



*The Real World* reveals geography's exhilarating insights into every corner of human endeavor. Geography explains the contents of our supermarket shelves and the quality of the air we breathe. It can elucidate tribal conflicts in Africa and account for the styling of our automobiles. It can argue that humankind's landscaping is often a great improvement on raw nature; yet it understands better than many environmentalists the threats to our planet's future.

With the pointers geography can give, a neighborhood stroll becomes a new adventure, whereby the patterns of streets and alleys, the distribution of rich and poor, and the variation of brick and stone make sense. And our perceptions of distant peoples become subject to an informed and rational sympathy as geography accounts for the "peculiarities" of their behavior.

Even maps, those most feared of schoolroom tools, assume a reassuring new purpose: not as earnest crib sheets, reminding us that we don't know where anywhere is, but as a game board for many-leveled voyages of discovery. In *The Real World*, geography is no longer a recitation of capital city names and the definition of a peninsula. It is indeed the real world of people and places we know.

—from the publisher

**Science News Books**

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*The contents in outline:*

**Planet Earth** explains the series of coincidences that created an environment fit for living things and how the dynamics of sun and sea, wind and water power the global engine.

**Humans Emergent** tells how the first humans roamed out of Africa to explore the world. Humankind spread through Europe and Asia and over the mysterious horizons to the New World and the Indies.

**Globe Inc** describes how the world makes a living — or not. The Industrial Revolution began processes that have created world markets, multinational corporations and bountiful prosperity. But life at the edge is still a scramble for daily bread.

**People in Place** examines the patterns we make on the land with our cities, towns, villages and hamlets. There are millionaires living in mud houses and rural farmers opting to live in city slums. Why?

**Lines on the Map** shows how frontiers are drawn between nations, between empires, between creeds and beliefs. This is the geography that dictates war and peace, freedom and oppression.

**Mapping the World** explores the idea that it is through maps that we think we know the world. But maps can be as prejudiced and distorting as any other form of communication.

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Houghton Mifflin, 1991, 264 pages, 9" x 12", hardcover, \$35.00

