Population Clusters

- United States and Canada have highly urbanized populations.
- Both have high degree of cultural pluralism, or cultural diversity.
- United States has higher growth rate due to natural increase and immigration.
- Canada’s population increase is even more affected by immigration.

Figure 3A-2
© H. J. de Blij, P. O. Muller, and John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
NORTH AMERICA
POPULATION DISTRIBUTION: 2012
One dot represents 10,000 persons

Figure 3A-2
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The realm has diverse **physiographic regions** that each exhibit natural landscape homogeneity.

- Some high-relief regions:
  - Pacific Mountains
  - Rocky Mountains
  - Appalachian Mountains

- Some lowland regions:
  - Great Plains
  - Interior Lowlands
  - Various Coastal Plains
Physiographic variety is matched in climatic variety.

- Considerable \textit{Cf} and \textit{Df} climates are suitable for large-scale farming.
- Significant \textit{rainshadow effect} of the western mountains blocks moisture to the Great Plains.
- Humid east experiences weather extremes due to frigid Arctic and subtropical seasonal air masses.
Figure 2-6

World Regional Geography, Fourth Edition
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Climate Zones

Tropical Humid Climates (A)
- Tropical wet/dry

Arid and Semiarid Climates (B)
- Steppe
- Desert

Temperate Climates (C)
- Midlatitude, moist all year
- Subtropical, winter dry
- Mediterranean, summer dry

Cool Humid Climates (D)
- Continental, moist all year

Coldest Climates (E)
- Arctic
- High altitude

Winds
- Ocean currents

Wet Pacific air blows into coastal mountains bringing rain and moderate temperatures.

Continental effect makes winters colder and summers hotter.

Moist Gulf of Mexico air brings rain and moderate temperatures.

Gulf Stream current brings warm tropical water, warming the air over the Atlantic coast.
North America’s Physical Geography: Great Lakes and Great Rivers

- Two great drainage systems between the Rockies and Appalachians:
  1. Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River into the northern Atlantic
  2. Mississippi-Missouri Rivers into a *delta* on the Gulf of Mexico

- Both have been modified by human engineering.
European Settlement & Expansion

- Indigenous North Americans
  - Known as Native Americans or First Nations
- Devastated by arrival and expansion of Europeans
  - Displaced from their homelands
  - Native American nations relegated to impoverished and isolated reservations
European Settlement & Expansion

- European colonies:
  - Current population geography a legacy of French and British settlement
  - Diversified local economies
- American Revolution and opening of the West
  - Interior lowlands favorable to farming and settlement
  - Political acquisition of western territories made by new state by purchase or concession
Figure 2.1c

World Regional Geography, Fifth Edition

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Cultural Foundations

- **Language**
  - Near-universality of English
    - Undergoing change, especially worldwide
  - Facilitates mobility
  - Dominant medium of interaction

- **Religion**
  - Christianity dominant in the U.S.
  - Regional denomination diversity
  - Religious tolerance for most; Islam a contemporary exception

Figure 3A-6
© H. J. de Blij, P. O. Muller, and John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
The Federal Map of North America

- **Similarities**
  - **Internal political geographies**
    - Dominated by straight-line boundaries
    - Elsewhere, physical features mark boundaries
    - Result delimiting prior to settlement
  - **Federal state structures**
    - Each country’s subdivisions vary in their significance

Figure 3A-7
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The Distribution of Natural Resources

- Uneven distribution of natural resources across the realm
- Water
  - Relatively well-supplied
  - Concerns for future supply:
    - Arid Southwest and Great Plains rely on other areas for water.
    - Overuse of ground water aquifers lowers water table.
The Distribution of Natural Resources

- Abundant *mineral* reserves are in three zones.
- *Fossil fuels* or oil, *natural gas* and coal energy sources:
  - Not enough to satisfy demand, so imports are necessary.
  - Alternative energy sources, especially nuclear power, are not well-developed.
The Distribution of Natural Resources

Map Analysis Activity: Comparing Natural and Human Resources

1. What is observed in the locations of North America’s natural resources and its population distribution?
2. Based on the two maps, do these themes have a relationship? Why or why not?
Urbanization and the Spatial Economy: Industrial Cities

- Industrialization and urbanization in tandem
- A new *urban system*:
  - Cities specialized in raw materials or manufacturing
  - Interconnected by growing transportation network
  - **American Manufacturing Belt** emerged as foundation of the North American Core

- **Shifting spatial economy**:
  - *Primary* sector in decline due to mechanization
  - *Secondary* sector growth and decline
  - *Tertiary* sector expansion
Initiated an integrated continental-scale economy
- Rail predominantly for cargo, not passengers
- “Intermodal” cargo from ships, to trucks and rail

Revival as shipping costs decline and international trade grows

New boom requires adding to the rail system
Among the Realm’s Great Cities...

**New York**

- A true “world city”
  - Global influence as a cultural and media capital
  - Sprawling megalopolis
- Urban problems:
  - Socioeconomic issues
  - Immigrant ghettos
  - Aging infrastructure and industry
  - Current economic crisis
- Bold plans to resolve its problems
Among the Realm’s Great Cities...

**Toronto**

- Historic heart of English-speaking Canada
  - Leading economic center
- Known for its...
  - Livability
  - Diversity
  - Vibrancy
- Central city-suburban cooperation
  - Difficulties in managing increasing suburban clout

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Urbanization and the Spatial Economy: Deindustrialization and Suburbanization

- Transportation and communication innovations increased interconnectedness and mobility.

- Evolution of the outer city:
  - Residential suburbia had its own businesses and industries, entertainment, and other amenities.
  - Relative decline in the central city.

- Coincided with deindustrialization:
  - Loss of manufacturing jobs meant opportunities were found in suburbia.
  - Those who could, moved out of the inner city.
Urbanization and the Spatial Economy: The Information Economy and City Regions

- **Information economy:**
  - For some cities, helped recovery from deindustrialization and high employment
  - Rising employment in tertiary and quaternary service-based sectors
  - Information-based economic activity is found in established CBDs, on urban fringes or in suburbs:
    - *Silicon Valley*: world’s leading center for computer research and development
    - Favorable combination of locational dynamics
Groundwater withdrawals, per acre, 1990

- 0.00–0.01
- 0.02–0.09
- 0.10–0.24
- 0.25–0.49
- 0.50–0.99
- More than 1.00 acre-foot

Scale varies in this perspective.

Water level change, 1980–1990

- Rose more than 15 feet
- 7.5–14.9
- 2.5–7.4
- No significant change
- 2.5–7.4
- 7.5–14.9
- Declined more than 15 feet
Urbanization and the Spatial Economy: Polycentric Cities

- Multiple centers:
  - CBD still at the center.
  - Outer city’s have their own CBDs.

- Gentrification involves land-use changes and urban neighborhood restoration:
  - Raises property values and taxes
  - Displaces former low income residents with newer more affluent ones
THE GENERAL MODEL

THE URBAN REALMS OF METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES
1-West/Pacific Foothills
2-Northwest/San Fernando
3-East/San Gabriel Valley
4-Southeast/Orange County
5-Southwest/Pacific Lowlands
6-Central Los Angeles
Urbanization and the Spatial Economy: Effects of the Great Recession

- 2008 financial crisis:
  - Banking sector’s “toxic assets” a result of predatory mortgage lending and irresponsible borrowing
- Burst of housing bubble and problem of negative equity:
  - Housing bubble grew by speculation and drive for profit
  - Greatest in fast-growth areas with high housing demands
  - Drastic rise in foreclosures

- Canada’s experience was less severe:
  - Conservative banks
  - Strong economy
The Making of a Multicultural Realm: The Virtues of Mobility and Immigration

- Changing population distribution and character:
  - Center of gravity of U.S. population is moving southward to the **Sunbelt**, aided by air conditioning
  - Other major migrations:
    1. Urbanization
    2. Rural to urban movement of African Americans
    3. Suburbanization and beyond
    4. Return of African Americans to southern cities
    5. Steady influx of global immigrants
The Migration Process...

Both United States and Canada are products of international migration, or permanent relocation:

- Migration decision depends on perception, information, and distance.
- Push and pull factors motivate or attract.

- Destination:
  - North America is a "land of opportunity."
  - Immigration is 40 percent of growth.
Figure 3A-13
© H. J. de Blij, P. O. Muller, and John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
The Making of a Multicultural Realm: The Challenge of Multiculturalism

- Growing pluralism:
  - **Transnationalism** and beyond national borders
  - **Melting pot** of blended cultures being contested by increasing ethnic and cultural complexity
  - **Mosaic culture** as ever more heterogeneous complex of separate, distinct groups

**What do you think?**
- What type of society results from multiculturalism? Melting pot or mosaic culture or both? Why?
The Making of a Multicultural Realm: The Challenge of Multiculturalism

- In the United States...
  - Sufficient immigrant numbers allow the creation of a durable society within the national society.
  - Challenge of undocumented immigration and debate over border security are political hot topics.

- In Canada...
  - Critical labor shortages provide context for immigration policies.
  - Policy is balanced according to employment and demographic needs in various regions.
**Regional Issue:**

**Immigrants: How Many Can North America Accommodate?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigration Brings Benefits</th>
<th>Limit Immigration Now</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❑ It is part of the region’s history and has never been heartily welcomed.</td>
<td>❑ High level of legal immigrants is unsustainable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❑ It fuels economic growth.</td>
<td>❑ Demands for social services strain state budgets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❑ It is not just unskilled, but also skilled and educated.</td>
<td>❑ Immigrants displace working-class Americans by accepting lower wages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❑ Native population is aging, and immigration brings youth.</td>
<td>❑ Amnesty for illegal immigrants attracts more, and that’s a security issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❑ Illegal immigration should be curbed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>