

## **Chapter 4 Outline (review this for the test)**

### **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.

### TEST INFORMATION:

- 25 multiple choice questions = 20 minutes (2 points each – 50% of total score)  
✓ scantron - Bring a #2 or mechanical pencil.
- 1 free response essay question = 25 minutes (50 points – 50% of total score)

### Hints for answering multiple choice questions

- Go through the entire set of questions and answer **ONLY** the ones you know for sure
- When you reach a question you are not quite sure of, but think you can answer given more time, mark that question. (devise a strategy that works best for you, perhaps you can circle the question number)
- After you have answered all the questions you know for sure, go back to the questions you circled. If you can narrow down the choices to two possible responses, go ahead and make your best guess.
- If time remains, scan through all the questions you haven't answered, and answer them.

### Hints for answering free response essay questions

- FYI--Free response questions often consist of a statement, sometimes accompanied with a graphic and two to three questions following that statement.
- When constructing your response, it is not necessary to construct a typical 5 paragraph essay. Instead, focus on answering each of the two to three questions as thoroughly as possible. High scores will be given to responses that provide **specific examples** to **illustrate the concept, process, or pattern under discussion**. Also, high scores will be given to students who correctly identify and relate relevant areas of human geography other than that which is being directly addressed in the question.
- Focus on answering the question as **accurately, clearly and succinctly** as possible.
- Provide **specific examples** to help answer each question.
- Write neatly with complete sentences and correct grammar.
- Before constructing response, **brainstorm and outline** your answer.

**Possible free response essay questions for chapter 4** (you will be tested on **ONE** of these! Study them ahead of time!)