

# Types of neighbourhoods: exam revision



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## Essay Exam 1

### Part 1- Short Answer:

1. Jacobs to contend there are only three types of neighborhoods: (1) the street neighborhood, (2) districts of 100, 000 people or more, and (3) the city as a whole. This ideas definitely reflect in the idea of city planning. It is noteworthy to note that Jacobs considers these to be the ideal take on what a neighborhood to have in order to not be dependent on economics and that these three types of neighborhoods enable people to come together in unity and harmony and that is when the neighborhood is most successful. And also she believes that the continuity these neighborhood bring definelty help foster the social interactions among the people to have a healthy and safe environment. These three types are also related as they describe that the planning of a city needs to take place from the street level perspective and the goal needs to support and promote the vitality of city streets. And the biggest thing of how these are related is that the city is organized in a complex fashion. Thus, everything is interrelated and everything is related to everything. So any attempts to simplify anything hurts the people of the city and planning.
2. Kevin Lynch was able to introduce urban designers to a new idea about the urbanism of a city. He focused on how the people in the city used and perceived the physical environment and not the traditional way by the use of learning about the city through maps. Lynch was able to

gather his research after a five year long examination of the most important elements of the city perceived by the residents in that area and his goal reflected his vision of identifying the most important features to the people in that area. His core concept was the idea of “legibility” which is how easy the paths of the cityscape can be organized into a recognizable pattern. He conducted his research in three cities and identified the five key elements that make up the perceived elements of the city: path, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. The path consists of the channels along which the observer moves. This includes streets, paths, routes and this the single most important mechanism in the idea of promoting urban legibility because this is how people experience the city. And the idea that people are using paths constructed in their mental capacity demonstrates the idea of the promotion of legibility as they are able to recognize the paths of the cityscape. Landmarks are point references which are similar to nodes. Contrasting nodes, landmarks are external features to the individuals and where they enter during their travels. They are often physical structures and is extensive. Landmarks help promote the idea of urban legibility as they are used by people to help better understand and navigate the environment that was built.

3. In “ Building American Cityscapes,” Edward Muller argues that the American urban landscape reflects “ a unifying consensus founded on a capitalistic economy and liberal social philosophy” (304). Basically, in lament terms, Muller is arguing that the characteristics of the American system ideals is written into the landscape and is shaped differently from other cities and countries. An example of this in the text is when

he argues that ideally, the transformation of the American system has been transformed and impacted by the change from the original urban settlements in North America that reflected the derivative transplants of European societies (304). The furtherization from the idea of the founding roots built the nationwide enterprise of the current state and premise of which Muller argues of the capitalistic economy. The liberal social philosophy stresses the freedom and rights of the individual marked by the government protecting these fundamental rights. An example of this is in the text is when Muller said: “ Substantial infusionsofdiverse immigrant groups have testedthissocial vision, butageneral adherenceto theliberal philosophyin agrowingeconomy diminished rigid class stratification, effected a sharing of the power and wealth with upwardly mobile generations, and produced a dynamic yet untidy social geography (304). Thus, changes and marks have impacted the environment and changed the way in how the environment is looked and perceived as the current American urban landscape according to Muller. And due to the new center of the economics at the center of the American landscape, these changes have been reflected the consequences by the geographical nature.

#### 4. Part 2- Essay Answer to Question 1:

More and more people have been moving to the suburbia since the 1950's and it has become the place to live. But, also to geographers it has become and study and a huge cultural discussion. Geographers have researched and tried to create a set of definitions or a criteria that defines a suburbia. In fact, contrary to popular belief while researching and trying to determine the

suburb is from different approaches and cultural angles, it has been found that the concept and idea of the suburbia is a hotly discussed and popular issue among geographers. So many definitions are proposed for the suburbia, but geographers do agree on the fact there are few people who even understand the idea and concept in this world as to what a suburbia truly is.

So what exactly is a suburbia? The urban settings are inside of the main city and urban areas have high population densities and lots of businesses that are centralized in that area in order for people and there is some stress on interpersonal relationships because of overcrowding. On the contrast, rural settings are completely different and are far from the city and the density of the population in the rural settings is low. Few businesses can cater to the people. The suburbia is the level between the rural and urban areas. It consists of neighborhoods that surrounds the city but not located in the centralized location of where people go or congregate to. The suburbia exists really on the outer edge districts and is characterized by housing area, some shopping avenues, and some schools.

In James Howard Kunstler's TED talk, he basically is able to dictate that public places should be inspired by the centers of civil life and the idea of common good. Also, he argues that he believes that there are locations or places in America that should not be worth caring about. Kunstler is a sense relates to the ideas and concepts proposed by Jane Jacobs. Jane Jacobs was an urbanist pioneer that examined how planners plan the city and the various concerns that arise when planning the city. She even researches as to what factors directly lead to the success of neighborhoods, sidewalks, and

such. She has even contributed this success because of the rising demand for diversity. In Kunstler's view we see his fear of the trust in the suburbia because no one cares to know each other and develop social interactions. People keep to themselves and there is a sense of a lack of trust in the eyes of the community among neighbors. This critique reflected the idea of Jacobs in sense. Both agree that lack of trust and fear is evident among urbanism and both agree that if this problem is captured it can be definitely changed and impacted. Kunstler believes that if you get to know the people and environment around you, this can definitely have an impact on how the fear can be resolved in a sense. Jacobs, on the other hand argues for the development of surveillance. Even though the two have different solutions, both can agree on the concept that neighborhoods become successful when the problem is identified and fixed in the best way possible. Another concept that be realized is that both Jacobs and Kunstler agree on the fact that a change in the planning of the city needs to be in order to bring continuity in order to have social interactions in order to foster a healthy and safe environment, which Kunstler argues.

In James Howard Kunstler's TED talk, he basically is able to dictate that public places should be inspired by the centers of civil life and the idea of common good. Also, he argues that he believes that there are locations or places in America that should not be worth caring about. Kunstler is a sense relates to the ideas and concepts proposed by Kevin Lynch. Lynch was an urban farmer that was able to research and dissect on the perceptions and the navigation of the environment by the people in relation to city planning. He is able to examine how the external factors of the environment affects

the people along with space and time. Lynch says that specific and definite elements such as the path, district, landmark, edge, and node exists in the complexity in every structure. Kunstler's ideas as a stretched part on my end also reveals a want for the city to be transformed into an imageable landscape which is similar to Lynch. In fact, both can agree on the fact that the city can be transformed into different view by considering the environment. If this is done, both also agree the people in that community can perceive the place with different perceptions and meanings. Thus, change can impact the people living in that area. Both Kunstler and Lynch both definitely share the idea that there needs to be a change in the development and planning of the city. Both Lynch and Kunstler stems from different backgrounds and different approaches ideally, but both argue on the same premise that the environment needs to be altered in order to impact the people around it. In a sense, the landscape of the environment are being shaped and reshaped by the social interactions and perceptions of what it should be in that particular area. It seems as if both Lynch and Kunstler seems to grasp the concept of the urban life and environmental images.

In conclusion, Kunstler ideas seems to relate back to the pioneers of the great field of urbanism in this subject. There is a definite parallel of Kunstler's work to Jane Jacobs and Kevin Lynch. Kunstler is definitely able to cover the history and development of the planning of specific cities and suburbs. He is able to critically examine how land have been used and misused, rather than for the collective group effort. Kunstler definitely blames the fall of suburbia due to the automobile industry and the

destruction on the idea of what a community is in the idea of an urban sprawl. Kunstler definitely has some good points to show how history has shaped the ideas of neighborhoods. The fact alone is that Kunstler is a controversial figure.