



the postmodern theory of urbanism
(a.k.a. "the los angeles school")

SOC 2202: Cities and Society
Fall 2019

reminders . . .

- Prospectus for final paper uploaded to your OneDrive folder by Friday, November 1.
- Posting your Expert Blog on Course Website

previously . . .

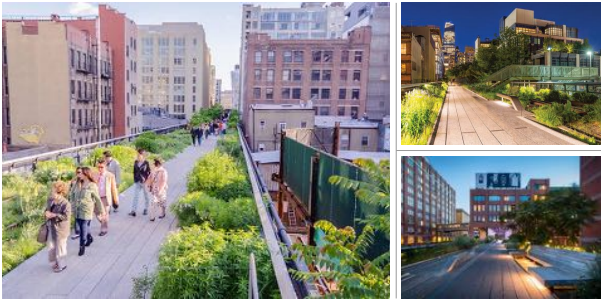
- Contemporary Theories of Urbanism I
 - Legacy and Criticism of the Chicago School
 - Political Economy
 - Antecedents (Marx, Engels)
 - Five Areas of Agreement
 - Three Points of Departure

Five Areas of Agreement

- Cities are situated in a global hierarchal system.
- The global system is one of competitive capitalism.
- Capital is easily moved, but cities are locationally fixed.
- Politics and government matter.
- People and circumstances differ according to time and place, and those differences matter.

Three Points of Departure

- Cities are influenced by their mode of production.
 - David Harvey: primary, secondary, tertiary circuits of capital.
- Cities are growth machines.
 - Logan and Molotch: growth entrepreneurs
- Real estate development and government intervention are the most important influences in metropolitan areas.
 - sociospatial perspective.



The High Line (NYC)



The Bloomingdale Trail ("The 606")

From both the chapter "The City as a Growth Machine", from John R. Logan's Urban Fortunes, and from Kevin Loughran's "Parks for Profit" paper, it is evident that the strategic use of land enables for economic growth within cities. The power to push for these economic advancements is often wielded entirely by the active elites of the urban population. Logan notes that important roles in city growth have been given to "mass media, urban professionals, and skilled political entrepreneurs" (Logan 2007, 58). As we have learned throughout this course, and is reiterated in Logan's piece, minorities and the urban poor are often underrepresented in these groups, and certainly do not have the political power wielded by the urban "elites."

Is economic growth achieved by the creation of privileged spaces such as New York's High Line progress for a city, or are the benefits outweighed by the inequality it perpetuates within the city? How can a city create public spaces that will economically and socially benefit the entire urban population rather than just the elite?

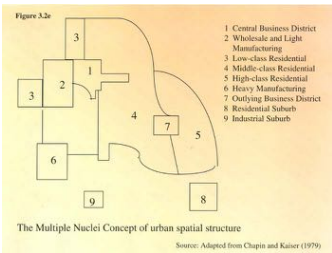
—Kate F., Expert Question

antecedent

Chauncey Harris and Edward Ullman - The Multiple Nuclei Model (1945)

- Separate functions and their particular needs require concentration within specific and specialized districts.
- Similar activities often locate in the same area, forming agglomerations, or mini-centers.
- Cities grow asymmetrically around these multiple nuclei.

the multiple nuclei model (1945)





Social Networks Matter

Mark Granovetter (1943 -)
"The Strength of Weak Ties" (1973)
Getting A Job (1974)

- Responding to Louis Wirth ("Urbanism as a Way of Life," 1938) and his contention that weakly tied networks (secondary ties) produced alienation.
- How do people search for jobs?
 - Strong ties vs. Weak Ties:
 - **Weak Ties** are "indispensable to individuals' opportunities and to their integration into communities" (1973: 1378).
 - Information is more quickly and among a greater diversity of people through weaker ties.
 - Weak ties plays a role in fostering social cohesion, while strong ties led to fragmentation.

Online Communities

- The relationships created through online communities can offset the declining significance of place.
- Barry Wellman (2001): online communities as networks of interpersonal ties that provide sociability, support, information, a sense of belonging a social identity that is not limited to neighborhoods and villages.
 - people can use this technology to create and sustain community ties, thus forming meaningful relationships.
 - globalization and transnationalism

the postmodern city paradigm

- draw from the humanities (literary criticism)
- criticism of contemporary urban development; not necessarily a theoretical framework.
- **Thrusts:**
 - Historical processes and modes of production under capitalism, combined with new economic and social arrangements that create landscapes that reflect past and present relations of power.
 - There is no **singular or dominant approach** to understanding contemporary city development (growth). To suggest one is contradictory to the notion of postmodernism.

the postmodern city paradigm

- Cognitive Maps:
 - how spaces fit with one another and how they can be "mapped" by individuals navigating the city.
 - cities as fragmented into corporate spaces that have little relationship to one another.
- Economic Restructuring and Globalization:
 - **Fordist to Post-Fordist Production**
 - **dislocation** caused by economic, cultural, and technological changes (e.g. Detroit)

the postmodern city paradigm

- Multiculturalism
 - Experience of diversity within cities
 - Individuals interact with each other in multiple dimensions, dependent largely through class relations.
- Los Angeles as Indicative of the Postmodern Geography
 - Spectacular spaces with little relations to one another
 - Composed of multiple urban cores/no downtown
 - Cities as regional rather than centered around a CBD

contemporary urbanisms

- **edge cities** - cities where the concentration of businesses, shopping, and entertainment exist outside the central business district.
- **privatopia**
- **heteropolis**
- **cities as theme parks**
- **fortified cities**
- **interdictory spaces**

contemporary urbanisms

- **edge cities**
- **privatopia** - private residential governance
- **heteropolis**
- **cities as theme parks**
- **fortified cities**
- **interdictory spaces**

contemporary urbanisms

- **edge cities**
- **privatopia**
- **heteropolis** - cities characterized by a high degree of diversity
- **cities as theme parks**
- **fortified cities**
- **interdictory spaces**

contemporary urbanisms

- edge cities
- privatopia
- heteropolis
- cities as theme parks - the "Disneyfication" of urban space.
- fortified cities
- interdictory spaces

contemporary urbanisms

- edge cities
- privatopia
- heteropolis
- cities as theme parks
- fortified cities - cities characterized by high-tech policing and surveillance.
- interdictory spaces

contemporary urbanisms

- edge cities
- privatopia
- heteropolis
- cities as theme parks
- fortified cities.
- **interdictory spaces** - spaces designed to repel people from (mis)using them.



examples of interdictory spaces