

# Assignment 6

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*"I pledge my honor that I have abided by the Stevens Honor System"*

## Q1.

Burgess's theory on how cities develop overtime is centered around how growth and development occurs in concentric circles or zones, with the central business district at the center and lower-income residential areas further out. Like his teacher Robert Park, Burgess argued that cities took this shape because those who were successful had their choice of which areas to live in - most often, the lively heart of the city. Consequently, he argued, lower income individuals were priced out and pushed to the outer rings of the city, where crime would become more prevalent. He emphasized that studying and understanding the social and economic forces at play within these cities, as they would ultimately determine the ways in which people interacted with each other within those environments.

After reading about Burgess' model of Chicago, Homer Hoyt noticed that it and many other cities did not strictly follow the concentric circles laid out within it. So, he developed his own theory, in which he argued that cities were more often divided into sectors, which were shaped by economic choice like Burgess argued, but also factors like the transportation available within the cities and within each sector. He argued that cities grew along major transportation routes, did not follow concentric rings and often formed in pie-piece shapes, were economically commingled but still often revolved around a central business district. Hoyt certainly learned from Burgess' work on understanding the expansion patterns of city growth, but his work was ultimately more applicable to more cities worldwide, and took more factors into account.

## Q2.

Proponents of the Los Angeles School of urbanism shared some core ideas with multiple-nuclei theorists, such as multiple centers of activity spread across the urban districts, and transportation interconnecting them. Rather than relying solely on existing theories of urban development, however, Los Angeles School proponents reject the strict frameworks in favor of more specific requirements for each distinct district. With their theory based around the city of Los Angeles and its fragmented political structure (it has over 100 separate neighborhoods within its boundaries), these postmodernists believe that L.A. represents the future of urban reality, and only in studying and understanding it will sociologists be able to predict similar development patterns in other cities moving forward.

However, there are also some limitations that critics are quick to bring up regarding the applicability of the theory. For one, L.A. theorists tend to overstate the extent to which their

theory - which holds merit in L.A. - applies to other cities as well. They also tend to understate the vast complexities which go into modeling a megapolis area like L.A, Chicago, or New York and try to reduce the many compounding factors to a measurable few. Overall, critics of the L.A. School of urbanism seem to simply argue that no one city will be an effective case-study and modeling plan for urban areas worldwide.