



FIGURE 3B-1

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REGIONS

North American Core

Maritime Northeast

French Canada

Southeast

Southwest

Pacific Hinge

Western Frontier

Continental Interior

Northern Frontier

IN THIS CHAPTER

- ◆ U.S.-Canada cross-border linkages
- ◆ The Hispanicization of the Southwest
 - ◆ Miami: South of the South
 - ◆ China's impact on the Pacific Hinge
- ◆ The natural riches of the Northern Frontier
 - ◆ The Alaskan frontier and U.S. geopolitics

CONCEPTS, IDEAS, AND TERMS

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Geology, climate, culture, and history have combined to create an interesting matrix of regions in North America (Fig. 3B-1). Mountain ranges, coastal zones, deserts, low-lying plains, and a range of climatic environments all demand different kinds of human adaptation. Successive waves of immigrants brought with them a variety of cultures; sometimes the differences were subtle, but sometimes they were quite stark. The emergence of two large countries, the United States and Canada, provided a pair of major political and institutional territorial structures within which regional differences have been accommodated. As Figure 3B-1 shows, a majority of North America's regions traverse both countries regardless of the international boundary. But some other regional developments are best understood within the national context of each country. As much as Canada and the United States have in common, there is ample reason to focus the first part of this chapter on each individually. In the discussion that follows, therefore, we begin by highlighting the regional geographies of two concordant neighbors—in the knowledge that Canadians tend to know more about the United States than Americans know about Canada. After that, we will examine the nine evolving regions of the realm as a whole.

REGIONS OF THE REALM

REGIONALISM IN CANADA: DIVISIVE FORCES

Canada's Spatial Structure

Territorially the second-largest state in the world after Russia, Canada is administratively divided into only 13 subnational entities—10 provinces and 3 territories (the United States has 50). The provinces—where 99.7 percent

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MAJOR CITIES OF THE REALM	
City	Population* (in millions)
New York	21.1
Los Angeles	13.2
Chicago	9.6
Dallas-Ft. Worth	7.0
San Francisco	6.6
Houston	6.3
Washington, D.C.	6.2
Philadelphia	6.1
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	5.9
Toronto, Canada	5.8
Atlanta	5.7
Boston	4.7
Phoenix	4.5
Detroit	4.3
Montreal, Canada	4.0
Seattle	3.8
San Diego	3.3
Denver	3.1
Vancouver, Canada	2.6
Ottawa, Canada	1.3

*Based on 2014 estimates.

of all Canadians live—range in dimensions from tiny, Delaware-sized Prince Edward Island to Quebec, nearly twice the size of Texas (Fig. 3B-2).

As in the United States, the smallest provinces lie in the northeast. Canadians call these four the Atlantic Provinces (or simply Atlantic Canada): Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the mainland-island province named Newfoundland and Labrador. Gigantic, mainly *Francophone* (French-speaking) Quebec and populous, heavily urbanized Ontario, both flanking Hudson Bay, form the heart of the country. Most of western Canada (which is what Canadians call everything west of Ontario) is organized into the three Prairie Provinces: Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. In the far west, beyond the Canadian Rockies and extending to and along the Pacific Ocean, lies the tenth province, British Columbia.

Of the three territories in Canada's Arctic North, the Yukon is the smallest—but nothing is small here in Arctic Canada. With the Northwest Territories and recently created Nunavut, the three Territories cover almost 40 percent of Canada's total area. The population, however, is extremely small: only about 120,000 people inhabit this vast, frigid frontier zone.

The case of Nunavut merits special mention. Created in 1999, this newest Territory is the outcome of a major aboriginal land claim agreement between the *Inuit* people (formerly called Eskimos) and the federal government, and encompasses all of Canada's eastern Arctic as far

north as Ellesmere Island (Fig. 3B-2), an area far larger than any other province or territory. With around one-fifth of Canada's total area, Nunavut—which means “our land”—contains only about 35,000 residents, of whom 80 percent are Inuit.

Canada's population is clustered in a discontinuous ribbon, roughly 300 kilometers (200 mi) wide, nestled against the U.S. border and along ocean shores, whereas most of the country's energy reserves lie far to the north of this corridor. As such, the map of Canada's human settlement (Figs. 3A-2 and 3B-2) bears out this generalization and emphasizes the significance of environment. People choose to live in the more agreeable areas to the south, but territorial control of abundant northern resources is highly important. The population pattern creates cross-border affinities with major American cities in several places (Toronto-Buffalo, Windsor-Detroit, Vancouver-Seattle), although very little of this occurs in the three Prairie Provinces of the Canadian West, which for the most part adjoin sparsely settled North Dakota and Montana.

Cultural Contrasts

Canada's capital, Ottawa, is symbolically located astride the Ottawa River, which marks the boundary between English-speaking Ontario and French-speaking Quebec. Though comparatively small, Canada's population is markedly divided by culture and tradition, and this division has a pronounced regional expression. Linguistically, 68 percent of Canada's citizens speak English as their mother tongue; 13 percent speak French only; 17 percent of the population is bilingual in English and French; and the remaining 2 percent are speakers of other languages. The spatial concentration of more than 85 percent of the country's Francophones in Quebec accentuates this division (Fig. 3B-2). Quebec's population is more than 80 percent French-Canadian, and this province remains the historic, traditional, and emotional focus of French culture in Canada.

Over the past half-century a strong nationalist movement has emerged in Quebec, and at times it has demanded outright separation from the rest of Canada. This ethnolinguistic division continues to be the litmus test for Canada's federal system, and the issue continues to pose a latent threat to the country's future national unity. The historical roots of the matter are related to French-British competition since the seventeenth century in which Britain gained the upper hand. To this day, the British monarch remains the official head of state (as Canada remains part of the British Commonwealth), represented by the governor general. It is one of the issues that riles Quebec nationalists.

There does seem to be an overall decline in support for Quebec's independence. This is partly due to a number of laws that reassure the primacy of Québécois culture in the province (a 2006 federal parliamentary resolution effectively recognizes the Québécois as a *distinct nation*). In addition, there appears to be a growing realization among the French-speaking people that continued integration in

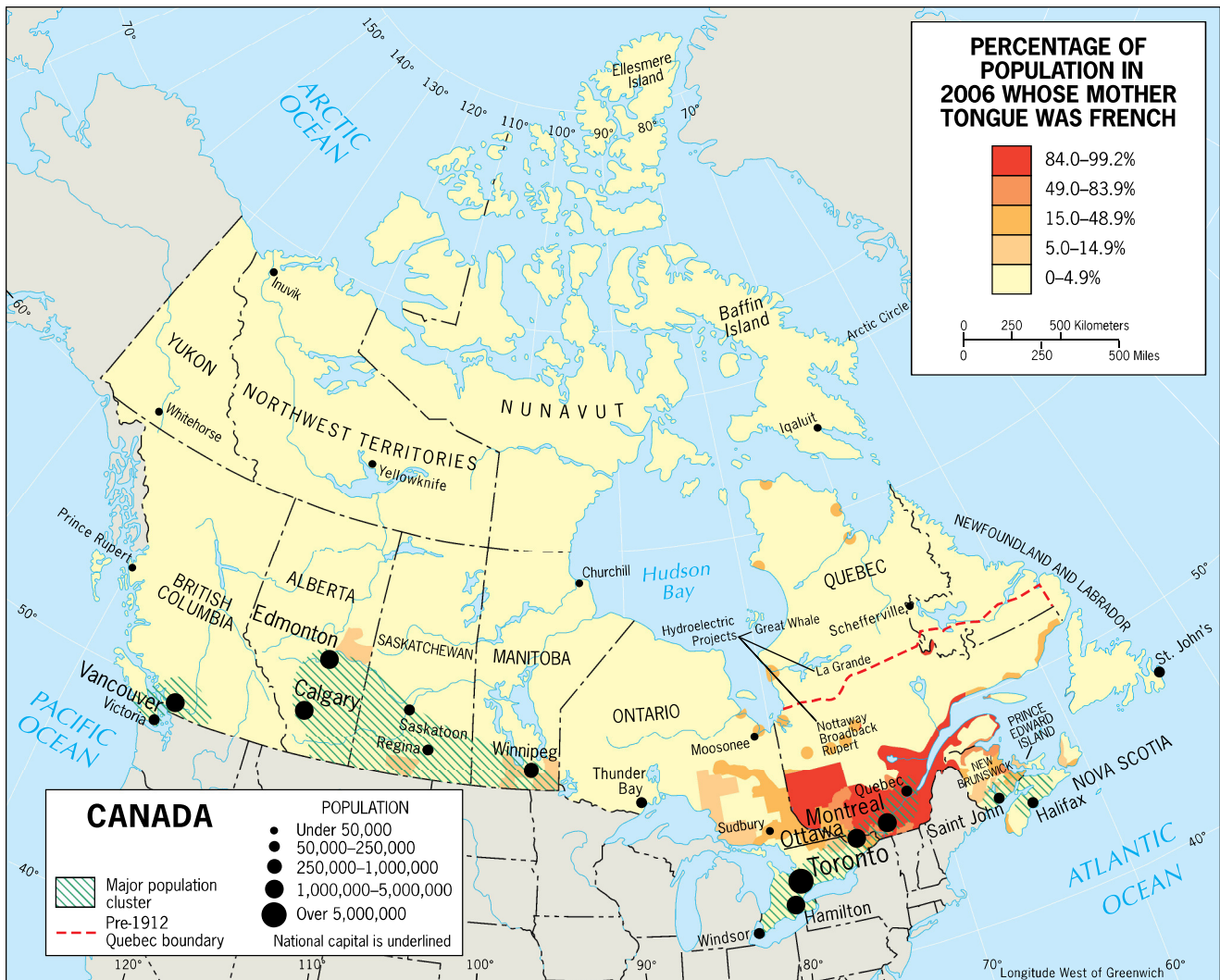


FIGURE 3B-2

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Canada combined with a high degree of autonomy is the best possible option. But the struggle for a maximum degree of autonomy continues, along with the accompanying political and ethnic tensions.

The Ascendancy of Indigenous Peoples

On the wider Canadian scene, the culture-based Quebec struggle has stirred ethnic consciousness among the country's 1.2 million native peoples—dominated by **First Nations** [1], but also including Métis and Inuit. They, too, have received a sympathetic hearing in Ottawa, and in recent years breakthroughs have been achieved with the creation of Nunavut as well as local treaties for limited self-government in northern British Columbia.

A foremost concern among these peoples is that their aboriginal rights be protected by the federal government against the provinces of which they are a part. This is especially true for the largest First Nation of Quebec, the Cree, whose historic domain covers the northern half of the province. As Figure 3B-2 shows, the territory of the Cree

(north of the red dashed line) is no unproductive wilderness: it contains the James Bay Hydroelectric Project, a massive scheme of dikes and dams that has transformed much of northwestern Quebec and generates hydroelectric power for a huge market within and outside the province. In 2002, after the federal courts supported its attempts to block construction of the project, the Cree negotiated a groundbreaking treaty with the Quebec government whereby this First Nation dropped its opposition in return for a portion of the income earned from electricity sales. The Cree also secured the right to control their own economic and community development.

Centrifugal Forces

The events of the past four decades have had a profound impact on Canada's national political geography, and not only in Quebec. Leaders of the western provinces objected to federal concessions to Quebec, insisting that the equal treatment of all ten provinces is a basic principle that precludes the designation of special status for any single one. Recent

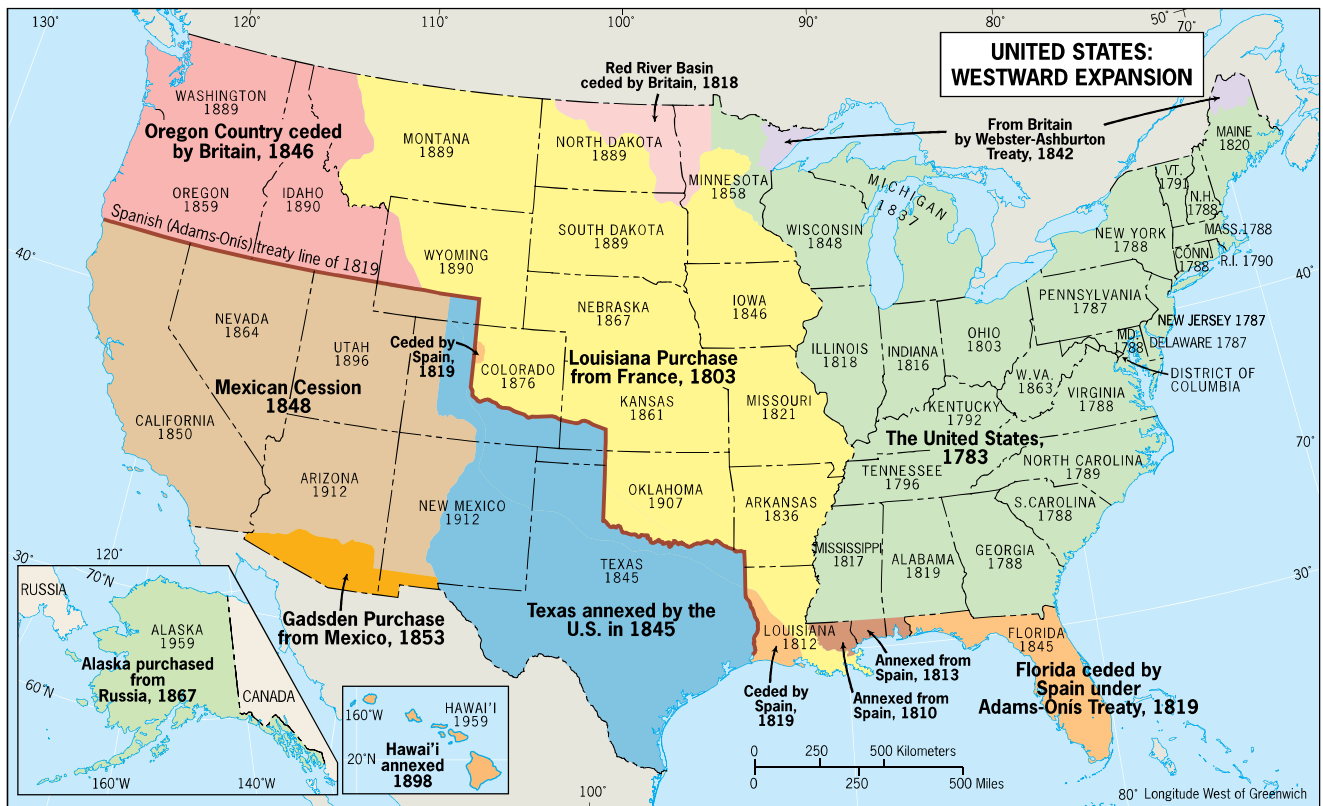


FIGURE 3B-3

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federal elections and opinion surveys have clearly revealed the emerging fault lines that surround Quebec and set off the western provinces and British Columbia from the rest of the country. Thus, with national unity always a challenge in this comparatively young federation, Canada confronts forces of **devolution** [2] that threaten to weaken the state.

In addition, the continuing economic integration of Canada and the United States (galvanized by the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994) tends to pull the southern parts of Canada's most populous provinces into an ever closer relationship with its U.S. neighbor. Local **cross-border linkages** [3] are already strongly developed and are likely to intensify in the future: the Atlantic Provinces with neighboring New England; Quebec with New York State; Ontario with Michigan and adjacent Midwestern States; the Prairie Provinces with the Upper Midwest; and British Columbia with the (U.S.) Pacific Northwest. Such functional reorientations constitute yet another set of potentially powerful devolutionary challenges confronting the Ottawa government.

REGIONALISM AND ETHNICITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Nothing in the United States compares with the devolutionary challenges Canada has faced throughout its evolution as a modern state. The United States has about four times as many subnational political units as Canada, but none

since the Civil War (1861–1865) has mounted a serious campaign for **secession** [4] of the kind Quebec has. And in only one (Hawai'i) have indigenous people demanded recognition of a part of the State as sovereign territory.

In Canada, indigenous peoples were able to hold on to sparsely populated areas in the north. In the United States, on the other hand, the relentless push westward by European settlers and the U.S. government in effect dispossessed—and decimated—the original inhabitants (Fig. 3B-3). In the end, they were confined to some 300 reservations located mainly in the western half of the country (Fig. 3B-4, lower-right map). There are only about 3 million Native Americans left today, with the Navajo and Cherokee being the largest surviving nations. Whereas in Canada the First Nations hold significant territorial power, in the United States they are in a far weaker position to challenge the federal government.

Within U.S. society, much more so than in Canada, the social fabric and ethnic relations are determined by past and present waves of immigration. In certain cases, immigration has helped forge a particular regional geography. This was especially true in the case of the hundreds of thousands of Africans who were forcibly brought to the United States in bondage from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries and put to work as slaves on plantations in the American South.

Slavery was abolished in 1865, but racial segregation persisted in a variety of legal forms until the civil rights

AMONG THE REALM'S GREAT CITIES . . .

TORONTO, CAPITAL OF Ontario and Canada's largest metropolis (5.8 million), is the historic heart of English-speaking Canada. The landscape of much of its center is dominated by exquisite Victorian-era architecture and surrounds a healthy downtown that is one of Canada's leading economic centers. Landmarks abound in this CBD, including the Sky Dome stadium (now called Rogers Centre), the famous City Hall with its facing pair of curved high-rises, and mast-like CN Tower, which at 553 meters (1815 ft) is the world's fifth-tallest freestanding structure. Toronto also is a major port and industrial complex, whose facilities line the shore of Lake Ontario.

Livability is one of the first labels Torontonians apply to their city, which has retained more of its middle class than central cities of its size in the United States. *Diversity* is another leading characteristic because this is North America's richest urban ethnic mosaic. Among the largest of more than a dozen thriving ethnic communities are those dominated by Italians, Portuguese, Chinese, Greeks, and Ukrainians; overall, Toronto now includes residents from about 170 countries who speak more than 100 languages; and the immigrant inflow continues steadily, with those born outside Canada constituting fully half of the city's population (in all the world only two other million-plus cities exhibit a higher percentage).

Originally, the city's advantageous location on the northwestern shore of Lake Ontario was a function of its centrality in what has always been Canada's most populated region, its access to regional waterways, and relative proximity to the U.S. core area. Subsequently, it was the advent of the railroad during the late-nineteenth-century industrialization era that solidified Toronto's position as Canada's leading city. Today, the Greater Toronto area produces about one-fifth of

movement peaked in the 1960s. In violation of the Constitution, a wide range of State and local Jim Crow laws were enacted to codify the repression of African Americans. This historical legacy is still visible today in the geography of race in the United States, with blacks regionally concentrated in the Southeast, from eastern Texas to Maryland (Fig. 3B-4, upper-right map). We noted in Chapter 3A that substantial numbers of blacks migrated north to work in the industrial centers of the American Manufacturing Belt during the second quarter of the twentieth century; major African American population clusters still exist in those northern cities, but they are not clearly apparent at the scale of the national map.

Race continues to be a sensitive issue in the United States, more so than in Canada, because of this terrible history and because until recently a large number of African Americans were effectively denied equal opportunities. The

TORONTO



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Canada's entire economic output and is home to nearly half of the country's corporate headquarters.

Toronto has functioned successfully in recent decades, thanks to a metropolitan government structure that fostered central city-suburban cooperation. But that relationship is increasingly stressed as the outer city gains a critical mass of population, economic activity, and political clout. Externally, the city has become the centerpiece of the Main Street conurbation (see Fig. 3A-9), which extends for 1000 kilometers (650 mi) from Windsor-Detroit in the southwest through Toronto and Montreal to Quebec City in the northeast.

2008 election of the first black president was a major historical event but even now, following Barack Obama's reelection to a second term, it is still not clear if his presidency has served as a catalyst of progressive change in terms of race relations.

Another highly visible regional expression of ethnic migration concerns the presence of Hispanics in the southwestern United States (Fig. 3B-4, upper-left map). This migration, too, should be understood in historical and geographical contexts. In these parts of the country, many Hispanic place names reflect Mexico's ouster from a vast area acquired in 1848 by the United States at the end of the Mexican War through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This treaty established the Mexican-American border at the Rio Grande and assigned to the United States no less than 1.3 million square kilometers (525,000 sq mi) of Mexican territory, including present-day California, Arizona, Nevada, New

DISTRIBUTION OF MAJOR RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS, CONTERMINOUS UNITED STATES, 2010

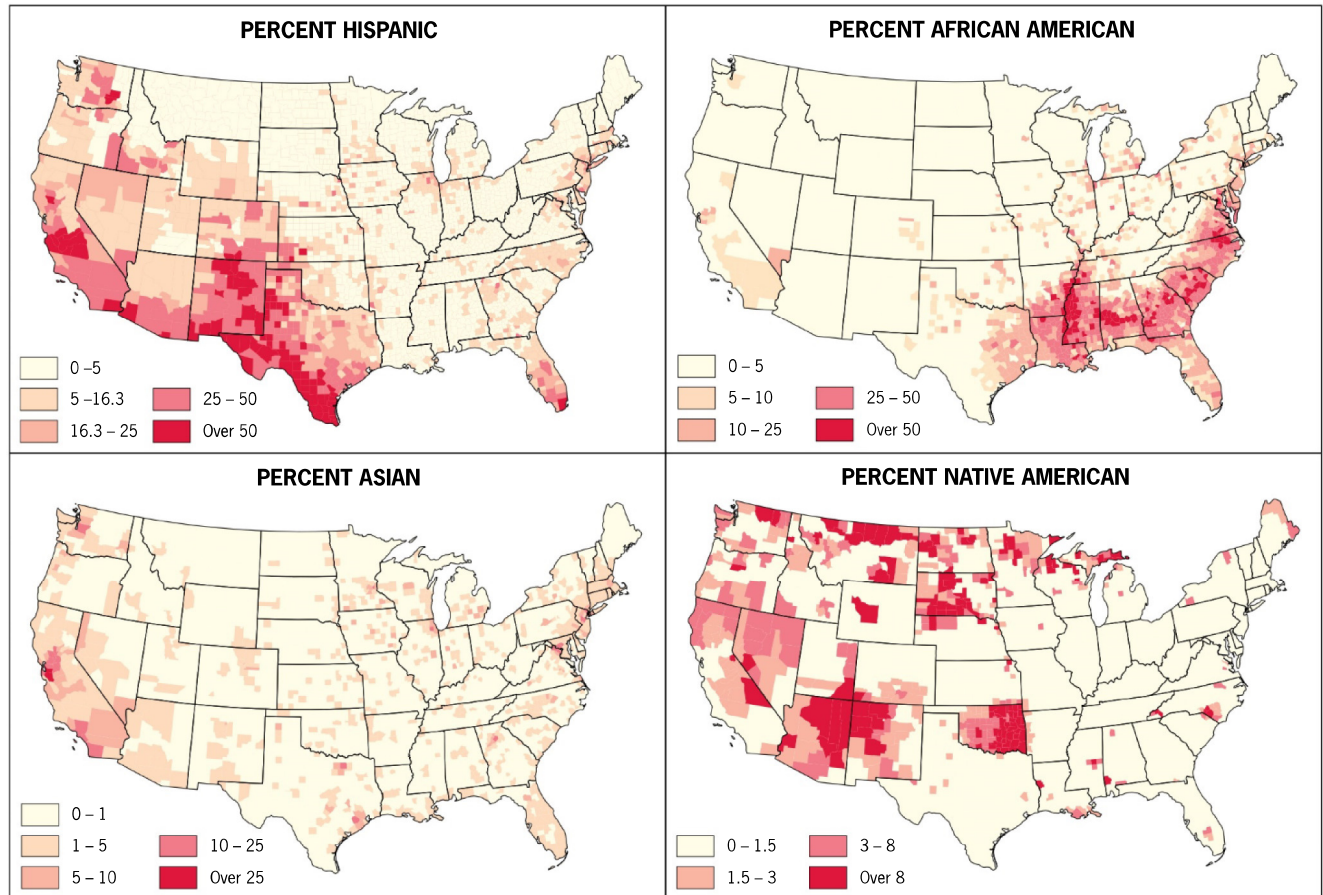


FIGURE 3B-4

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Mexico, Texas (which had already declared independence from Mexico), southern Colorado, and Utah (Fig. 3B-3). In Mexico, this disastrous event (which precipitated that country's civil war) is much more vivid in the national consciousness and memory than it is in the United States. Certain Mexican nationalists even proclaim that much of the current migration across the U.S.-Mexican border, illegal though it may be (see photo), is a matter of resettlement of unjustly lost lands.

Since 1980, the number of Hispanics in the United States has more than tripled and now exceeds 55 million, outnumbering the African American minority and changing the ethnic-cultural map of America. Hispanics are still strongly clustered in the Southwest, California, and Florida (see Fig. 3B-4, upper-left map). In fact, along virtually the entire multi-State tier north of the Mexican border, America has become a cultural transition zone (think of the expression "Tex-Mex"), where immigration, legal as well as illegal, has become a contentious issue. Language, not a point of controversy for the African American community, is an emotional matter for some Anglophone Americans who fear erosion of the status of English in their communities and in the country as a whole. Indeed, Hispanics are now dispersing into many parts of the United States—

including rural areas in the Southeast and Midwest as well as urban communities from Massachusetts to Washington State. Even some small and dwindling towns in the Midwest and on the Great Plains, in States like Kansas, are now being revived due to the influx of Hispanics.

Finally, the Asian immigrant population, whose arrival rate has also risen in recent decades, is geographically the most agglomerated of the main ethnic minorities (Fig. 3B-4, lower-left map). Chinese remain the most numerous among the 19-plus million Americans who identify themselves as Asian, but this diverse minority also includes Japanese who have been in the United States for generations, Filipinos who began arriving after World War II, Koreans who have migrated since the 1950s, Vietnamese who were resettled in the 1970s following the Indochina War, more gradual arrivals of Pacific Islanders including Hawaiians, and considerable numbers of South Asian Indians in the past few decades. Whatever their origins, the great majority have remained in California, where many have achieved notable economic success and upward mobility. This regional geography of ethnicity within the national context of the United States was largely shaped by migration histories as well as the processes of voluntary or involuntary inclusion and exclusion.



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People have walled and fenced themselves off since the earliest days, as the Great Wall of China and Hadrian's Wall (built by the Romans in northern Britain) remind us. But no wall—whether the Berlin Wall during the Cold War or the Israeli “Security Barrier” of today—has ever halted all migration. Neither will migration be stopped by a fortified fence along the Mexican border from the Pacific coast to the Gulf of Mexico. However, long stretches of the U.S.–Mexico boundary already look like this. This photo shows a ground-level view of the improvised wall that slashes westward, between Tijuana, Mexico and the southernmost suburbs of San Diego, California, as it makes its way toward the Pacific shore on the horizon. The poverty-stricken landscape of this eastern part of Tijuana extends almost to the rusty barrier itself, while development on the U.S. side has kept its distance from this well-patrolled segment of the border.

REGIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

Now let us consider the various regions within the North American realm on the basis of physical, cultural, and historical geography. Ample justification exists for recognizing the two countries of the North American realm as discrete regions, based on several contrasts we have discussed. There is, however, another way to conceptualize North America's regional geography: by combining functional and formal principles. The result, Figure 3B-1, is by no means the only solution because the drawing of a regional boundary, though well-informed, usually remains arbitrary to a certain degree. But for our general purpose these boundaries are the most pertinent and the following regional distinctions will be helpful in understanding the overall fabric of the realm. As we note in the following regional survey based on our map, there is more to the framework of North America than ethnicity and politics.

■ THE NORTH AMERICAN CORE (1)

The historic Core region of the North American realm integrates what have long been the most prominent parts of the United States and Canada (Fig. 3B-1). They contain

the largest cities and federal capitals of both countries, the leading financial markets, the largest number of corporate headquarters, dominant media centers, prestigious universities, cutting-edge research complexes, and the busiest airports and intercity expressways. Moreover, both the U.S. and Canadian portions of the North American Core still contain roughly one-third of their respective national populations. Political and business decisions, investments, and many other commitments made here affect not just North America, but the world at large.

As the manufacturing cities thrived, they grew larger, vertically as well as horizontally.

City centers acquired character-

istic and symbolic skylines (with Manhattan the synonym for the most spectacular of all), and urban peripheries expanded to the degree that cities near each other coalesced. The geographer Jean Gottmann in the 1950s combined the Greek words “megalo” (great) and “polis” (city) to coin the term **megalopolis** [5] to describe such coalescing metropolitan areas, and that term is still with us. The most prominent American megalopolis extends along the Atlantic seaboard from north of Boston to south of Washington, D.C. Sometimes also referred to as “Bosnywash,” this was the economic anchor of the North American core area: the seat of the U.S. government, the nucleus of business and finance, the hearth of culture, and the trans-Atlantic trading interface between much of the realm and Europe. In Figure 3A-9, note that Canada's predominant megalopolis is its most highly urbanized zone extending from Windsor (adjacent to Detroit) through Toronto to Montreal and Quebec City; urban geographers call this Windsor-Quebec axis **Main Street**, and it also forms part of the realm's core area.

Nonetheless, the dominance of the historic Core has been declining. As was true of the **American Manufacturing Belt** [6]—the region with which the Core coincides—it once commanded unmatched supremacy. But deindustrialization and the subsequent emergence of the information economy have eroded that dominance as competitors to the south and west continue to siphon away some of its key functions. As already noted, the State of Michigan is experiencing long-term economic decline as jobs in the automobile industry have steadily disappeared over the past few decades. In fact, household incomes in Michigan fell by more than 21 percent just between 2000 and 2009, the most precipitous drop in the nation. Second and third on this unenviable list were two other States of the old Manufacturing Belt: Indiana and Ohio.

AMONG THE REALM'S GREAT CITIES . . .

NEW YORK

NEW YORK IS much more than the largest city of the North American realm. It is one of the most famous places on Earth; it is the hemisphere's gateway to Europe and the rest of the Old World; it is a tourist mecca; it is the seat of the United Nations; it is one of the globe's most important financial centers—in many ways its most prominent world-city.

New York City consists of five boroughs, centered by the island of Manhattan, which contains the CBD south of 59th Street (the southern border of Central Park). Here is a skyscrapered landscape unequaled anywhere, studded with more fabled landmarks, streets, squares, and commercial facilities than any other cities except London and Paris. This is also the cultural and media capital of the United States, which means that the city's influence constantly radiates across the planet thanks to New York-based television networks, newspapers and magazines, book publishers, fashion and design leaders, and artistic and new media trendsetters.

At the metropolitan scale, New York forms the center of a vast urban region—250 square kilometers (150 sq mi) in size, containing a population of 21.1 million—which sprawls across parts of three States in the heart of Megalopolis. That outer city has become a giant in its own right with its population of 13 million, massive business complexes, and flourishing suburban downtowns.

New York's prominence has certainly been put to the test over the past half-century. It was hit hard by waves of deindustrialization that swept across North America during the 1960s and 70s, so much so that bankruptcy was declared in 1975. The population began to shrink while inner city decay advanced. But New York took off again, beginning in the mid-eighties, led by its expanding economic sectors in high-technology, information, and producer services such as accounting, finance, insurance, advertising, and consulting.

Then there was 9/11—the horrendous act of terrorism that profoundly shook New York and the rest of the nation. It changed the Big Apple's skyline forever and left a permanent mark on the city's psyche. It also disrupted and displaced a great deal of economic activity, especially in finance and producer services, but these effects now seem to have been



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temporary. More recently, the 2008 fiscal crisis that triggered the Great Recession took a major toll on Wall Street (where, arguably, that crisis originated in the first place)—as well as on 'Main Street.'

Ever resilient New York today appears to be prosperous enough, despite widening internal inequalities, its steadily rising cost of living, and all the challenges that come with managing a metropolis of this magnitude. The population overall is growing, crime rates are lower than they have been in decades, and even such aging ghettos as Harlem are being gentrified and redeveloped.

■ THE MARITIME NORTHEAST (2)

When you travel north from Boston into New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine, you move across one of North America's historic culture hearths whose identity has remained strong for four centuries. Even though Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island—traditional New England States—share these qualities, they have become part of the Core, so that on a functional as well as formal basis, the Maritime Northeast extends from the northern border of Massachusetts to Newfoundland, thereby incorporating all four Canadian Atlantic Provinces (Fig. 3B-1).

Difficult environments, a maritime orientation, limited resources, and a persistent rural character have combined to slow economic development here. Primary industries—fishing, logging, some farming—are mainstays, although recreation and tourism have boosted the regional economy in recent decades. Upper New England experiences the spillover effect of the Boston area's prosperity to some degree, but not enough to ensure steady and sustained economic growth. Atlantic Canada has endured economic hard times as well in the recent past. For example, overfishing has depleted fish stocks. Alternate opportunities focus on this subregion's spectacular scenery



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The skyline of Lower Manhattan, with the Statue of Liberty on its island in the foreground, on the evening of September 11, 2012. The parallel beams of the Tribute in Light, representing the fallen Twin Towers, shine into the night sky to conclude the annual ceremonies that memorialize the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (2001).

and the tourism it attracts. Economic prospects have also been boosted in Canada's poorest province, Newfoundland and Labrador, by the discovery of significant offshore oil reserves. Production is now well underway, and in the 2010s additional energy deposits have been discovered both on and around Newfoundland Island.

■ FRENCH CANADA (3)

Francophone Canada constitutes the inhabited southern portion of Quebec, focused on the St. Lawrence Valley from near Montreal northeastward to the river's mouth

(Fig. 3B-1). It also includes the French-speaking Acadians who reside in neighboring New Brunswick (Fig. 3B-2). The French cultural imprint on the region's cities and towns is matched in the rural areas by the narrow, rectangular *long lots* perpendicular to the river, also of French origin.

The economy of French Canada was historically less industrial and more rural than the adjacent Core region (and Toronto far outranks Montreal here). Nevertheless, Montreal's economic role has advanced since 2000, with information technology, telecommunications, and biopharmaceuticals all growing in importance. But Quebec's economic prospects tend to be overshadowed by the region's political uncertainties, and bursts of nationalism (such as laws prohibiting shops from advertising in English) have at times eroded business confidence. When the provincial government sought to address the declining birth rate resulting from accelerating urbanization by encouraging immigration, tolerance for multiculturalism in Quebec proved to be so low that a special commission held hearings to investigate the matter. Parochialism has cost Quebec dearly and sets this region off from the rest of the Canada that virtually encircles it.

The Acadians in the neighboring province of New Brunswick, Canada's largest cluster of French-speakers outside Quebec, take a different view. Not only do they reject the notion of independence for themselves, but they also actively promote all efforts to keep Quebec within the Canadian federation. Accommodation with the Anglophone majority and acceptance of multiculturalism in New Brunswick set an example for the rest of French Canada.

Yet in some ways, French Canada is a very rich part of North America. Northern Quebec produces so much

Small fishing ports still dot the New England coast: Chatham, Massachusetts, at the elbow of Cape Cod.



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An unmistakably French cultural landscape in North America: the Rue Saint-Louis in Quebec City, the capital of Quebec Province. Not an English sign in sight in this center of French/Québécois culture. The green spires in the background belong to Le Château Frontenac, a grand hotel built on the site of the old Fort St. Louis (the Count of Frontenac was a prominent governor of what was then known as New France). French-speaking, Roman Catholic Quebec lies at the heart of French Canada.

hydroelectricity that it exports the surplus to Ontario and to the northeastern United States. Most of the power is generated through the James Bay Project, a series of dams and power stations on the eastern side of Hudson Bay along the La Grande River (Fig. 3B-2). Quebec is so well off in this regard that the recent discovery of natural gas in the St. Lawrence River Basin was met with tempered enthusiasm. Many Québécois feel that they have no need for gas; unlike hydroelectric power, it is a nonrenewable energy resource that would boost carbon emissions and heighten the risk of widespread water pollution. Not surprisingly, these views are disputed by energy-industry interests, and it remains to be seen if drilling can begin in the foreseeable future.

■ THE SOUTHEAST (4)

For more than a century following the U.S. Civil War (1861–1865), the Southeast (Fig. 3B-1) remained in economic stagnation and cultural isolation from the rest of the country. During the 1970s, however, things changed so fast that a New South was born almost overnight. The Sunbelt migration stream drove people and enterprises into the long-dormant cities. Core-region companies looking for headquarters or subsidiary offices found Atlanta, Charlotte, Tampa, Miami-Fort Lauderdale, and other urban areas both economical and attractive, swiftly turning them into boomtowns. Racial segregation had been dismantled in the wake of the civil rights movement. A new social order

was matched by new facilities ranging from airports (Atlanta's quickly became one of the world's busiest) to theme parks open to all. Soon the nation was watching Atlanta-based CNN on television, vacationing at Orlando's Walt Disney World, and monitoring space flights that originated at Cape Canaveral.

The geography of development in the South, however, is rather uneven. While many cities and certain agricultural areas have benefited, others have not; the South contains some of the realm's poorest rural areas, and the gap between rich and poor here is wider than in any other region in the realm. Northern Virginia's Washington suburbs, central North Carolina's Research Triangle, eastern Tennessee's Oak Ridge complex, and metropolitan Atlanta's corporate campuses are locales that typify the New South; but Appalachia and rural Mississippi still represent the Old South, where depressed farming areas and stagnant small industries restrict both incomes and change.

Climatically, the Southeast is notably warmer than the Core region to the north and more humid than the Southwest. It is not for nothing that this is where the tobacco, cotton, and sugar plantations thrived. But the summer heat brings a serious threat to the Gulf-Atlantic Coastal Plain of the South: hurricanes capable of inflicting catastrophic devastation on low-lying areas. These tropical cyclones are fueled by the rapidly rising air over the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean that reach peak temperatures in late summer. Coastal Florida and southern Louisiana have been particularly hard hit during the short span of years since the turn of the century.

A major disaster of another kind struck the Gulf Coast in 2010: an explosion at a British Petroleum rig about 100 kilometers (60 mi) southeast of the Mississippi Delta caused the worst oil spill in U.S. history. It took BP five months to seal the resulting seafloor leak, but not before an estimated 4.9 million barrels of crude oil spewed into the Gulf, with much of it washing ashore from western Louisiana as far east as Florida's Panhandle. The damage inflicted on wildlife, fisheries, and local industries (including tourism) was considerable, and this environmental disaster fully exposed the enormous risks of deep-sea oil extraction. As a result, prospects for expanding offshore drilling elsewhere in U.S. waters were dealt a huge setback.

There is another, relatively small part of this region that warrants special attention. South Florida used to be a particularly remote and nearly unpopulated corner of the United States. Before the twentieth century, it was too far from the northeastern Core of the country (and even from closer urban centers like Atlanta) to warrant development; the climate and mosquitoes posed a formidable challenge

to prospective settlers; and there were no natural resources to exploit. Indeed, it was not until the 1960s that this sub-region of the Southeast became fully integrated into the national economy and urban system—thanks to the widespread introduction of air conditioning and affordable air travel, not to mention the mass immigration of Cubans fleeing Fidel Castro’s communist regime.

In short order, burgeoning South Florida became part of an international region that encompassed the Caribbean Basin and much of Middle and South America. Located south of America’s “Deep South,” today it continues to evolve into an interface between North America and the rest of the hemisphere. South Florida’s largest urban center, Miami, emerged in the 1980s as an important *world-city* (Fig. 3B-5). This new role was certainly a result of the growth of its large, well-educated Hispanic population, but that is not the entire story. Take another look at the world map in Figure G-1 and note Miami’s longitude: it is not only located at the southern end of North America’s Atlantic seaboard, but also lies on the same meridian as Guayaquil, Ecuador, the westernmost major city in South America. Now compare Miami’s relative location to that of Los Angeles (three time zones to the west) and it becomes clear why Miami is far better connected to countries such as Brazil, Argentina, and Colombia—while L.A.’s southern linkages are almost entirely with Mexico. In fact, Los Angeles is much more heavily oriented to the Pacific Rim, whereas Miami is the realm’s most important world-city focused on the Americas.



MIAMI WORLD-CITY CONNECTIONS

- Cities with largest number of headquarters of corporations conducting business in Miami
- Cities with largest number of branches of Miami-based corporations

FIGURE 3B-5

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From the Field Notes . . .

“Domino Park lies at the center of Little Havana, perhaps the most iconic neighborhood in Greater Miami. After Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, thousands of Cubans fled the island

and resettled here. Today there are more than 900,000 Cubans in the metropolitan area, the biggest concentration of any single ethnic group in the United States. In fact, Miami

would qualify as the second-largest city in Cuba. Domino Park is situated on Southwest 8th Street, better known locally as ‘Calle Ocho.’ It is only a short walk from the Bay of Pigs Monument that commemorates the fallen soldiers of the failed invasion of Cuba by exiles in 1961. Taking a stroll along Calle Ocho, you can stop at a cafe for a *cortadito*, watch cigars being made by hand, or get fitted for a guayabera shirt. Domino Park recently opened to women (!), but it is mostly older men who come here to play games, talk politics, and meet with friends—just as they would in Cuba.”



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■ THE SOUTHWEST (5)

The Southwest has taken on its own regional identity in recent years, and today it is firmly established in the North American consciousness for several reasons. One is environmental: here, steppes and deserts dominate. Another is cultural: Anglo, Hispanic, and Native American cultures coexist here, sometimes amicably, at other times uneasily.

As Figure 3B-1 shows, by our definition the Southwest begins in East Texas and extends all the way to the eastern edge of Southern California. Texas leads this region in most respects. Its economy, once heavily dependent on oil and natural gas, has been restructured and diversified so that today the Dallas-Forth Worth–Houston–San Antonio triangle has become one of the world’s most productive **technopoles [7]**—state-of-the-art, high-technology industrial complexes—including Austin at the heart of it. This is also a hub of international trade and the northern anchor of a NAFTA-generated transnational growth corridor that extends into Mexico as far as Monterrey.

New Mexico, in the middle of the Southwest region, is the least developed economically and ranks low on many U.S. social indices, but its environmental and cultural attractions benefit Albuquerque and Santa Fe, with Los Alamos a famous name in research-and-development circles. In the west, Arizona’s technologically transformed desert now harbors two large coalescing metropolises, Phoenix and Tucson. Growth continues, but rising concerns about climate change add to the uncertainties of maintaining water supplies already stretched to the limit.

The huge State of Texas, larger than France, is surpassed in areal size only by Alaska and is also the second most populous U.S. State after California (27 and 39 million, respectively). It is a most affluent State, with much of its wealth still emanating from its energy sector: Texas claims about a quarter of all U.S. oil reserves and nearly a third of its natural gas deposits. Today, the Lone Star State has become a leader in the generation of wind energy as well, with wind turbines increasingly dotting the sparsely settled landscape of West Texas.

Texas and the other southwestern States border Mexico, and all are home to substantial Mexican populations, both legal and illegal. In Arizona, the Hispanic population has nearly tripled since 1990 as the majority of non-Hispanic whites dwindled from 72 to 56 percent. Among the elderly almost 80 percent are non-Hispanic whites, but the State’s 18-and-younger age cohort is now 45 percent Hispanic. In 2010, Arizona passed a widely debated (and criticized) law making it mandatory for people to carry proof of legal residency, failure of which can result in detention and presumably deportation. Much of the debate centered on the apparent inevitability of **racial profiling [8]** this would involve (i.e., who will be asked to produce such documentation?). Despite legal challenges, the mood among Arizonans seemed clear: 81 percent of registered voters were in favor of the law.

VOICE FROM THE

Region



© Cinthia Carvajal

Cinthia Carvajal, student in Anthropology and Sustainability, Arizona State University

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IN ARIZONA

“Senate Bill 1070 was signed into law in Arizona in 2010. This law was created to reduce illegal immigration into the State, where crossing the international border without documents has occurred for years. As a Hispanic immigrant living in Arizona, I can see how the law has affected friends, family, and other people around me. Basically, it has caused polarization in Arizona at a scale not seen before. Conversations about immigration and the new law are not pleasant. The law has divided the State, has divided its classrooms, and has divided people who once coexisted in peaceful and respectful ways. Those who support the law are convinced it is the best solution and has no effects on documented and law-abiding immigrants—that it just targets those who are undocumented. Others oppose the law; they are people of many races and ethnicities, but most are documented immigrants or children of immigrants whose background can be seen in their faces or heard in their accents. People like me. The ambiguity of the law has caused many to leave the State. Those of us who stay behind live every day with that little doubt in our minds: who is going to be the next person to question my ‘legality?’”

■ THE PACIFIC HINGE (6)

The Southwest meets the Far West near metropolitan San Diego on California’s border with Mexico, and from there the region we call the Pacific Hinge extends all the way north into Canada where Vancouver forms the northern anchor in southwestern British Columbia (Fig. 3B-1). We include almost all of California in this region, but (for environmental as well as economic reasons) only the western portions of Oregon and Washington State. This is a particularly important part of North America and increasingly a counterweight to the historic Core in the U.S. Northeast.

The Pacific Hinge is a major economic region not just in this realm but in the global economy too. It includes such leading cities as Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Portland, and Seattle as well as America’s most populous State: in fact, California’s economy ranks among the world’s ten largest *by country*. This region also encompasses one of the realm’s most productive agricultural areas in California’s Central Valley, magnificent scenery, and a

culturally diverse population drawn by its long-term economic growth and pleasant living conditions.

Our regional definition is mainly based on economic considerations and intensifying trade connections across the Pacific Ocean. This part of North America is deeply involved in the development of countries in eastern Asia. In the post-war era, Japan's success had a salutary impact here, but what has since taken place in China, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and other Asian-Pacific economies has created unprecedented opportunities. The term **Pacific Rim** [9] has come into use to describe the discontinuous regions surrounding the great Pacific Ocean that have experienced spectacular economic growth and progress over the past four decades: not only coastal China and various parts of East and Southeast Asia, but also Australia, South America's Chile, and the western shores of Canada and the conterminous United States. That is why in this chapter we speak of the *Pacific Hinge* of North America, now the key interface between the realm and the Rim.

This development is expressed in the growing importance of the region's ports. Since 1995, the seaports of Los Angeles and nearby Long Beach have seen their container traffic double; and despite the global recession, a recent report predicted another doubling of traffic by 2030. Moreover, the region's airports (especially Los Angeles and San Francisco) annually handle millions of Asia-bound passengers as well as a steadily growing number of cargo shipments.

The Pacific Rim is therefore a classic example of a functional region, with economic activity in the form of capital flows, raw-material movements, and trading linkages that generate urbanization, industrialization, and labor migration. As part of this process, human landscapes from Sydney to Santiago are being transformed within a 32,000-kilometer (20,000-mi) corridor that lines the globe's largest body of water.

Greater Los Angeles, the region's largest and most dynamic activity complex, is profiled in the *Among the Realm's Great Cities* box. Farther north, the San Francisco Bay Area has seen rather more orderly expansion, with the Silicon Valley technopole the key component of its high-technology success story. In what Americans refer to as the Pacific Northwest, the Seattle-Tacoma area originally benefited from cheap hydroelectricity generated by Columbia River dam projects, attracting aluminum producers and aircraft manufacturers (most notably Boeing). Meanwhile, the technopole centered on suburban Redmond (Microsoft's headquarters) heralds the Seattle area's transformation into a prototype metropolis of the new information economy.

Vancouver, located at the northern edge of the Pacific Hinge, has the locational advantage of being closer, on air and sea routes, to East Asia than any other large North American city. Ethnic Chinese here constitute 20 percent of the metropolitan population, and the total number of resident Asians now exceeds 50 percent.



From the Field Notes . . .

"On this street corner in central Los Angeles, four different cultures converge. Los Angeles is one of the most ethnically



diverse metropolitan areas in the United States and in the world. More than a third of the population was born abroad, and more than half speak a language other than (or in addition to) English. The largest non-native ethnic group are Hispanics (mainly Mexicans and Central Americans), but there also are many Asians, especially Chinese and Koreans. Cesar E. Chavez, after whom this avenue is named, was a charismatic Mexican American farm worker turned union organizer and became nationally known as a leading civil rights activist. His birthday, March 31, is a State holiday in both California and Texas—and an optional holiday in Arizona (!). Chavez Avenue is a major east-west thoroughfare through downtown Los Angeles, and even a short stroll along it offers a sampling of global cultures.

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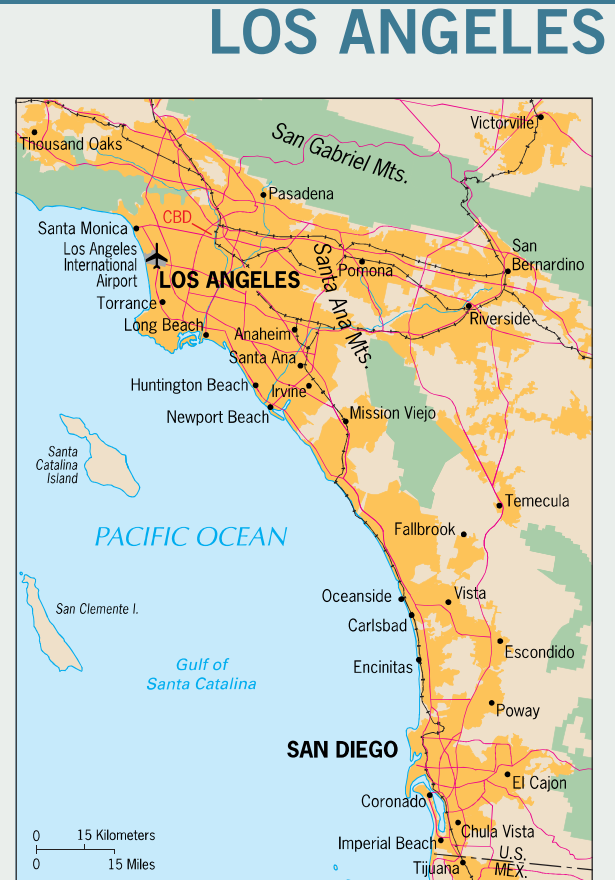


AMONG THE REALM'S GREAT CITIES . . .

IT IS HARD to think of another city that has been in more headlines in the past several years than Los Angeles. Much of this publicity has been negative. But despite its earthquakes, mudslides, wildfires, pollution episodes, showcase trials, and riots, L.A.'s glamorous image has hardly been dented. This is compelling testimony to the city's resilience and vibrancy, and to its unchallenged position as the Western world's entertainment capital.

The plane-window view during the descent into Los Angeles International Airport, almost always across the heart of the metropolis, gives a good feel for the immensity of this urban landscape. It not only fills the huge natural amphitheater known as the Los Angeles Basin, but it also oozes into adjoining coastal strips, mountain-fringed valleys and foothills, and even the margins of the Mojave Desert more than 90 kilometers (60 mi) inland. This quintessential spread city, of course, could only have materialized in the automobile age. In fact, most of it has been built rapidly since 1920, propelled by the swift postwar expansion of a high-speed freeway network unsurpassed anywhere in metropolitan America. In the process, Greater Los Angeles became so widely dispersed that today it has reorganized within a sprawling, multinodal geographic framework (see Fig. 3A-11).

The metropolis as a whole is home to 13.2 million Southern Californians, constitutes North America's second-largest urban agglomeration, and forms the southern anchor of the huge California megalopolis that parallels the Pacific coast from San Francisco southward to the Mexican border. It also is the Pacific Hinge's leading trade, manufacturing, and financial center. In the global arena, Los Angeles is the



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eastern Pacific Rim's dominant city and the origin of the greatest number of transoceanic flights and sailings to Asia.

■ THE WESTERN FRONTIER (7)

Where the forests of the Pacific Hinge yield to the scrub of the rain shadow on the inland slopes of the mountain wall that parallels the west coast, and the terrain turns into intermontane ("between the mountains") basins and plateaus, lies a region stretching eastward from the Sierra Nevada and Cascades to the Rockies, encompassing segments of southern Alberta and British Columbia, eastern Washington State and Oregon, all of Nevada, Utah, and Idaho plus the western components of Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado. As Figure 3B-1 shows, Edmonton, Calgary, and Denver are situated along the inland edge of this aptly named Western Frontier region, and Salt Lake City, anchoring the Software Valley technopole and symbolizing the new high-tech era, lies at the heart of it.

Remoteness, dryness, and sparse population typified this region for a very long time. It became the redoubt of the Mormon faith and a place known for boom-and-bust

cycles of mining, logging, and, where possible, livestock raising. However, in recent decades advances in communications and transportation technologies, sunny climates, wide open spaces, lower costs of living, and growing job opportunities have combined to form effective pull factors for myriad outsiders. Every time an earthquake struck in California, eastward migration got a boost. And during the most recent ten-year period, millions of Californians emigrated from the overcrowded, overpriced, and recession-plagued Pacific coast to the inland high desert.

Development in the Western Frontier centers on its widely dispersed urban areas, which are making this the realm's fastest growing region (albeit from a low base). Here thousands of new high-technology manufacturing and specialized service jobs propelled a two-decade-long influx, slowed but not reversed by the Great Recession. Yet this growth has not come without problems as locals see land values rise, prevailing conservative ideas challenged, and traditional lifestyles endangered.



Ethan Miller/Getty Images, Inc.

For years the hottest growth area in the Western Frontier region was its southernmost corner—the Las Vegas Valley. Nevada was one of America's fastest-growing States, attracting new residents by the hundreds of thousands and visitors to its burgeoning recreation industry by the tens of millions annually. Between 1990 and 2000, this Las Vegas suburb of Henderson ranked as the fastest-growing municipality in the United States. Sprawling development on a massive scale converted this patch of high desert into a low-density urban checkerboard whose expansion seemed without end. But by 2009 the growth cycle had ground to a halt as thousands of homeowners were forced into foreclosure, unemployment was rising, and the national economic crisis was darkening the immediate future of Boomtown, USA. Four years later, in 2013, this metropolis was only slowly emerging from the depths of the crisis.

One of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in North America, Las Vegas, lies on the border between the Western Frontier and Southwest regions. Far more than a gambling and entertainment magnet that draws some 40 million visitors annually, Las Vegas attracts immigrants because of its history of job creation, relatively cheap land and low-cost housing, moderate taxes, and sunny if seasonally hot weather. No doubt, proximity to Southern California has had much to do with its explosive growth (which has leveled off since 2008—see the photo above), but Las Vegas is also known far and wide as the ultimate frontier city—where (almost) anything goes.

■ THE CONTINENTAL INTERIOR (8)

The Western Frontier meets the Continental Interior region along a line marked by cities that influence both regions, from Denver in the south to Edmonton in the north. This vast North American heartland extends from interior Canada to the borders of the Southeast and Southwest (Fig. 3B-1). The region contains many noteworthy cities, including Kansas City, Omaha, Minneapolis, and Winnipeg; nonetheless, agriculture is the dominant story here. As the map of farm resource regions (Fig. 3B-6) shows, this is

North America's breadbasket. This is the land of the beef- and pork-producing Corn Belt—*Meat Belt* would be a more accurate label—which extends into the western half of the Core region (and, thanks to global warming, has spawned a new outlier in the southernmost wheatlands of the Canadian Prairie Provinces); of the mighty soybean, America's and the world's most rapidly expanding crop of the past half-century; and of spring wheat in the Dakotas and Canada's Prairie Provinces as well as winter wheat in Kansas. Indeed, the cities and towns of this region share histories of food processing, packing, and marketing; flour milling; and

soybean, sunflower, and canola oil production. This is also the scene of the struggle for survival of the family farm as the unrelenting incursion of large-scale corporate farming threatens a longstanding way of life.

This may be farmland, but it is not immune from what might seem to be the nonagricultural realities of the contemporary world, not even the energy issue. Corn continues to be grown mainly as feed for meat-producing hogs and beef cattle, but a sizeable proportion of the crop is now dedicated to making ethanol, the gasoline substitute (or additive). Whereas farmers hope that rising prices will revitalize the Corn Belt, others worry that accelerating corn prices will increasingly strain meat-loving consumers. In any case, the amount of corn needed to make a real dent in U.S. gasoline consumption is many times greater than the entire annual crop. In 2011, when more than half of the corn grown in the Midwest was converted into biofuels, ethanol accounted for about 10 percent of national gasoline consumption while raising alarms about possible food prices.

Even a cursory look at demographic statistics makes it clear why many States in the Continental Interior are losing population or gaining far fewer than the national average. The Great Plains, the western component of this region, is especially hard hit: younger people and those better off are leaving, whereas older and less affluent residents stay behind. Villages and small towns continue to die, and the notion of abandoning certain areas to return them to their natural state is being seriously discussed.

But things are not the same everywhere. The Continental Interior may not have as prominent a presence on the national scene as New York or California, and the region is not as wealthy, but coal-rich Wyoming and oil-booming North Dakota had the highest increases in household income in the United States during the first decade of this century (at 8.0 and 7.4 percent, respectively—while the national figure was *negative* 7.1 percent). Moreover, unemployment rates here rank among the lowest in the

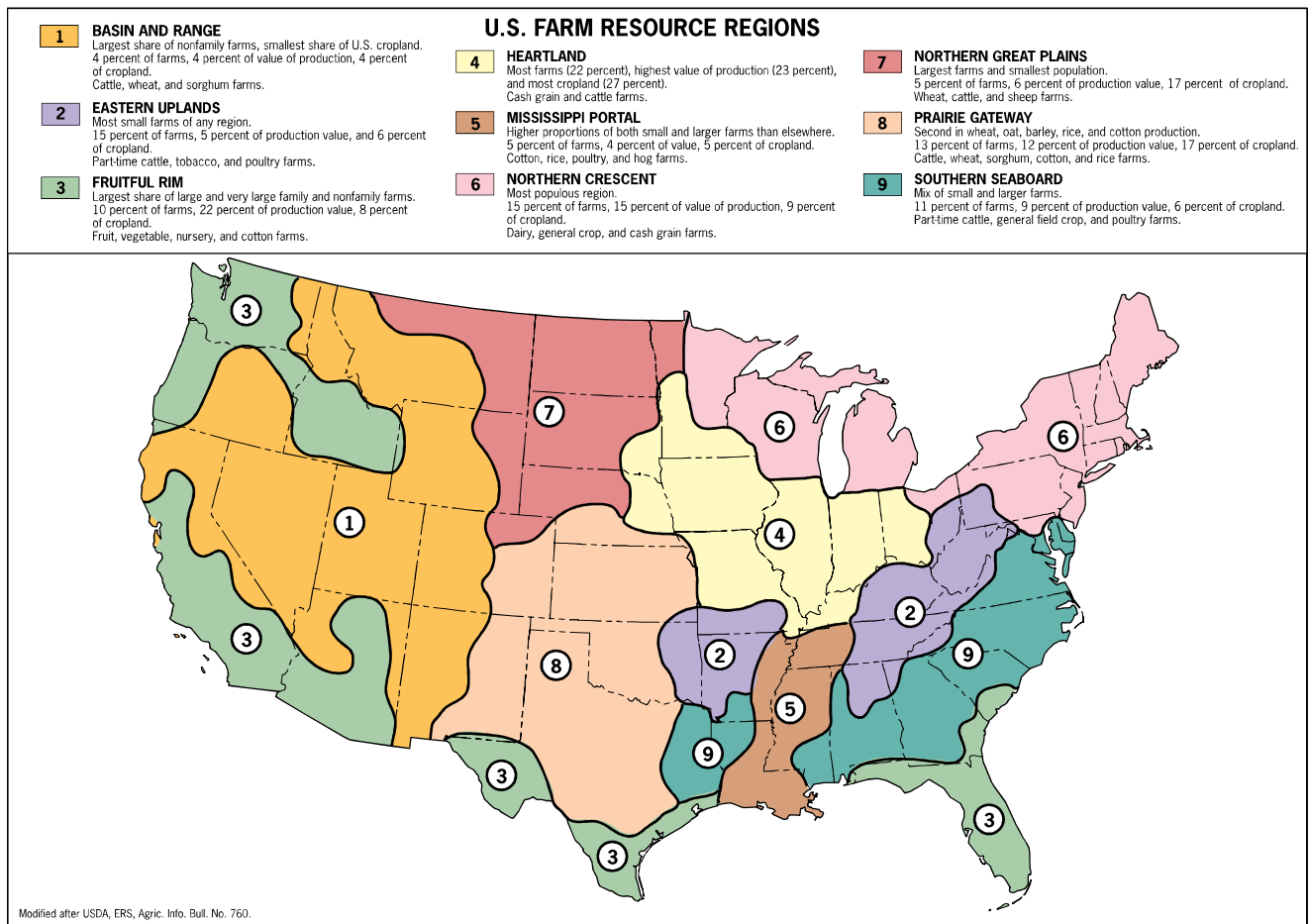


FIGURE 3B-6

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country. With an economy largely driven by agriculture and mining, and with oil and gas exploration a leading growth industry, the effects of the Great Recession were minimal in this region.

THE NORTHERN FRONTIER (9)

Figure 3B-1 leaves no doubt as to the dimensions of this final North American region: it is by far the largest of the realm, covering just about 90 percent of Canada and all of the biggest U.S. State, Alaska. Not only does this region include the northern parts of seven of Canada's provinces, but it also comprises the Yukon and Northwest Territories as well as recently established Nunavut. The very sparsely populated Northern Frontier remains a land of isolated settlement based on the exploitation of newly discovered resources. The Canadian Shield, underlying most of the eastern half of the region, is a rich storehouse of mineral resources, including metallic ores such as nickel, uranium, copper, gold, silver, lead, and zinc. The Yukon and Northwest Territories have proven especially bountiful, with the mining of gold and especially diamonds (Canada currently ranks third in the world); at the opposite, eastern edge of the Shield, near Voisey's Bay on the central coast of Labra-

dor, the largest body of high-grade nickel ore ever discovered is now open for extraction.

The province of Alberta is experiencing one of the most spectacular economic booms in the realm's history. Recent estimates indicate that Alberta's oil reserves, including the **tar sands** [10] around Fort McMurray (see Fig. 3B-7 and the chapter's final photo), rank third in the world behind only those of Venezuela and Saudi Arabia. Alberta has become Canada's fastest-growing province, and Calgary its fastest-expanding major city. The boom makes Calgary a magnet for business and highly skilled workers; the city's skyline is in spectacular transformation, comparable to what has recently occurred on the Arabian Peninsula. The big question is how long these good times will last. Productive locations in the Northern Frontier constitute a far-flung network of mines, oil and gas installations, pulp mills, and hydropower stations that have spawned hundreds of small settlements as well as thousands of kilometers of interconnecting transportation and communications lines. Inevitably, these activities have infringed on the lands of indigenous peoples without the preparation of treaties or agreements, which has led to recent negotiations between the government and leaders of First Nations over resource development in the Northern Frontier. But essentially this



FIGURE 3B-7

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vast region remains a frontier in the truest sense of that term.

Alaska's regional geography differs from the rest of the Northern Frontier in that the State contains several urban settlements and an incipient core area in the coastal zone around Anchorage. The population of Alaska, which has just passed the 750,000 milestone, accounts for more than one-third of the region's total. Here also lies the only metropolis of any size, Anchorage (population 300,000). The State's internal communications (air and surface) are also better developed.

Another difference lies in Alaska's North Slope oil exploitation, one of the hemisphere's key energy sources since the 1300-kilometer (800-mi) Trans-Alaska Pipeline began operating in 1977. The North Slope is the lowland north of the Brooks Range that faces the Arctic Ocean. Dwindling supplies at the main reserve at Prudhoe Bay are now compelling producers to turn to huge additional reserves in Alaska's northland, but opposition from preservationist organizations has slowed their plans. The issue remains in contention—as is another project to construct a natural gas pipeline to parallel the oil pipeline to carry gas, a byproduct of oil drilling, to the growing market in the Lower-48.

Climate change is likely to affect the Northern Frontier in as-yet-unforeseeable ways. As the map shows, this region extends all the way north to the Arctic Ocean and therefore includes waters that, in the event of longer-term sustained global warming and associated contraction of the Arctic ice cap, will open, possibly year-round, near-shore waterways that would dramatically alter global shipping routes and intercontinental distances (a topic discussed in Chapter 12). The question of ownership of these waters—and the submerged seafloor beneath them, coming within reach of exploitation—will be a matter of significant international contention in the decades ahead.

In 2010, Canada solidified its reputation as an environmentally conscious nation through the signing of an unprecedented agreement. The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement involves 21 logging firms and 9 environmental organizations as well as the Canadian government. As shown in Figure 3B-7, it imposes a moratorium on logging and any other development within a huge zone of 290,000 square kilometers (112,000 sq mi). Greenpeace, which originated in Canada, has called it the all-time biggest agreement to preserve nature. The word “boreal” is derived from the Latin word for north; **boreal forests** [11]—identical to the Russian *taiga* (snowforest) discussed in Chapter 2A—