

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

## LAYERS OF TRADITION: CULTURE REGIONS AT DIFFERENT SCALES

### ACTIVITY 2: CULTURE TRAITS OF YOUR CULTURE SUBREGION

Most people would agree that life in Kansas is different from life in Alabama, California, Montana, New York, Alaska, Québec, or Nova Scotia. Of course, we recognize that all of these North American places culturally have more in common with each other than with Ecuador, Kenya, Malaysia, or Japan. But had Dorothy woken up in Philadelphia instead of Oz, she might still have said "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore."

In Activity 2, we ask you to think about the region where you live, and what sets it apart from neighboring regions. In answering the following questions, there may be many right answers, but that doesn't mean there are no wrong answers. Try to keep your focus at the regional geographic scale. Your answers should apply to the whole region, not just your town or neighborhood, and not to the United States or Canada as a whole.

2.1. Find the location of your college in Figure 2.2. Write its **vernacular region** here:

- Common vernacular name \_\_\_\_\_

2.2. Now, on the map below, draw your best approximation of the boundaries of your culture region. This will not be graded by your instructor. Its purpose is for you to have the whole of this region in mind when answering the next set of questions.



2.3. To start you thinking about the cultural geography of your region, identify:

- Common or unique characteristic of the natural landscape  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Unofficial capital city \_\_\_\_\_
- Famous tourist site for visitors who want to experience the essence of your region  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Movie or TV show set in and symbolic of your region  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Novel of your region \_\_\_\_\_

2.4. For each of the following culture traits, identify a notable example associated with your region. For each trait, make your best guess about whether it is unique (found exclusively in your region), prevalent (not unique to your region but more prevalent or widespread in your region than elsewhere), or the same (as most of the United States and Canada).

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| • Food _____  | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Clothing _____  | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Crops _____   | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Livestock _____   | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Music _____   | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Sport or game _____   | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Architectural style _____   | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Building material _____   | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Mode of transportation _____  | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Prominent religion _____  | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Local expression _____  | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |
| • Accent (spell phonetically an example<br>of the pronunciation)<br>_____ | Unique__ Prevalent__ Same__ |

2.5. Which of the cultural traits in your list above was the least distinctive to your region? Why do you think that your region has lost its distinctiveness in this aspect of culture?

2.6. Are there any prominent cultural traits in your region that originated outside of Canada and the United States? If so, what is it, where did it come from, and when do you think it was brought to your area?

2.7. Is the “nonnative” cultural trait in Question 2.6 an example of syncretism, and if so, how has it been modified and fused with a North American cultural element?