

Social Disorganization and Cultural Transmission (Shaw and McKay)

- I. Human Ecology School
- II. Shaw and McKay's Studies of Delinquency
 - A. Spatial Distribution of Delinquency
 - B. Social Disorganization
 - C. Cultural Transmission
 - D. Policy: Chicago Area Projects.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand how cities grow according to Burgess and the Human Ecology School
2. Know how delinquency is spatially distributed in cities.
3. Understand the four important empirical facts Shaw and McKay wanted to explain.
4. Understand how social disorganization and cultural transmission explained the above facts.
5. Understand the policy implications of Shaw and McKay's theory.

Chicago School of Human Ecology

- Natural Selection and Natural Areas
- Invasion, Competition, Succession
- Growth of Cities
- Concentric Zones (Burgess)
- Social Ills

Ernest W. Burgess' Concentric Zones

The Concentric Zone Model:

1. Central Business District

2. Transitional Zone

***Recent Immigrant Groups*

—Deteriorated Housing

—Factories

—Abandoned Buildings

3. Working Class Zone

—Single Family Tenements

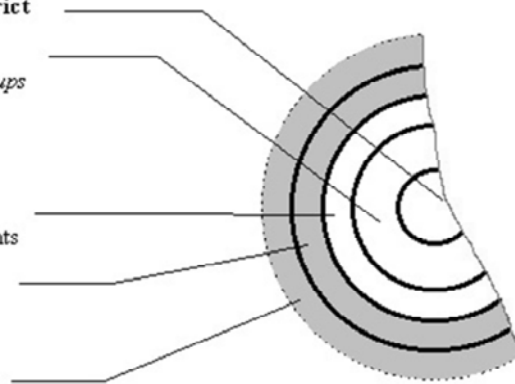
4. Residential Zone

—Single Family Homes

—Yards/Garages

5. Commuter Zone

—Suburbs



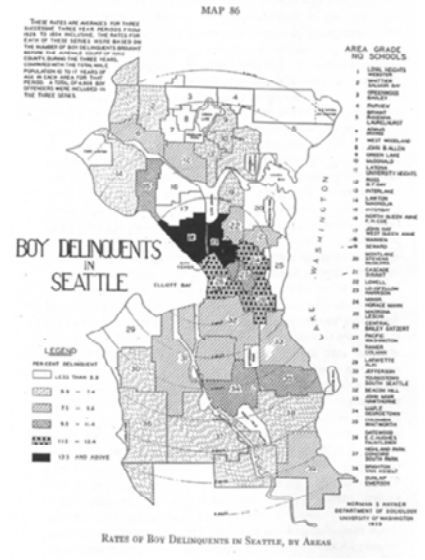
Shaw and McKay's Delinquency Research

- Life Histories of Delinquents
- Mapped Spatial Distribution of Delinquency in Chicago
- Developed the Theory of Social Disorganization and Cultural Transmission
- Pioneered the Chicago Area Projects Crime Prevention Program



Clifford S. Shaw

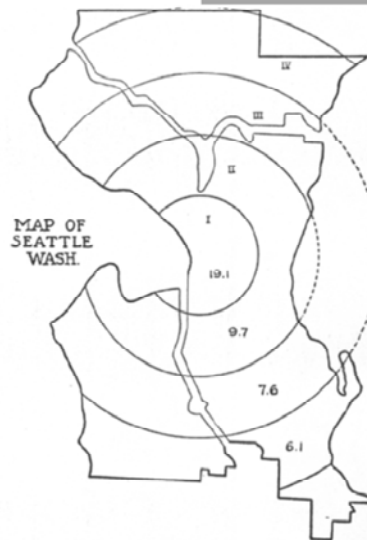
Spatial Distribution of Delinquency in Seattle (Shaw & McKay)



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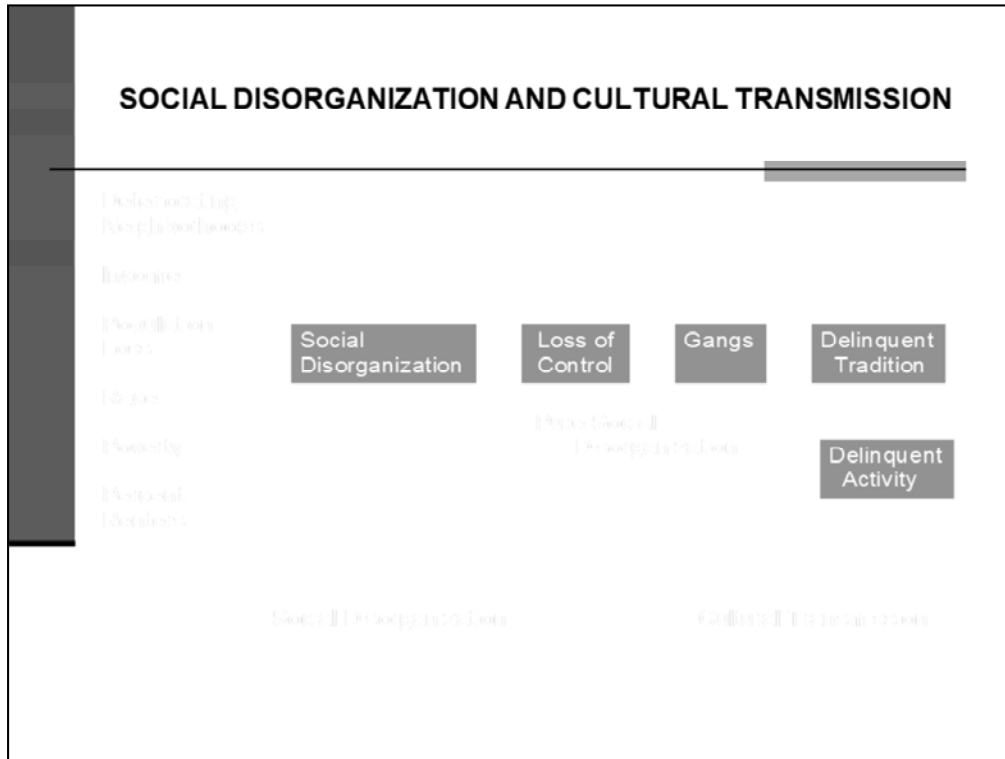
RATE MAP VIII
RATES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN SEATTLE, WASH.



ZONE MAP VIII
RATES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS BY ZONES IN SEATTLE, WASH.

Spatial Distribution of Delinquency in the City (Shaw & McKay)

- High in Zone in Transition (Interstitial Areas)
- Drops in Peripheral Neighborhoods (further away from center)
- Remained High Despite Turnover of Ethnic Groups
- Ethnic Groups Who Moved to Periphery Experienced Low Rates



Social Disorganization

- Problem of tautology
- Measures used by Shaw and McKay:
 - Population loss
 - Proportion rentals vs. home owners
 - Income
 - Physical deterioration
 - Percentage nonwhite
- **Social Disorganization:** Inability of a community solve its problems collectively (or achieve collective values)
 - Weak and unlinked institutions; no sense of community
 - Family structure, schools, community groups

Loss of Control Over Youth

- Social disorganization produces loss of informal social control
- Parental supervision, community controls
- Formation of spontaneous play groups of children
- Becomes the vehicle for delinquency

Cultural Transmission

- Delinquent tradition transmitted across generations of youth groups
 - Older gangs transmit delinquency to younger play groups
 - Delinquent tradition: values, pressures, and sanctions
 - Transmission: learning a culture
- Delinquent traditions produce persistently high delinquency rates in a community or neighborhood
- Explains four empirical findings.

Policy Implications: Chicago Area Projects

- Help inner city residents prevent delinquency
- Develop a sense of community
 - Increase community participation
 - Strengthen institutions (families, schools, churches, community groups)
 - Foster ties between institutions
 - Increase controls over children
 - Principle: Community empowerment using "natural leaders"
- Target: Develop recreation programs
- Evaluation: Not definitive