

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

ISS320 Exam 1 Review

Readings Study Guide

- Lewis Mumford, 1937. "What is a City?"
- Ferdinand Toennies, "Community and Society" (Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft) in Lin, Jan and Christopher Mele (eds) 2013. *The Urban Sociology Reader*. Routledge. 2nd ed.
- George Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life" in Lin, Jan and Christopher Mele (eds) 2013. *The Urban Sociology Reader*. Routledge. 2nd ed.
- Le Corbusier, 1970. *The City of Tomorrow and its planning*.
- Jane Jacobs. 1961. "The uses of city neighborhoods." (Excerpt from *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*) in Lin, Jan and Christopher Mele (eds) 2013. *The Urban Sociology Reader*. Routledge. 2nd ed.
- Misc. *NYT* Articles

L. Mumford

Key Terms & Concepts

- **The City**

Fundamentally an economic and social order or institution.

- **Urbanitas**

Mumford argues that the social order of the city brings out prosocial behavior in its individuals.

- **Theater of Social Action**

The city acts to facilitate social interaction through various means of its concentration ie. the arts, politics, etc.

- **Social Drama**

The unique social dynamics that are facilitated by the City and its ability to concentrate human capital. The social drama produces or synthesizes cultural products.

- **Social Nucleus**

A cities central institutions of cultural production and social interaction.

- **Purposive Associations**

A defining aspect of the social structure of the City, relationships that emerge from common purpose or to serve a specific function.

F. Toennies

Key Terms & Concepts

- **Law & Order**

Order is based on the union of wills, then in law and ideology. Law is the normative expression of mores. Order is founded ultimately in natural law. See Hobbes.

- **Ideal Types**

Two distinct hypothetical paradigms that are constructed in contrast to one another. An analytical tool.

- **Binary Opposition**

Two mutually exclusive and theoretically opposite concepts.

- **Mores**

The collective moral norms of a culture/society that are produced by the convergence of aspects of culture and create ideals. Social constructs.

- **Dissolution**

As Gemeinschaft evolves into Gesellschaft, mores and folkways (essence of the social order) dissolve and give way to a state of Hobbesian or game-theoretic social model of mutual fear and hostility that is veiled by law and the intervention of the state.

- **Natural Law**

Legal theory of certain inherent and inalienable laws and universal objective morality.

- **State of Nature**

The state of human life without organization into polities. Violent and egotist.

- **Gemeinschaft (Community)**

Historical state of community life and social order based on common morality and folkways of the community. Religion enforces the social order by legitimizing the legal and social system. Produces a social will that is internalized by the individual who acts as a microcosm of the community.

- **Gesellschaft (Society)**

Modern state of life and social order based on the consensus or agreement of distinct wills. Law serves to impartially enforce the consensus. Collective will is dissolved into separate self-interested agencies or wills. The state's sovereignty and legitimacy is used to enforce the order of relations.

- **Primary relationships**

Intimate and permanent relationships such as family that define Community.

- **Secondary/associative relationships**

Impersonal and economic relationships that dominate Society.

- **Kurwille**

Rational, contractual will that is a product of the relations of Gesellschaft. Self-interest.

- **Wesenwille**

Natural, communitarian will that is a product of the relations of Gemeinschaft. Intuitive or instinctual.

- **Volkstum (The People)**

The essence of the Volk/people. The folk spirit that dictates the relationships and culture of Gemeinschaft which persists into the change to Gesellschaft.

- **Staatstum (The State)**

The essence of the state, which is determined by the economic logic of trade and industry. The state and the people are opposed, as the state's will imposes itself on the traditions of the people.

G. Simmel

Key Terms & Concepts

- **Objective Spirit**

The spirit of the commonplace, mutual, super-individual that is characteristic of modern urban culture. The objective spirit triumphs over the subjective in the city.

- **Subjective Spirit**

The spirit of intimacy and personality that is present in the inner life of an individual and expressed more openly in the traditional city.

- **Blasé Attitude**

A psychological product of metropolitan living which is a type of desensitization to stimuli and the indiscriminate perception of and reaction to external stimuli. Blasé attitude preserves the self by devaluing the external world, as the individual personality is attacked by the leveling forces of commerce. Comparable to anomie.

- **Metropolis**

The modern city which functions as a nexus for the flow of capital and people.

- **Mental Life & “Self”**

The inner or psychic state of the individual that reacts to the conditions of existence in the Metropolis.

- **Money Economy**

The dominance of capitalism and its quantification or objectification present in urban life that overtakes the historical relationships and values in favor of ephemeral economic relations. See Marx.

- **Individuation/De-individuation/Anonymity**

The anonymity of transactions in the money economy causes the city-dweller to lose identity, and through the pressure of the external forces that drive suppression of the individual, the individual reacts/resists by further differentiating themselves to recapture identity and incomparability.

- **Functional Specialization/Division of Labor**

Capitalism and industrialization create the need for labor to be specialized to specific interrelated functions (eg. An assembly line). This causes interdependence and a loss of autonomy in the working class, and reduces the individual to a replaceable cog in the economic structure.

- **“Iron Cage” of Rationality**

The aspect of city life that frees one from traditional obligations but entraps the individual in a new social structure that is dictated solely by economic logic.

- **Mass society**

The emergent force of the masses that act monolithically, while being comprised of unorganized individuals.

- **Leveling/Money as Leveler or Common Denominator**

Currency/Capital has a tendency to “level” the individual down by measuring everything only by its cost/value, rendering man to only the value of his labor. The common standard of monetary value de-emphasizes the distinct qualities of things.

- **Outer/Inner Stimuli**

The external stimuli that are perceived by human senses and the internal stimuli that follow them.

- **The Intellect as Adaptation**

To Simmel, the intellect is an ‘organ’ that develops in response to the conditions of living in the Metropolis, as the intellect protects one from the abundance of stimuli present in the city.

- **Enlightenment Ideal**

The ideal of the 17th and 18th century intellectual movement to view the world as entirely calculable and the desire to mathematize and quantify human experience.

- **Standardization of Time & Space**

Capital and the Money Economy necessitate the standardization of time into universal quantifiable units. This further constrains the individual by restricting and integrating the personal and subjective aspects of life.

- **Reserve**

The tendency for metropolitan man to be adversarial and harbor distrust towards others, a necessary self-protection mechanism resulting from the conditions of metropolitan living.

- **Cultural Production**

Cities function as centers of cultural production, where art, customs, norms are developed and diffuse outward.

L. Corbusier

Key Terms & Concepts

- **Planned Order**

The state of a city that is brought about by its planning according to rational principles.

- **Man's Way**

The straight line path that enables efficient production and transportation; product of human reason imposing itself.

- **Pack-Donkey's Way**

Meandering paths that mimic the movements of wandering animals that are present in unplanned cities where they organically/sporadically develop.

- **Curvilinear**

City plan based on smaller curved intersecting roads, eg. Medieval cities.

- **Rectilinear**

City plan based on square/rectangular grid geometry, eg. Roman cities.

- **Arteries/Capillaries**

Types of roads on a hierarchy of roads, arterial roads being higher capacity. Corbusier associates arterial roads with the modern city, and capillaries or small winding roads with the traditional pre-modern city.

- **Modernism/High Modernism (Architecture)**

20th-century intellectual and artistic movement characterized by the primacy of function and the rejection of tradition and embracing of science and technology.

- **Rationality**

The capacity for man to reason, which for Corbusier the universe can be rationally understood, comparable to reason in classical philosophy.

- **Incoherency of Tradition**

Corbusier characterizes traditional cities as incoherent with the needs of modern man.

- **Rational Organization**

The planning and development of the city according to man's reason and intellect.

- **Purposeful Division**

The spacial separation of cities according to the purposes of each area or district, such that all are separate from one another (eg. Industrial and residential).

- **Urban standardization**

Tenet of Corbusier's planning. Standardization universalizes the forms of the city into indistinct parts that can be reproduced or re-used.

- **Spacial Determinism**

The idea that the aesthetics and functionality of the immediate physical and structural environment influences human behavior and thought.

- **Appearance/form v. Substance/function**

Corbusier contrasts the pre-modern emphasis of aesthetics to the modern emphasis of functionality.

- **Orthogonal Primacy**

Corbusier sees the right angle as the highest expression of man's reason and intellect in the context of creating structures.

- **Man v. Nature**

The opposition of man to nature is used by Corbusier to differentiate the modernist city of the future.

- **Geometry & Health**

Corbusier asserts that the geometry of a city is an expression of the strength or weakness of a people, such that the rectilinear city is a strong and vital one, and vice-versa.

- **Imperative of Re-ordering**

Corbusier sees the re-organizing of the great cities as imperative.

- **Great City**

The large and densely-populated cities of Europe and the west.

J. Jacobs

Key Terms & Concepts (Tentative)

- **Neighborhood**

The neighborhood in its healthy state is a fundamentally self-regulating entity. Neighborhoods are also open systems that interact dynamically with each other. Jacobs categorizes useful neighborhoods as being the whole city, the street neighborhood, and the sub-city district. These scaled types of neighborhoods interact with each other through the intermingling of people and economic transaction.

- **Self-government**

The capacity for self-government of a city as a larger polity depends on the health of its neighborhoods. Neighborhoods themselves function as self-governing communities due to the intricate local politics that can mobilize resources for their own interests and bypass bureaucracy. Jacobs understands self-government in an informal sense.

- **Mobility and Fluidity**

Cities must allow for the movement of people, both in a socioeconomic and geographic sense, in order to maintain a continuity of its communities and residents.

See: page 57

- **Serendipity/Spontaneity**

Healthy and diverse neighborhoods with vibrant street life naturally generate spontaneous social encounters, and a strong local identity and culture.

- **Urban Renewal**

A planning practice with the goal of counteracting the decay of city infrastructure. In many cases slum clearing and gentrification is a part of this practice.

- **Slums and Slum Clearing**

The postwar urban planning practice of slum clearance, according to Jacobs, was responsible for the destruction of close-knit communities and neighborhoods.

Typically this process entailed the demolition of neighborhoods under eminent domain, then the redevelopment and gentrification or industrialization of the area, uprooting the previous inhabitants in the process. The diversity and liveliness, along with the social capital that these communities bring to the city make them essential to Jacobs.

- **Balkanization and Diversity**

Jacobs observes ethnic cohesiveness of some enclaves prevents them from building cross-district connections, and refutes the idea that ethnic islands produce stable and lively communities. She notes that these communities flourish after having absorbed a number of diverse demographic groups.

- **New Urbanism**

The school of urban planning theory that is founded upon the ideas of Jacobs, those being things like walkability, mixed-use zoning, local identity and heritage, and sustainable growth as opposed to suburbs and urban sprawl.

- **Urban Sprawl**

Rapid outward growth of the boundaries of a city that is characterized by the dominance of cars and low density development.

- **Mixed-use Zoning (cross-use)**

Mixed-use planning is planning that combines multiple uses into one zone of development, eg. Residential and Commercial. Jacobs values mixed development as a more prosocial planning strategy. Growth and scale in city population and the size of developments counteract cross-use. It is an essential component of the city to Jacobs.

- **The District**

Distinct from the neighborhood. Jacobs has a social understanding of what

composes a district. A district is largely defined by its social fabric and relations, as well as its collective local identity. They also possess political power as a body distinct from the city, where constituents act monolithically.

- **“Hop-and-skip” relationships**

Hop and skip relationships are connections in the social fabric of the city district that bridge demographic, geographic, and economic gaps. Community and organization leaders function as highly connected nodes for hop and skip links. These relationships also allow for a district to extend its reach beyond its standard economic and geographic boundaries. See: Network Effects, Economies of Scale.

- **Ethnic Enclaves**

Jacobs cites urban ethnic enclaves as examples of small and close-knit neighborhoods, often too small to function as political entities or districts. The cohesiveness of ethnic enclaves are able to curb antisocial behavior within, however their insularity makes them vulnerable to the outer politics of the city and the money power of gentrification.