



From the Ground Up: Translating Geography into Community through Neighbor Networks

Rick Grannis

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Where do neighborhoods come from and why do certain resources and effects--such as social capital and collective efficacy--bundle together in some neighborhoods and not in others? *From the Ground Up* argues that neighborhood communities emerge from neighbor networks, and shows that these social relations are unique because of particular geographic qualities. Highlighting the linked importance of geography and children to the emergence of neighborhood communities, Rick Grannis models how neighboring progresses through four stages: when geography allows individuals to be conveniently available to one another; when they have passive contacts or unintentional encounters; when they actually initiate contact; and when they engage in activities indicating trust or shared norms and values.

Seamlessly integrating discussions of geography, household characteristics, and lifestyle, Grannis demonstrates that neighborhood communities exhibit dynamic processes throughout the different stages. He examines the households that relocate in order to choose their neighbors, the choices of interactions that develop, and the exchange of beliefs and influence that impact neighborhood communities over time. Grannis also introduces and explores two geographic concepts--t-communities and street islands--to capture the subtle features constraining residents' perceptions of their environment and community.

Basing findings on thousands of interviews conducted through door-to-door canvassing in the Los Angeles area as well as other neighborhood communities, *From the Ground Up* reveals the different ways neighborhoods function and why these differences matter.

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