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-steam 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
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