Video Information

Human Geography: People, Places and Change

Geography 2

This course is an introductory examination of the Earth's human environment. Emphasis is on the description, analysis and explanation of human population distributions; human cultural train distribution; patterns of rural land-use and settlement; patterns of agriculture and industry; and world urban development.

All DVDs are closed captioned.

Lesson 1 - Imagining New Worlds

Cancun, Mexico, looks remarkably different to the international tourists who come to get away, the Mayan descendants who farm their fathers' land, the Mexicans who find employment at resorts, and the global corporations that see opportunity for investments. These contrasting experiences of different people in the same region are what geographers call "geographical imaginations."

Lesson 2 - Reflections on a Global Screen

The rapid globalization of the media is a trend that some countries fear will homogenize culture, forcing out programs that reflect their own values to make room for Hollywood's. But globalization is a two-way street; Hong Kong stations can transmit their local broadcasts to Chinese populations in Europe and the U.S. just as CNN can offer worldwide coverage from Atlanta.

Lesson 3 - Global Firms in the Industrializing East

Singapore has transformed itself into an economic powerhouse along the Pacific Rim. In the early 1960s, multinational companies attracted by a highly skilled and cheap labor force turned Singapore into a major manufacturing center. Just a generation later, companies in Singapore delegate labor-intensive work to Malaysia and Indonesia while bringing in new business in research, development, and finance.

Lesson 4 - Global Tourism

The experiences of visitors to Hawaii, Malaysia, and Borneo are shaped by each island's tourism industry. Hawaii has the most mature industry, the product of decades of development that preserved little of its indigenous culture; Malaysia is following a similar path. Borneo is developing "ecotourism," catering to more intrepid travelers. The paradox of tourism offers opportunities for local development yet can destroy native cultures and environments.

Lesson 5 - Alaska: The Last Frontier?

Those who don't call Alaska home often perceive the 49th state as a pristine wilderness, not considering the indigenous peoples who have inhabited the area for centuries. Ongoing conflicts in Alaska highlight the difficulties of balancing the needs of indigenous peoples and the wilderness with economic development and modern life.
Lesson 6 - Population Transition in Italy

Although Italy is the spiritual center of the Roman Catholic Church, which opposes artificial means of contraception, the country has experienced the fastest and most extreme decline in fertility ever recorded. Some attribute the decline to consumer materialism; others blame the underdeveloped welfare system. Whatever the cause, the consequence is an aging population with fewer young people to support it.

Lesson 7 - Water is for Fighting Over

Along the parched California-Nevada border, various groups with compelling yet competing interests claim the water of the Truckee River Basin. The burgeoning Reno-Sparks area needs water to sustain the community, but high levels in a local reservoir are destroying the cui-ui fish of a local Paiute tribe. Farmers need irrigated water for crops, but the government seeks water further downstream for a wetlands area. These conflicts illustrate how scarce natural resources can shape a community.

Lesson 8 - A Migrant's Heart

Jatinder Verma, a man of Indian descent who was born in East Africa and came to England at the age of 14, explains through a trip back to India how he is caught between two worlds, struggling to preserve his cultural heritage while being acculturated into his adopted country. His story demonstrates how migrants think about their sense of place in relation to where they have come from.

Lesson 9 - Berlin: Changing Center of a Changing Europe

Berlin's emergence as Germany's new political capital symbolizes the end of communism and a transformation occurring throughout the country and continent. Many of the issues that Germany now confronts such as the shift of considerable resources to rebuild the East and the rise of neo-Nazi sentiments are seen in microcosm in Berlin.

Lesson 10 - The World of the Dragon

What is happening in the East today, especially in China and Japan, disrupts simple notions of East vs. West and challenges Western accounts of globalization. This concluding program draws attention to developments in the East that have potential consequences for the West and examines the role that "overseas Chinese" play in the transnational network of the Chinese business world.