffusion of TV.
- Understand external and internal threats to folk culture posed by electronic media.

Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- Electronic Diffusion of Popular Culture
 - Principal obstacle to accessing popular culture is lack of access to electronic media.
 - Most important electronic media of popular culture is TV:
 1. Watching TV is most popular leisure activity in the world.
 2. TV is most important mechanism for rapidly diffusing popular culture around the world.

HOW AMERICANS SPEND THEIR WEEKENDS



Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- Electronic Diffusion of Popular Culture
 - **Diffusion of TV**: Mid-20th Century
 - TV technology originated simultaneously in multiple hearths in the early 20th century— e.g., UK, France, Germany, Japan, Soviet Union, and the United States.
 - Over the course of the 20th century, the United States went from dominating the world share of TVs to being nearly equal in rates of ownership with most developing countries.

DIFFUSION OF TV

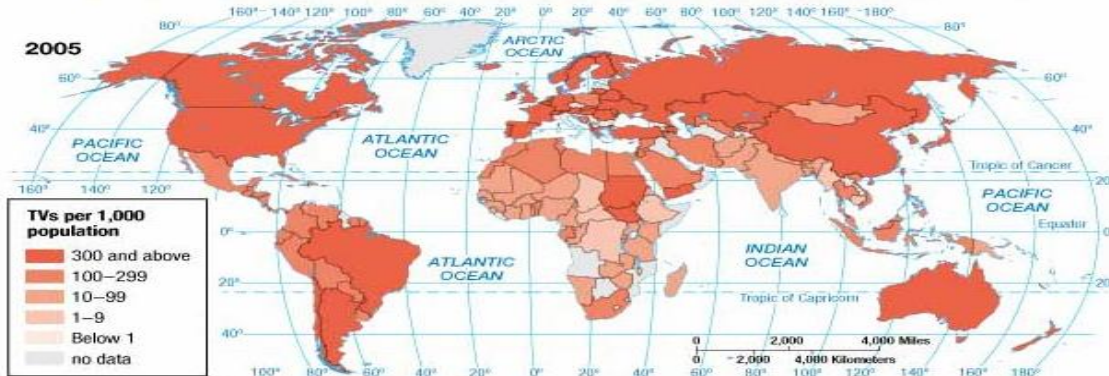
1954



1970



2005



Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- Electronic Diffusion of Popular Culture
 - **Diffusion of the Internet**: Late 20th Century
 - Diffusion follows pattern established by TV but at a more rapid rate.
 - In 1995, Internet users in the United States accounted for more than half of the global users.
 - By 2011, 77% of the U.S. population accessed the Internet.

DIFFUSION OF THE INTERNET

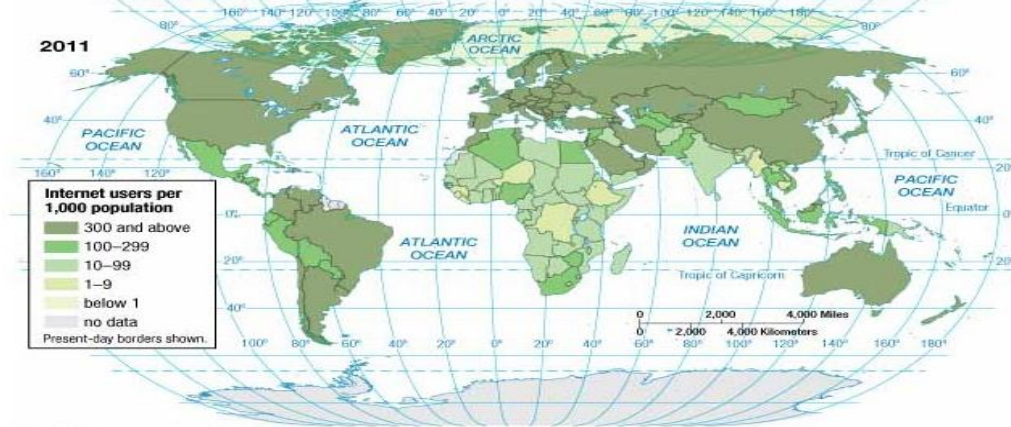
1995



2000



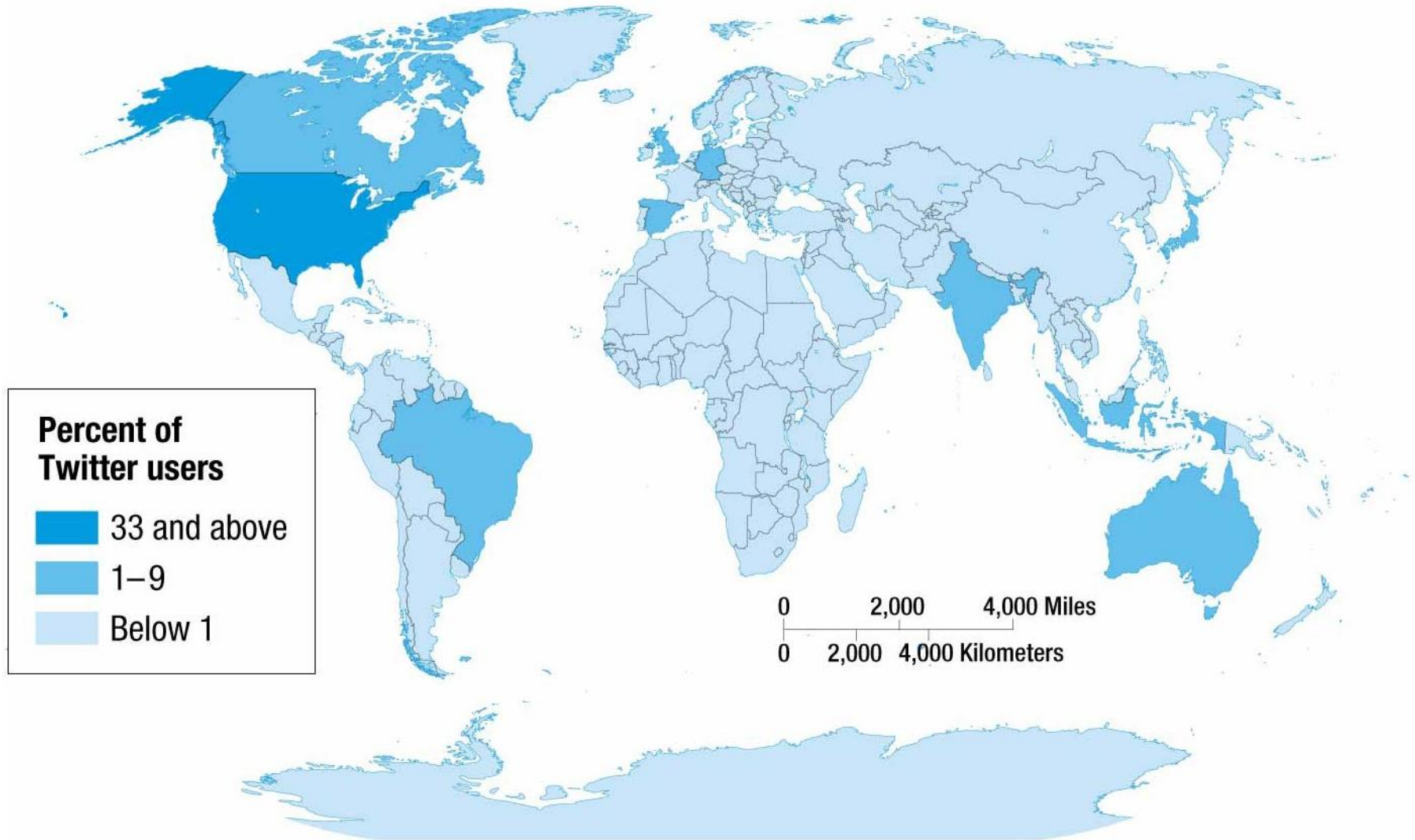
2011



Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- Electronic Diffusion of Popular Culture
 - Diffusion of Social Media: 21st Century
 - Same diffusion pattern as TV and Internet
 - Facebook
 - » In 2008, Facebook users in United States consisted of 1/3 of all global users.
 - » By 2011, global share decreased to 1/5.
 - Twitter
 - » United States was source of 1/3 of all tweets in 2010.
 - » Second leader of tweets is India.
- **YouTube holds the same patterns.

DISTRIBUTION OF TWITTER USERS



Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- Challenges in Accessing Electronic Media
 - **External Threat: Developed Countries Control the Media**
 - TV industry dominated by Japan, UK, and United States.
 - Leaders of developing countries could view dominance as impressing American values upon viewers.
 - Upward social mobility
 - Freedom for women
 - Glorification of youth
 - Stylized violence

Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

- Challenges in Accessing Electronic Media
 - External Threat: Developed Countries Control the Media
 - News
 - News media in developing countries dominated by the government
 - Media in the United States is largely private commercial stations.
 - Many African and Asian government officials criticize freedom of the press in the United States.
 - » Allegedly media do not convey an accurate view of other countries.

Why Is Access to Folk and Popular Culture Unequal?

--Internal Threat: Social Media

– Limiting Access to TV

- Satellite dishes enable people to access information that would otherwise be censored by their governments.

– Some governments attempt to limit Internet content including:

1. Political Content

- Opposition to local government

2. Social Content

- Socially sensitive material, such as gambling or sex

3. Conflict and Security

- Armed conflict, border disputes, or militant groups

4. Internet Tools

- Email, Internet hosting, and Internet searches

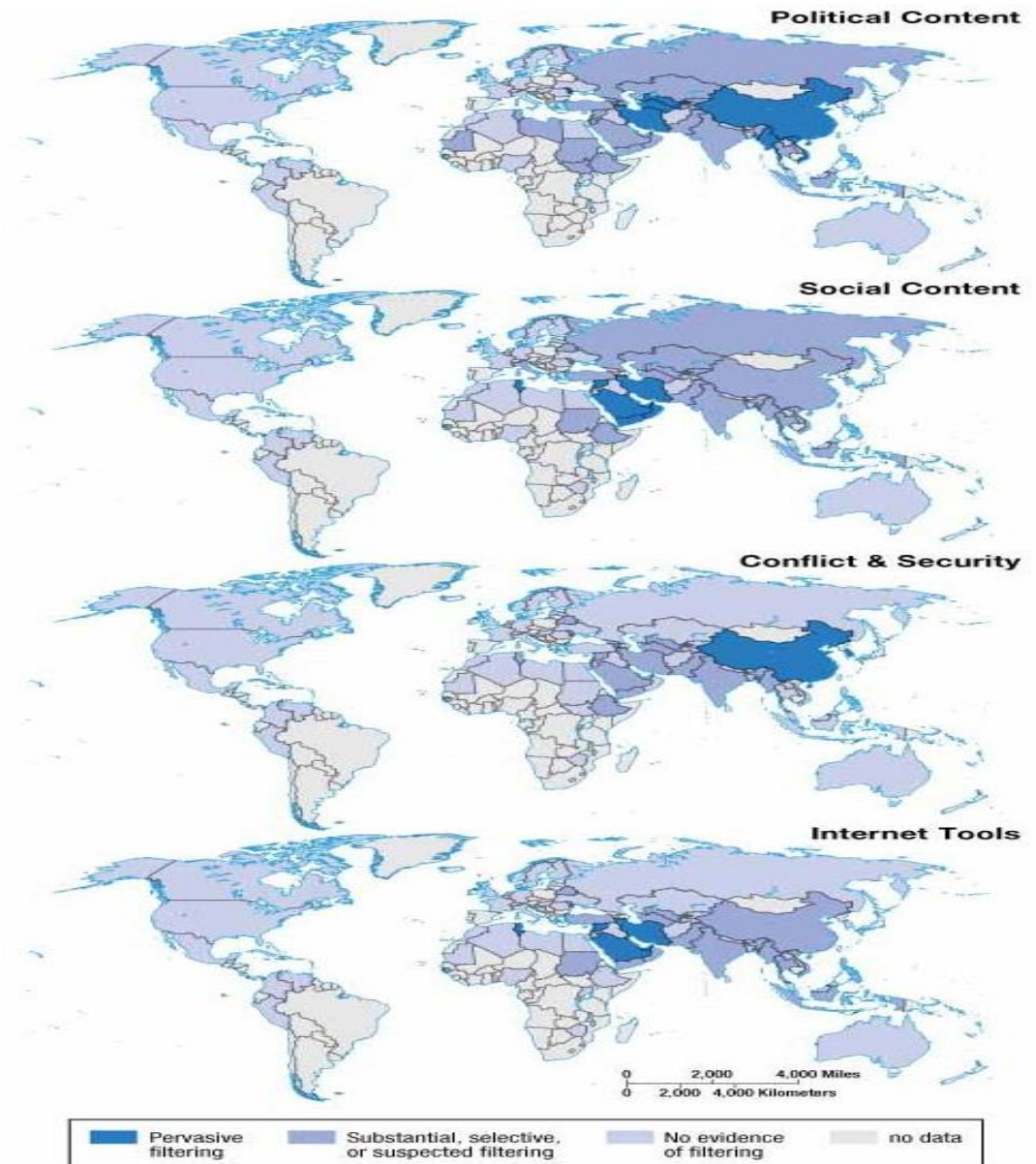
LIMITING FREEDOM ON THE INTERNET

(top) political content

(second) social content

(third) security content

(bottom) Internet tools.



Chapter 4: Folk and Popular Culture

KEY ISSUE #4:

- Why do folk and popular culture face sustainability challenges?

Learning Outcomes

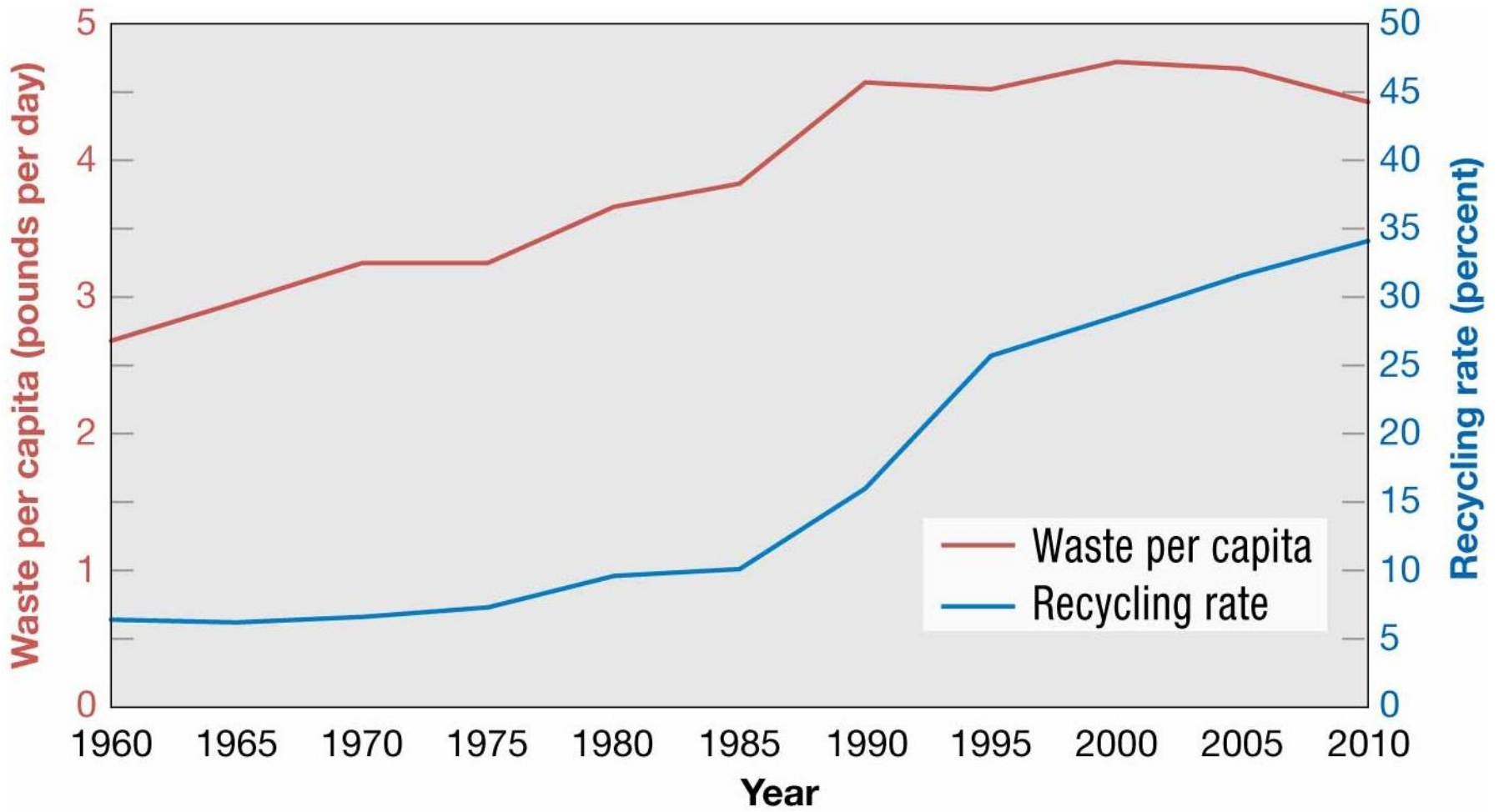
- Summarize challenges for folk culture from diffusion of popular culture.
- Summarize the two principal ways that popular culture can adversely affect the environment.
- Summarize major sources of waste and the extent to which each is recycled.

Why Do Folk and Popular Culture Face Sustainability Challenges?

- Sustainability Challenges for Folk Culture
 - Increased connection with popular culture makes maintaining centuries-old practices difficult.
 - Impacts of globalization on the landscape creates challenges in maintaining a unique landscape.
 - Global diffusion of popular culture beliefs has challenged the subservience of women to men that is embedded in some folk customs.

Why Do Folk and Popular Culture Face Sustainability Challenges?

- Sustainability Challenges for Popular Culture
 - Diffusion of some popular customs can adversely impact environmental quality in two ways:
 1. Pollution of the Landscape
 - Uniform landscapes used to generate product recognition. e.g., motels and fast-food restaurants
 - Golf courses remake the environment by drastically modifying its natural state.
 2. Depletion of Scarce Natural Resources
 - Diffusion of some popular customs increases demand for animal products and for raw materials—e.g., minerals and fossil fuels.



Summary

- Traits and leisure activities associated with folk culture tend to diffuse more slowly than those of popular culture.
- Folk clothing tends to be greatly influenced by local environmental conditions, whereas popular culture clothing tends to represent income and occupation.
- Important elements of material culture include clothing, food, and shelter.

Summary

- Popular culture is diffused around the world through electronic media that began with the TV. It has since phased over into the Internet and Social Media.
- Globalization and greater connectivity have fostered a world where new ideas are spread more rapidly and fewer places of isolation exist.