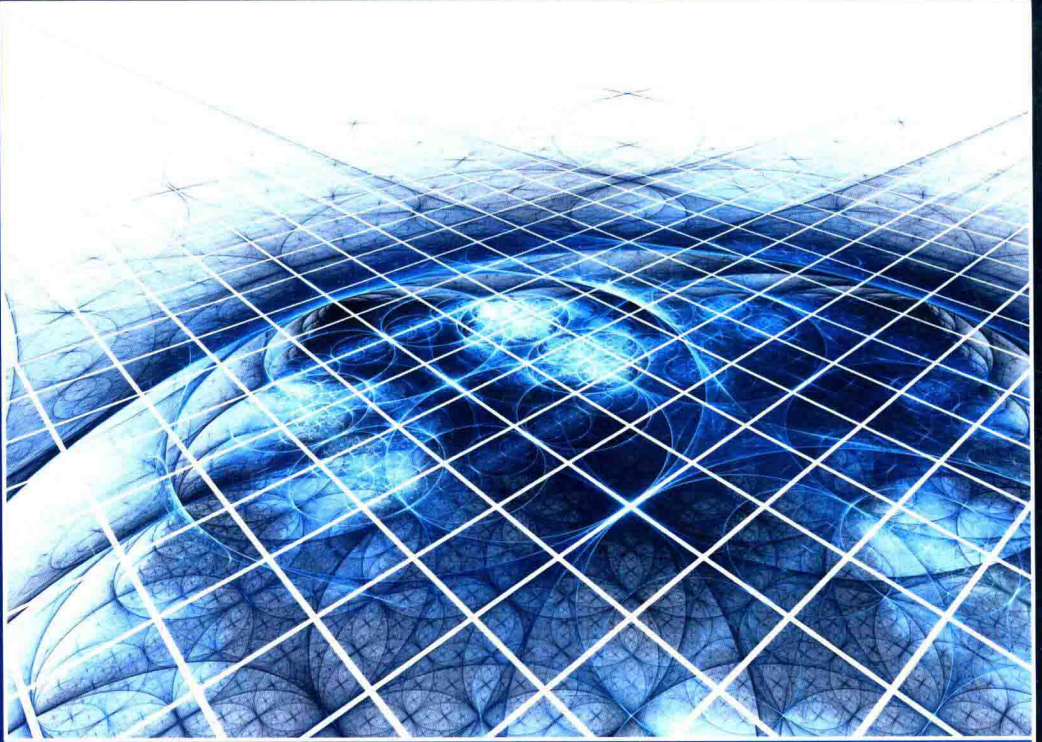


Edited by

Robert J. Stimson



*Handbook of Research Methods
and Applications in*

SPATIALLY INTEGRATED SOCIAL SCIENCE

Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Spatially Integrated Social Science

Edited by

Robert J. Stimson

The University of Melbourne, Australia



HANDBOOKS OF RESEARCH METHODS AND APPLICATIONS

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HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH METHODS
AND APPLICATIONS IN SPATIALLY
INTEGRATED SOCIAL SCIENCE

HANDBOOKS OF RESEARCH METHODS AND APPLICATIONS

Series Editor: Mark Casson, *University of Reading, UK*

The objective of this series is to provide definitive overviews of research methods in important fields of social science, including economics, business, finance and policy studies. The aim is to produce prestigious high quality works of lasting significance. Each *Handbook* consists of original contributions by leading authorities, selected by an editor who is a recognized leader in the field. The emphasis is on the practical application of research methods to both quantitative and qualitative evidence. The *Handbooks* will assist practising researchers in generating robust research findings that policy-makers can use with confidence.

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Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Spatially Integrated Social Science
Edited by Robert J. Stimson

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Introduction

Robert J. Stimson

This volume is the final product from the *Australian Research Council Research Network in Spatially Integrated Social Science (ARCRNSISS)*, which was funded by the Council from late 2004 to the end of 2009. The chapters in the book are based on presentations from a wide range of social scientists – mostly from Australia but also from the US, New Zealand and the UK – who were involved as instructors in the annual residential *Summer School for Graduate Students in Spatially Integrated Social Science Theory, Methods and Applications* which was attended each February by 20 to 25 graduate students. The purpose of the Summer School was for graduate students drawn from a range of disciplines in the social sciences and from across the Australian university system to receive intensive training in research taking a spatially integrated approach in the social sciences.

Over the last couple of decades there has been a growing interest in spatially integrated social science (SISS) research internationally, reflecting an increasing recognition of the importance of the roles of space and place as important consideration in analysing and modelling social and economic phenomena and in investigating human behaviour. That is reflected in part in a growing number of journals that are interdisciplinary in scope and that have an explicit focus on spatial phenomena. It is also a reflection of the degree to which much of the data used by social scientists is spatial in nature, especially data that is collected by official agencies (such as census bureaux) that is aggregate in nature and made available for spatial units that are largely *de jure*. It is also reflected in the emergence of sophisticated micro-simulation methods whereby it is possible to ‘merge’ unit record survey data (individual data) with spatially aggregated data (such as the census data) to produce simulated synthetic estimates across space of phenomena that relate to measures in those survey data collections.

Building on the explicitly spatial theoretical basis of human geography and regional science in particular, there has now emerged a powerful theoretical basis that underpins a *spatially integrated approach in social science research*. That is enhanced by researchers making use of methodologies that explicitly incorporate *space* and *place* considerations in analytical routines and models which, importantly, incorporate a consideration of variation in spatial scale and that give due recognition to the *spatial*