

Differences in Culture: Popular Culture

Being British is....

“Driving a German Car to an Irish Pub for a Belgian Beer, then traveling home, grabbing an Indian Curry or a Turkish Kebab on the way, to sit on Swedish furniture and watch American shows on a Japanese TV.”



Defining Popular Culture

- Culture found in a large, heterogeneous society that shares certain habits despite differences in other personal characteristics.



Diffusion of Popular Culture

- Hierarchical diffusion
 - Rapid diffusion through modern communication and transportation
 - Ex. Films or Internet
 - Begins in urban areas with cultural elites and slowly spreads to rest of society



Diffusion of Popular Culture

- Contagious Diffusion
 - Rapid and widespread diffusion of a characteristic
 - Starts with one person and spreads via contact
 - Helped by internet



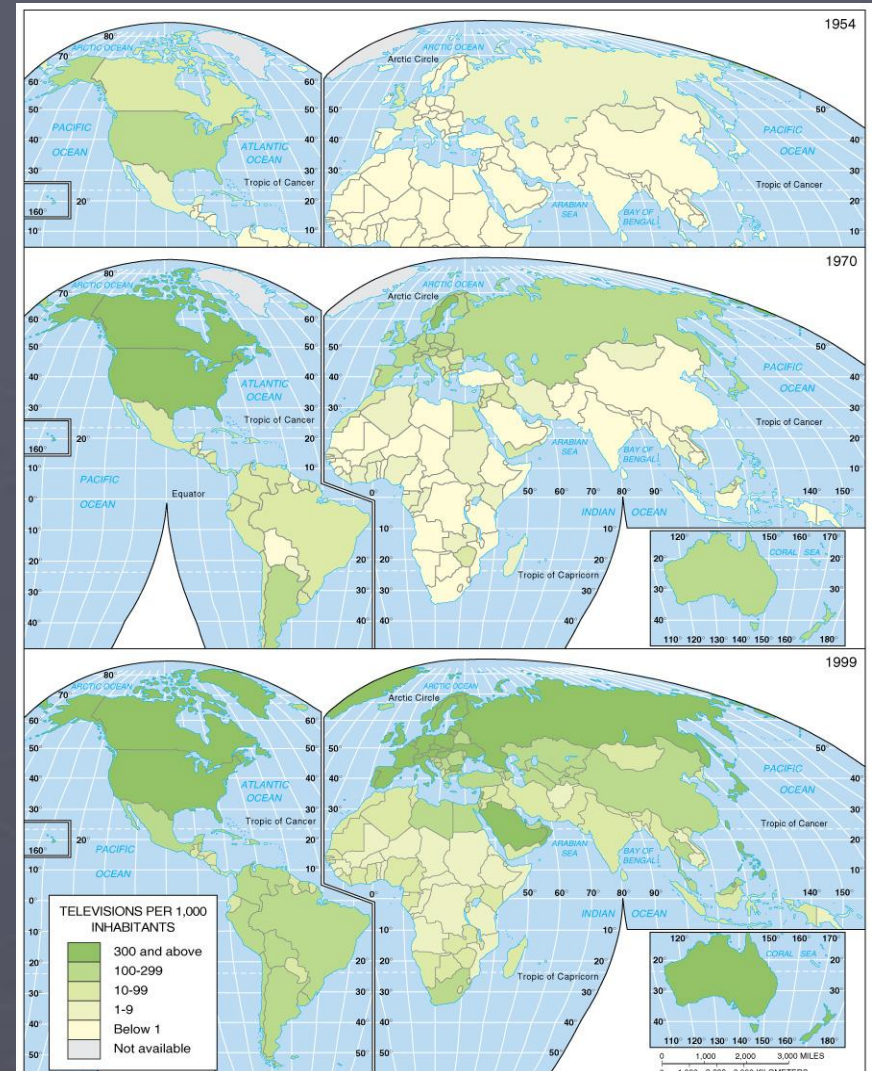
Effects of Popular Culture: Globalization

- The process by which people, places, regions, and countries become more interlinked and more interdependent at a planetary scale



Case Study: Diffusion of Television

- Since 1950 television has diffused rapidly
 - Places where diffusion has slowed are because of economic factors or government regulations



Effects of Popular Culture: Placeless Landscape

- Landscape that lacks diversity and are impersonal
 - Other-directedness in places
 - Tourist destinations
 - Commercial areas
 - Uniformity, standardization, and increasing scale in places
 - International architectural styles
 - Infrastructure similarity
 - Place destruction
 - Excavation, Wars, Urban Renewal



Effects of Popular Culture: Destruction of Folk Cultures

- Folk traditions and values are often replaced by main-stream concepts
 - Sometimes preserved as museum pieces or tourists traps



Effects of Popular Culture: Cultural Imperialism

- Media/Commercial hegemony by British, American, and Japanese companies
 - Transition of focus to MDCs
 - Ex. Few news stories about LDCs
 - Worldwide glorification of violence, sexuality, and consumerism



McDonalds in Beijing



Marlboro man in Egypt

Effects of Popular Culture: Accelerated Resource Consumption

- Consumerism leading to increased demand for scarce resources and space
 - Fashion and technology trends requiring resources
 - Changing diets putting stress on agricultural resources
 - Land consumption to meet personal desires for housing and recreation

