

end. Migrants spread these houses from the Chesapeake Bay–Tidewater, Virginia, area along the southeast coast.

As was the case with the Middle Atlantic “I”-house, the form of housing that evolved along the southeast coast typically was only one room deep. In wet areas, houses in the coastal southeast were often raised on piers or on a brick foundation.

- *The Middle Atlantic* region’s principal house type was known as the “I”-house, typically two full stories in height, with gables to the sides. The “I”-house resembled the letter “I”—it was only one room deep and at least two rooms wide.

Middle Atlantic migrants carried their house type westward across the Ohio Valley and southwestward along the Appalachian trails. As a result, the “I”-house became the most extensive style of construction in much of the eastern half of the United States, especially in the Ohio Valley and Appalachia.

- *New England* migrants carried house types northward to upper New England and westward across the southern Great Lakes region. The 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.

Four major house types were popular in New England at various times during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Figure 4-13). As the house preferred by New Englanders changed over time, the predominant form found on the landscape varies based on the date of initial settlement.

Today, such distinctions are relatively difficult to observe in the United States. Houses built in the United States during the past half-century display popular culture influences. The degree of regional distinctiveness in housing style has diminished because rapid communication and transportation systems provide people throughout the country with knowledge of alternative styles. Furthermore, most people do not build the houses in which they live. Instead, houses are usually mass-produced by construction companies.

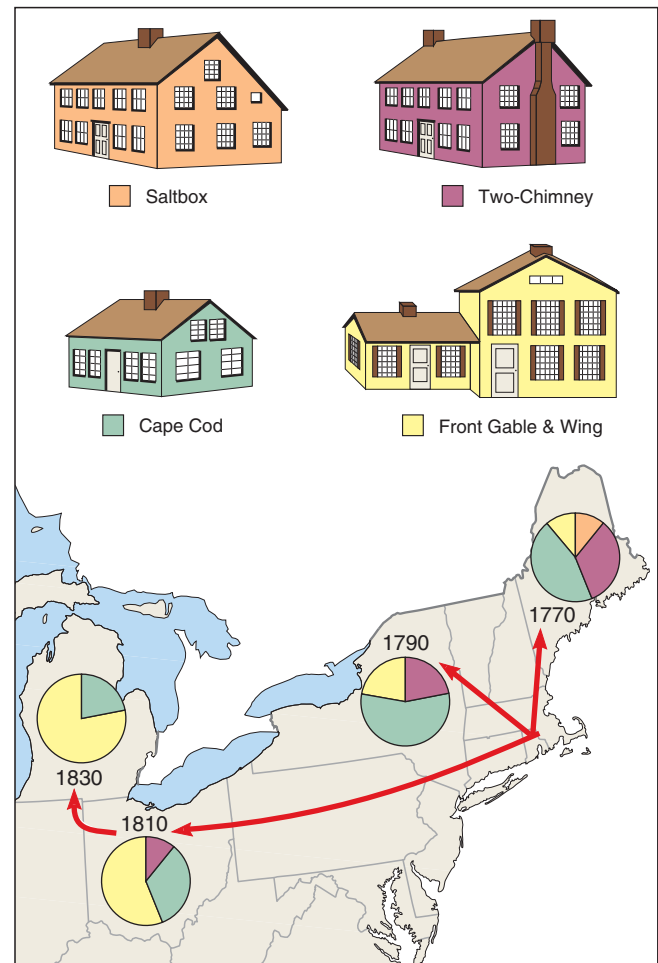


FIGURE 4-13 Diffusion of New England house types. Fred Kniffen suggests that these four major house types were popular in New England at various times during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As settlers migrated, they carried memories of familiar house types with them and built similar structures on the frontier. Thus New Englanders were most likely to build houses like the Cape Cod (green) when they began to migrate to upstate New York in the 1790s because that was the predominant house type they knew. During the 1800s, when New Englanders began to migrate farther westward to Ohio and Michigan, they built the front gable type of house typical in New England at that time, shown here in yellow.

KEY ISSUE 3

Why Is Popular Culture Widely Distributed?

- Diffusion of Popular Housing, Clothing, and Food
- Electronic Diffusion of Popular Culture

Popular culture varies more in time than in place. Like folk culture, it may originate in one location, within the context of a particular society and environment. But, in contrast to folk culture, it diffuses rapidly across Earth to locations with a variety of physical conditions. Rapid diffusion depends on a

group of people having a sufficiently high level of economic development to acquire the material possessions associated with popular culture. ■

Diffusion of Popular Housing, Clothing, and Food

Some regional differences in food, clothing, and shelter persist in MDCs, 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.

Popular Food Customs

Popular culture flourishes where people in a society have sufficient income to acquire the tangible elements of popular culture and the leisure time to make use of them. People in MDCs are likely to have the income, time, and inclination to facilitate greater adoption of popular culture.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS. Consumption of large quantities of alcoholic beverages and snack foods are characteristic of the food customs of popular societies. Americans choose particular beverages or snacks in part on the basis of preference for what is produced, grown, or imported locally.

- Bourbon consumption in the United States is concentrated in the Upper South, where most of it is produced. Tequila, consumption is heavily concentrated in the Southwest along the border with Mexico. Canadian whiskey is preferred in communities contiguous to Canada (Figure 4-14).
- 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.

Cultural backgrounds also affect the amount and types of alcohol and snack foods consumed. Alcohol consumption relates partially to religious backgrounds and partially to income and advertising.

- The Southeast has a relatively low rate of alcohol consumption because Baptists—who are clustered in the region—drink less than do adherents of other denominations; Utah also has a low rate because of a concentration of Latter-day Saints. Nevada has a high rate because of the

heavy concentration of gambling and other resort activities there.

- Texans may prefer tortilla chips because of the large number of Hispanic Americans there. Westerners may prefer multi-grain chips because of greater concern for the nutritional content of snack foods.

Geographers cannot explain all the regional variations in food preferences. Why do urban residents prefer Scotch and New Englanders consume more nuts? Why is per capita consumption of snack food one-third higher in the Midwest than in the West? Why does consumption of gin and vodka show little spatial variation within the United States? In general, consumption of alcohol and snack foods is part of popular culture primarily dependent on two factors—high income and national advertising. Variations within the United States are much less significant than differences between the United States and LDCs in Africa and Asia.

WINE. The spatial distribution of wine production demonstrates that the environment plays a role in the distribution of popular as well as folk food customs (Figure 4-15). The distinctive character of a wine derives from a unique combination of soil, climate, and other physical characteristics at the place where the grapes are grown.

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. 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

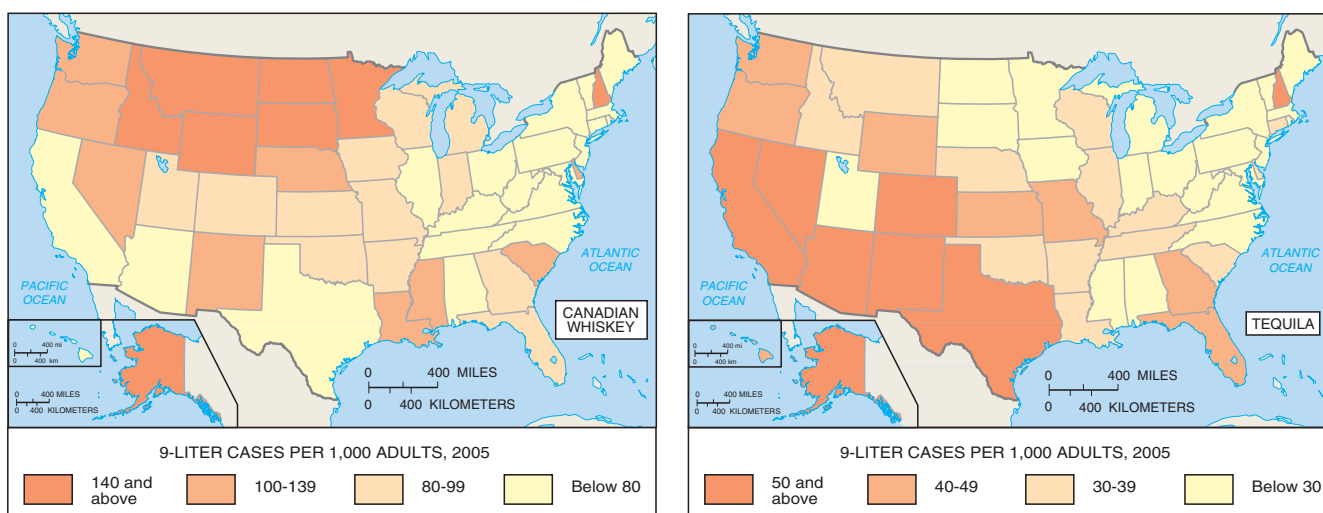


FIGURE 4-14 Consumption of Canadian whiskey (left) and tequila (right). States that have high per capita consumption of Canadian whiskey are located in the north, along the Canadian border. States that have high per capita consumption of tequila are located in the southwest, along the Mexican border. Preference for Canadian whiskey has apparently diffused southward from Canada into the United States, and for tequila northward from Mexico.

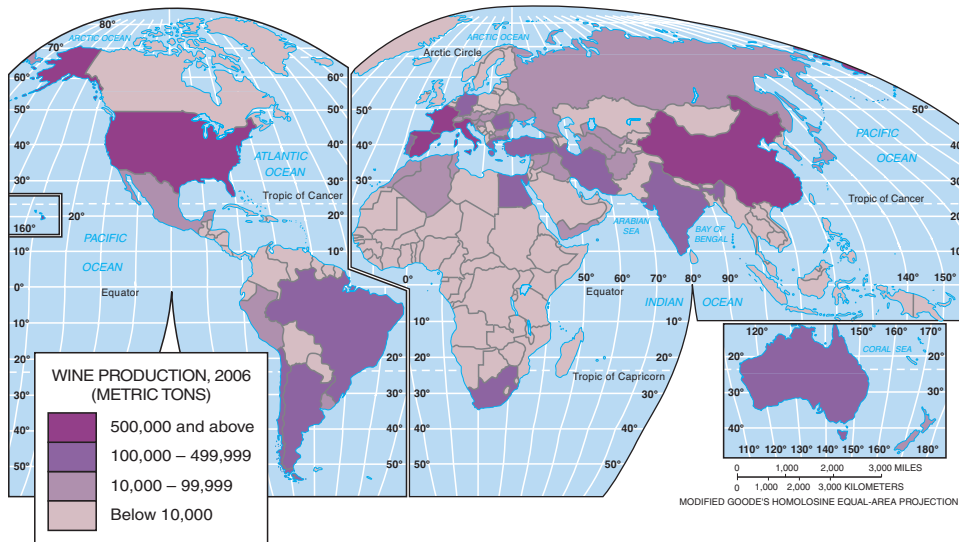


FIGURE 4-15 Wine production. The distribution of wine production is influenced in part by the physical environment and in part by social customs. Most grapes used for wine are grown near the Mediterranean Sea or in areas of similar climate. Income, preferences, and other social customs also influence the distribution of wine consumption, as seen in the lower production levels of predominantly Muslim countries south of the Mediterranean.

water can temper extremes of temperature. 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 not necessarily fertile for other crops. The soil is generally sandy and gravelly in the Bordeaux wine region, chalky in Champagne country, and of a slate composition in the Moselle Valley. The distinctive character of each region's wine is especially influenced by the unique combination of trace elements, such as boron, manganese, and zinc, in the rock or soil. In large quantities these elements could destroy the plants, but in small quantities they lend a unique taste to the grapes.

Because of the unique product created by the distinctive soil and climate characteristics, the world's finest wines are most frequently identified by their place of origin. Wines may be labeled with the region, town, district, or specific estate. A wine expert can determine the precise origin of a wine just by tasting because of the unique taste imparted to the grapes by the specific soil composition of each estate. The year of the harvest is also indicated on finer wines because specific weather conditions each year affect the quality and quantity of the harvest. Wines may also be identified by the variety of grape used rather than the location of the vineyard. Less expensive wines might contain a blend of grapes from a variety of estates and years.

Although grapes can be grown in a wide variety of locations, wine distribution 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. 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.

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 the Middle East (other than Israel) and southern Asia primarily because of cultural values, especially religion.

Rapid Diffusion of Clothing Styles

Individual clothing habits reveal how popular culture can be distributed across the landscape with little regard for distinctive physical features. Such habits reflect availability of income, as well as social forms such as job characteristics.

In the MDCs of North America and Western Europe, clothing habits generally reflect occupations rather than particular environments. 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 California is more likely to dress like a lawyer in New York than like a steelworker in California.

A second influence on clothing in MDCs is higher 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. Until recently, a year 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 fax machines, computers, and satellites. Sketches, patterns, and specifications are sent instantly from European fashion centers to American corporate headquarters and then on to Asian factories. Buyers from the major retail chains can view the

fashions on large, high-definition televisions linked by satellite networks.

The globalization of clothing styles has involved increasing awareness by North Americans and Europeans of the variety of folk costumes around the world. Increased travel and the diffusion of television have exposed people in MDCs 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.

JEANS. An important symbol of the diffusion of Western popular culture is jeans, which became a prized possession for young people throughout the world. In the 1960s, jeans acquired an image of youthful independence in the United States as young people adopted a style of clothing previously associated with low-status manual laborers and farmers.

Jeans became an obsession and a status symbol among youth in the former Soviet Union when the Communist government prevented their import. Gangs would attack people to steal their American-made jeans, and authentic jeans would sell for \$400 on the black market. Ironically, jeans were brought into the Soviet Union by the elite, including diplomats, bureaucrats, and business executives—essentially those who were permitted to travel to the West. These citizens obtained scarce products in the West and resold them inside the Soviet Union for a considerable profit.

The scarcity of high-quality jeans was just one of many consumer problems that were important motives in the dismantling of Communist governments in Eastern Europe around 1990. Eastern Europeans, who were aware of Western fashions and products—thanks to television—could not

obtain them, because government-controlled industries were inefficient and geared to producing tanks rather than consumer-oriented goods. With the end of communism, Levi's and other brands of jeans are freely sold and even produced in the former Soviet Union. But Levi's retain their American image. In Belarus, a former Soviet republic now an independent country, an antigovernment protest in 2006 was termed the denim revolution when protesters were urged to wear jeans at a rally. "Jeans evoke the West," said a protest leader.

Ironically, as access to Levi's increased around the world, American consumers turned away from the brand. Sales plummeted from \$7 billion in 1996 to \$4 billion in 2004, the year Levi's closed its last U.S. factory.

Popular Housing Styles

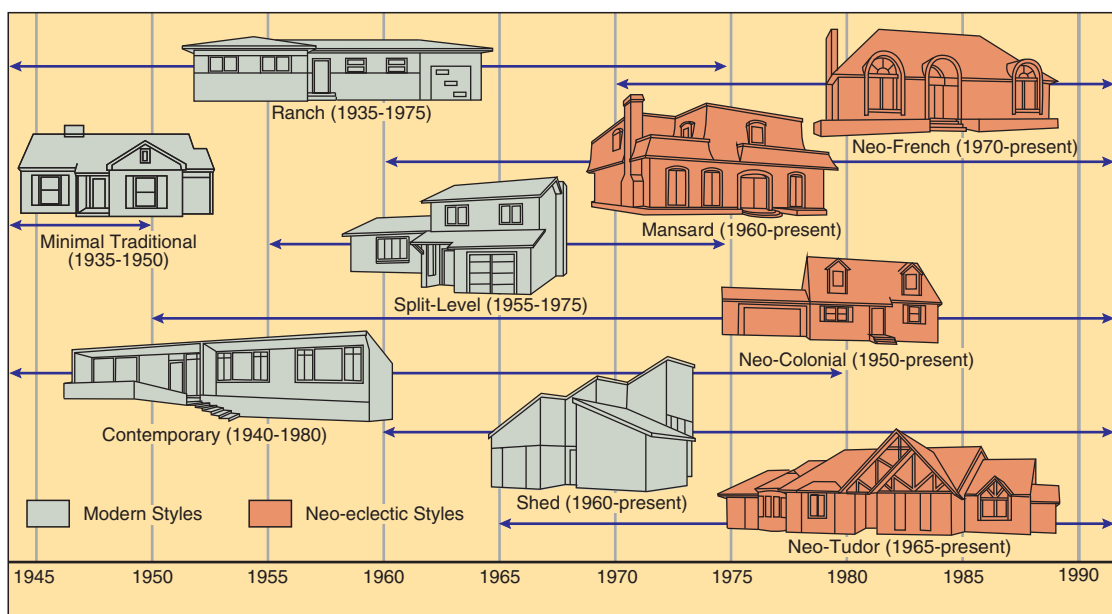
Housing built in the United States since the 1940s demonstrates how popular customs vary more in time than in place. In contrast with folk housing characteristic of the early 1800s, newer housing in the United States has been built to reflect rapidly changing fashion concerning the most suitable house form.

Houses show the influence of shapes, materials, detailing, and other features of architectural style in vogue at any one point in time. In the years immediately after World War II, which ended in 1945, most U.S. houses were built in a *modern style*. Since the 1960s, styles that architects call *neo-eclectic* have predominated (Figure 4-16).

MODERN HOUSE STYLES (1945–1960). Specific types of modern-style houses were popular at different times:

- **Minimal traditional:** Dominant in the late 1940s and early 1950s, reminiscent of Tudor-style houses popular in the 1920s and 1930s; usually one story, with a dominant

FIGURE 4-16 U.S. house types 1945–present. The dominant type of house construction in the United States was *minimal traditional* during the late 1940s and early 1950s, followed by ranch houses during the late 1950s and 1960s. The split-level was a popular variant of the ranch between the 1950s and 1970s, and the *contemporary* style was popular for architect-designed houses during the same period. The *shed* style was widely built in the late 1960s. Neo-eclectic styles, beginning with the *mansard*, were in vogue during the late 1960s. The *neo-Tudor* was popular in the 1970s and the *neo-French* in the 1980s. The *neo-colonial* style has been widely built since the 1950s but never dominated popular architecture.





CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHIC TOOLS

Documenting House Types Through Fieldwork

Fieldwork has been regarded as an important geographic method since the development of geography as a modern science two centuries ago. Geographers head for destinations near and far—to bustling urban areas and to remote rural areas, within their own countries or abroad. Given their concern with regularities in space, geographers need to get out of their classrooms and laboratories to observe the visible elements of other places with their own eyes. Fieldwork has been especially important for understanding the unique character of a place or the collection of features that distinguish one region from another.

Geographers make use of fieldwork in two principal ways. First, collecting information in the field can be the basis for drawing conclusions about expected patterns. Second, observing conditions in the field can be a source of inspiration for thinking about problems to address in future scientific studies. In other words, fieldwork helps some geographers to *answer* questions and helps others to *ask* questions.

Especially well suited to field studies have been visible everyday elements of folk and popular culture, such as house styles. Statistical studies and questionnaires such as the census can help geographers determine the size and date of construction of a house, but not the style that inspired its design. Only by looking at a house can its style of design be classified. Field material can be collected by delineating one or more areas on a map and visiting the sites. Armed with a chart or a spreadsheet, the geographer counts the number of times that something appears in the area, such as a particular type of house.

According to fieldwork by geographers John Jakle, Robert Bastian, and Douglas Meyer, regional differences in the predominant type of house persist to some extent in the United States (Figure 4-17). Differences in housing among U.S. communities derive largely from differences in the time period in which

the houses were built. A housing development built in one region will resemble more closely developments built at the

same time elsewhere in the country than will developments built in the same region at other points in time. ■

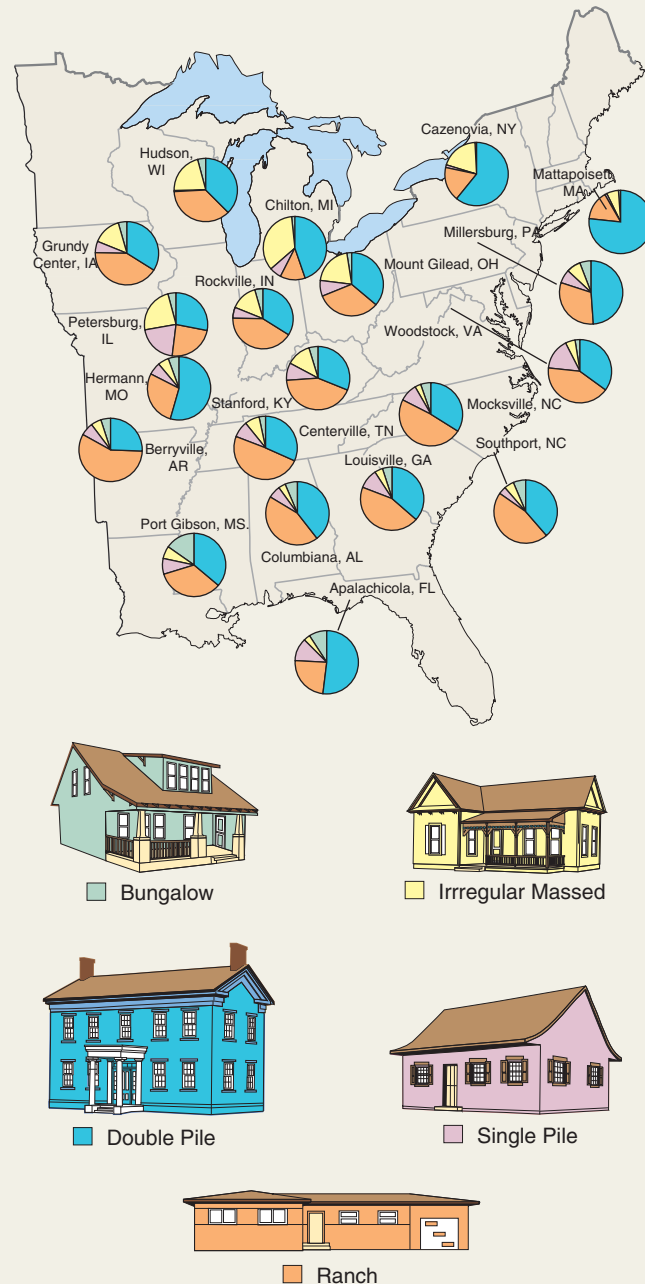


FIGURE 4-17 Regional differences in house types. Jakle, Bastian, and Meyer allocated the single-family housing in 20 small towns in the eastern United States into five groups: *bungalow*, *double pile*, *irregularly massed*, *ranch*, and *single pile*. Ranch houses were more common in the southeastern towns; double-pile houses predominated in northeastern areas.

front gable and few decorative details; small, modest houses designed to house young families and veterans returning from World War II.

- **Ranch house:** Replaced minimal traditional in the 1950s and into the 1960s; one story, with the long side parallel to the street; with all the rooms on one level rather than two or three, it took up a larger lot and encouraged the sprawl of urban areas.
- **Split-level:** A popular variant of the ranch house between the 1950s and 1970s; the lower level contained the garage and the newly invented “family” room, where the television set was placed; the kitchen and formal living and dining rooms were placed on the intermediate level, and the bedrooms on the top level above the family room and garage.
- **Contemporary:** Especially popular between the 1950s and 1970s for architect-designed houses; they frequently had flat or low-pitched roofs.
- **Shed:** Popular in the late 1960s; characterized by high-pitched shed roofs, giving the house the appearance of a series of geometric forms.

NEO-ECLECTIC (SINCE 1960). In the late 1960s, neo-eclectic styles became popular, and by the 1970s had surpassed modern styles in vogue:

- **Mansard:** The first popular neo-eclectic style, in the late 1960s and early 1970s; the shingle-covered second-story walls sloped slightly inward and merged into the roofline.
- **Neo-Tudor:** Popular in the 1970s; characterized by dominant, steep-pitched front-facing gables and half-timbered detailing.
- **Neo-French:** Also appeared in the early 1970s, and by the early 1980 was the most fashionable style for new houses; it featured dormer windows, usually with rounded tops, and high-hipped roofs.
- **Neo-colonial:** An adaptation of English colonial houses, it has been continuously popular since the 1950s but never dominant; inside many neo-colonial houses, a large central “great room” has replaced separate family and living rooms, which were located in different wings or floors of ranch and split-level houses.

Electronic Diffusion of Popular Culture

Watching television has been an especially significant popular custom for two reasons. First, it has been the most popular leisure activity in MDCs throughout the world. Second, television has been the most important mechanism by which knowledge of popular culture, such as professional sports, is rapidly diffused across Earth. In the twenty-first century, other electronic media have become important transmitters of popular culture.

Diffusion of Television

Television technology was developed simultaneously in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union, as well as in the United States, but in the early years of broadcasting the United States held a near monopoly. Through the second half of the twentieth century, television diffused from the United States, first to Europe and other MDCs, then to LDCs (Figure 4-18).

- 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. The United States had approximately 200 TV sets per 1,000 inhabitants in 1954, and the rest of the world had approximately 2 per 1,000.
- In 1970, the United States still had far more TV sets per capita than any other country except Canada. However, rapid growth of ownership in Europe meant that the share of the world’s sets in the United States declined to one-fourth. Still, in 1970, half of the countries in the world, including most of those in Africa and Asia, had little if any TV broadcasting.
- By 2005, international differences in TV ownership had diminished, although not disappeared altogether. Other MDCs had similar rates of ownership as the United States, and ownership rates climbed sharply in many LDCs.

Diffusion of the Internet

The diffusion of Internet service follows the pattern established by television a generation earlier, but at a more rapid pace (Figure 4-19):

- In 1995, there were 40 million Internet users worldwide, including 25 million in the United States, and Internet service had not yet reached most countries.
- In 2000, Internet usage increased rapidly in the United States, from 9 percent to 44 percent of the population. But the worldwide increase was much greater, from 40 million Internet users in 1995 to 361 million in 2000. As Internet usage diffused rapidly, the U.S. percentage share declined rapidly in five years, from 62 to 31 percent.
- In 2008, Internet usage further diffused rapidly. World usage more than quadrupled in 8 years, to 1.6 billion. U.S. usage continued to increase, but at a more modest rate, to 74 percent of the population, and the share of the world’s Internet users found in the United States continued to decline to 14 percent in 2008.

Note that all six maps in Figures 4-18 and 4-19 use the same intervals and colors. For example, the highest class in all maps is 300 or more per 1,000. What is different is the time interval. The diffusion of television from the United States to the rest of the world took a half-century, whereas the diffusion of the Internet has taken only a decade. Given the history of television, the Internet is likely to diffuse further in the years ahead at a rapid rate (Figure 4-20).

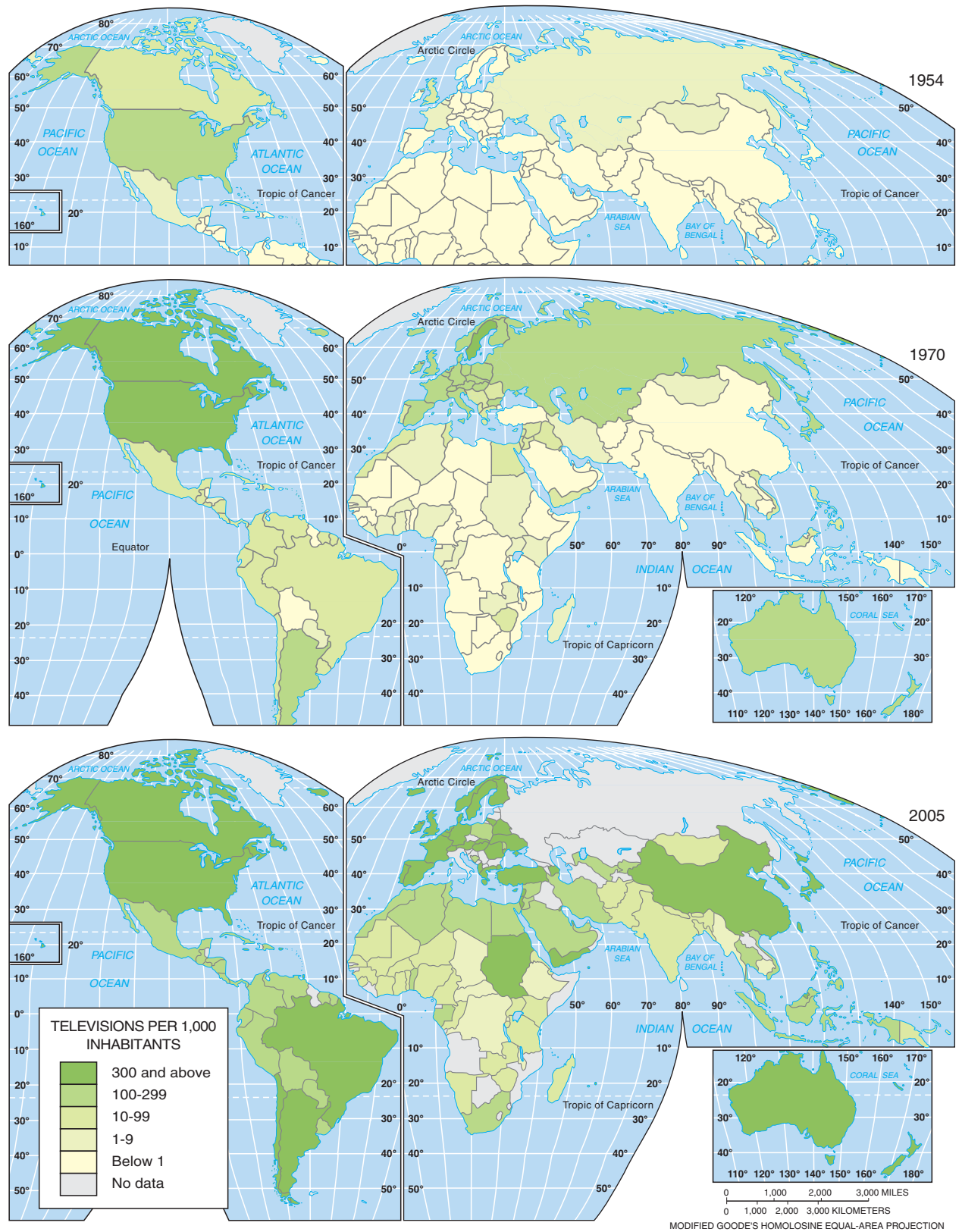


FIGURE 4-18 Diffusion of TV. Televisions per 1,000 inhabitants in 1954 (top), 1970 (middle), and 2005. Television has diffused from North America and Europe to other regions of the world. The United States and Canada had far more TV sets per capita than any other country as recently as the 1970s, but several European countries now have higher rates of ownership.

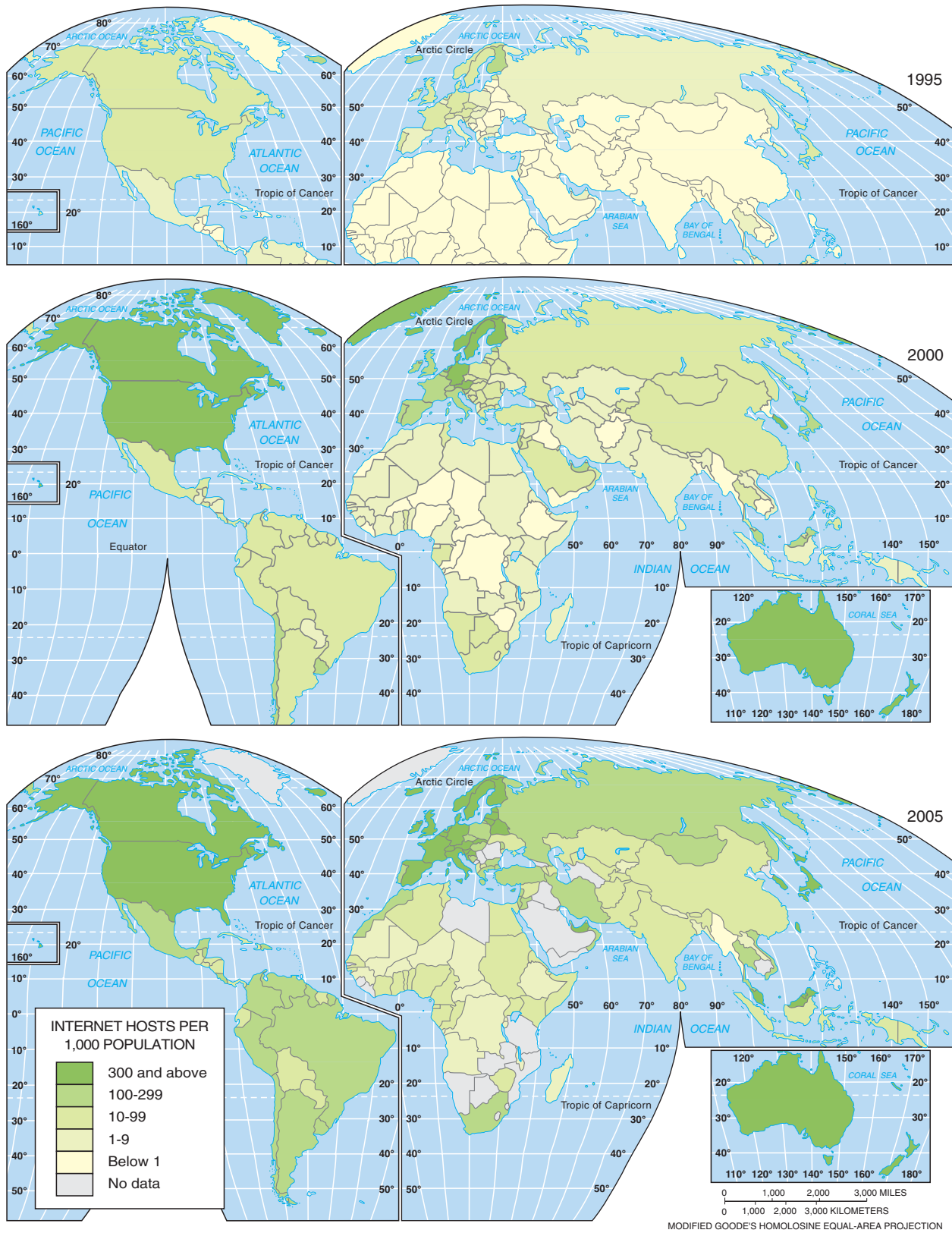


FIGURE 4-19 Diffusion of the Internet. Internet users per 1,000 inhabitants in 1995 (top), 2000 (middle), and 2005 (bottom). Compare to the diffusion of TV (Figure 4-18). The two sets of maps were drawn with the same scale and color scheme. Internet service is following a pattern in the twenty-first century similar to the diffusion of television in the twentieth century. The United States started out with a much higher rate of usage than elsewhere, until other countries caught up. The difference is that the diffusion of television took a half-century and the Internet only a decade.



FIGURE 4-20 Diffusion of the Internet to India. Access to the Internet is available in even many rural areas of many LDCs.

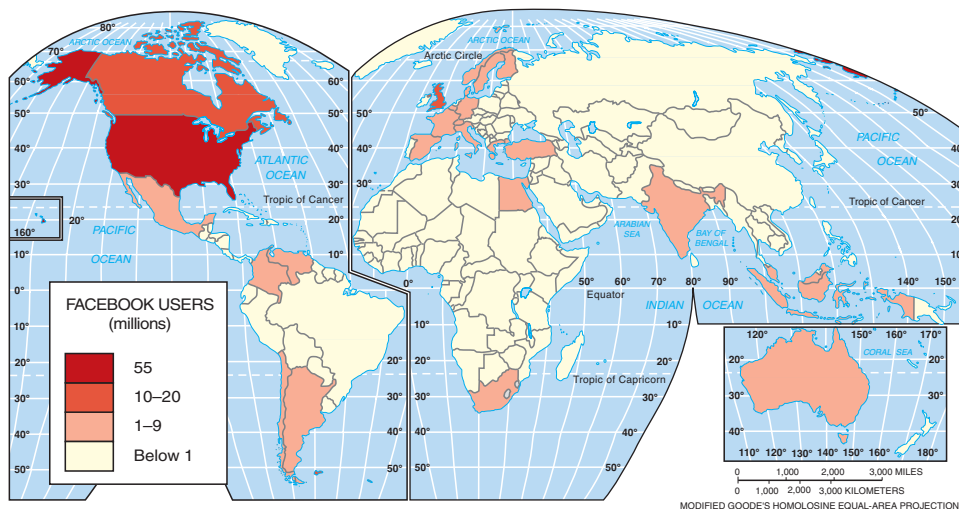


FIGURE 4-21 Diffusion of Facebook. In 2009, most Facebook users were located in the United States. In future years, Facebook may diffuse around the world in a similar pattern to Figures 4-18 and 19, or it may be overtaken by other electronic communications.

Diffusion of Facebook

Facebook, founded in 2004 by Harvard University students, has begun to diffuse rapidly. In 2009, five years after its founding, Facebook had 200 million active users (Figure 4-21). As with the first few years of TV and the Internet, once again the United

States had far more Facebook users than any other country. In the years ahead, Facebook is likely to either diffuse to other parts of the world, or it will be overtaken by other electronic social networking programs and be relegated to a footnote in the continuous repeating pattern of diffusing electronic communications.

KEY ISSUE 4

Why Does Globalization of Popular Culture Cause Problems?

- Threat to Folk Culture
- Environmental Impact of Popular Culture

The international diffusion of popular culture has led to two issues, both of which can be understood from geographic perspectives. First, the diffusion of popular culture may threaten the survival of traditional folk culture in many countries. Second, popular culture may be less responsive to the diversity of local environments and consequently may generate adverse environmental impacts. ■

Threat to Folk Culture

Many fear the loss of folk culture, especially because rising incomes can 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 MDCs can lead to dominance of Western perspectives.

Loss of Traditional Values

People in folk societies may turn away from traditional material culture, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Exposure to popular culture may stimulate desire to adopt similar practices.

One example of the symbolic importance of folk culture is clothing. In African

and Asian countries today, there is a contrast between the clothes of rural farmworkers and of urban business and government leaders. Adoption of clothing from MDCs is part of a process of imitation and replication of foreign symbols of success. Leaders of African and Asian countries have traveled to MDCs and experienced the sense of social status attached to clothes, such as men's business suits. Back home, executives and officials may wear Western business suits as a symbol of authority and leadership.