



THE NEW -URBAN- SOCIOLOGY

SECOND EDITION

MARK GOTTDIENER
RAY HUTCHISON

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PREFACE

The New Urban Sociology was the first textbook to present the sociospatial model and to apply this model to the study of urban sociology. In the five years since publication of the first edition, the theoretical discussion and applied study of “urban space” have emerged as the dominant paradigm not only in urban sociology but also in the various disciplines within urban studies, such as geography, architecture, and planning. New books by established scholars in the field, as well as special issues of scholarly journals and edited collections, offer insights into the social production and meaning of urban space. These developments reflect not simply a long-standing critique of earlier models of urban structure and process but a growing recognition that the emergence of global capitalism and the accompanying changes in the international division of labor have altered the social, political, economic, and cultural landscapes of metropolitan areas in the United States as well as in developing and industrialized nations around the world.

The second edition of *The New Urban Sociology* has evolved from our commitment to the study of urban sociology, a commitment forged over many years of experience in graduate school education and teaching in the classroom. We were introduced to urban sociology in graduate school by several well-known scholars and became passionately committed to the discipline. Mark studied with David Street and Gerald Suttles at SUNY–Stony Brook, and Ray studied with Morris Janowitz, Gerald Suttles, and William Julius Wilson at the University of Chicago. Urban sociology seemed to offer everything that was attractive about sociology. It required an interdisciplinary understanding of economics, politics, and culture. It was concerned with the reality of everyday life. It possessed great themes of immigrant adjustment, the making and unmaking of fortunes, active and exciting politics, the rise and decline of community ties, and even the dark side of human existence in the form of crime and vice. As graduate students, we were eager to learn about it all. From our experience, we came to an understanding that remains at the core of our work: Urban sociologists should be interested in actual reality. We should be inspired by daily life and be able to explain it in its full complexity. We agree with Robert Park that to understand urban life, one must move beyond the ivory tower of the university and “get the seat of your pants dirty” by actually doing research and becoming involved in urban communities.

While in graduate school, we learned about the theory of urban ecology, because that was the only explanatory paradigm taught at universities in the United States. Our dissertations were case studies of suburban development on Long Island (a suburban area adjacent to New York City) and of black suburbanization in Harvey, Illinois (an older suburb just south of Chicago). While revising these materials for publication, it became increasingly clear to both of us—even though we had not yet met each other—that the urban ecological paradigm could not adequately explain the changes occurring in the post–World War II period in metropolitan areas across the United States. Our dissatisfaction with mainstream urban sociology and

our passionate interest in explaining the social, political, and economic changes that we observed in our field studies led us to reconceptualize the field.

Over the past decade and a half, we have devoted our work to introducing new ideas about the role of economics, politics, and culture in urban analysis. This effort culminated in a new kind of urban theory and a new paradigm for the discipline, as well as the first edited series devoted to urban sociology. Our work joined the efforts of others, such as Lefebvre, Castells, Harvey, and Pickvance, in what has come to be called the *new urban sociology*.

Over this same period, we have also devoted ourselves to the teaching of urban sociology. The limitations of the textbooks that presented urban ecology as a global paradigm made it difficult to instruct our students in understanding the complexities of urban life. Slowly we began to frame specific concepts and arguments that we felt improved the approach of urban sociology. The first edition of this book represented the culmination of Mark's efforts over several decades to develop a new theoretical model that was better suited to contemporary urban society and the systematic application of this theory to the topics studied by urban sociologists. This second edition represents our joint effort to expand the earlier material by including new topics (e.g., street gangs) and examples (e.g., the redevelopment of squatter settlements in the Philippines) that demonstrate the applications of sociospatial theory to the reality of urban life not just in the United States but around the world.

The central organizing concepts of this text were devised in response to the limitations of other textbooks in the field. Without exception, urban sociologists focus principally on the large central city as an object of analysis. Suburban considerations may be treated, but they are usually consigned to a separate chapter. This urban bias distorts reality. In the United States, the majority of people now live, work, and shop in the suburbs rather than in large central cities. Our text focuses on the entire metropolitan region, including cities, suburbs, industrial parks, shopping malls, recreational sites, and small towns. We believe this approach presents a more balanced account of contemporary urban life.

A second feature of this book also grew out of our response to the limitations of other texts, in which discussions about the nature of urban development are biased in favor of economic accounts. We believe that all environments function because they are meaningful spaces and that cultural considerations play a significant role in metropolitan life. In this text, we seek to show these relationships without bias toward a single factor. We strive to provide a balanced view of economic, political, and cultural considerations in the study of metropolitan development.

Too often, textbooks are written as a series of disconnected chapters reporting facts about one topic after another without providing a compelling vision. This book is an exception. The *sociospatial perspective* is an integrated paradigm of thinking about metropolitan life. Its basic premise is that spatial or environmental and locational considerations are always part and parcel of everyday social relationships. We cannot talk about one without also talking about the latter. The sociospatial perspective is not urban ecology, although it also stresses the role of location in social relations. Unlike urban ecology, it does not propose that explanation should follow biological principles, nor does it suggest that the drama of development can be reduced to the effects of technological change alone. In contrast, the sociospatial perspective

is a synthesis of environmental considerations and the factors of class, race, gender, lifestyle, economics, culture, and politics to explore the development of metropolitan regions. Each chapter borrows from this thematic perspective to discuss specific topics ranging from crime to Third World development and, when possible, makes comparative distinctions.

The goal of this text is not just to be innovative but to be up to date. Its chapter topics are comparable to those found in other urban texts. The fruits of our discontent with the outdated mainstream perspective are realized in the execution of the material. When discussing the development of ancient cities, for example, cultural and political factors are considered to be as important as economic ones. In addition, the urban history of the United States is presented as high drama involving fortunes made through real estate speculation as much as through industry. Social problems are depicted as metropolitan and regional concerns rather than as the exclusive products of city living. The diversity of daily life is presented in terms of the full spectrum of race, class, and gender considerations. And finally, when we turn to metropolitan policy and the environment, we want to know *why* programs fail, *what* ideologies govern metropolitan growth, and *how* we can improve metropolitan life.

Some chapters, however, depart somewhat from the typical fare of other presentations. We consider the metropolitan changes occurring in the United States since 1960 to be so unique that we have devoted a separate chapter to their discussion. Furthermore, in the chapters on urban history and contemporary development, it is necessary to take a global perspective and provide comparative material. While a discussion of the development of Third World cities is now standard in urban texts, we have added a new discussion of metropolitan development in Europe and Japan to more fully incorporate a global perspective and provide comparative material. Finally, unlike most urban sociology texts, this book has a separate chapter on metropolitan politics and another chapter on metropolitan policy and the environment. Both are important for understanding how people manage and how they might improve the space of everyday life.

In the second edition, we have updated the material in the first edition and incorporated important new research. We have also sought to expand the approach presented in the first edition to include additional areas of research within the field of urban sociology. The reader will find not only a more complete discussion of earlier theoretical work but also an extension of the sociospatial model to incorporate both older and emerging areas of research.

Specific changes and additions to the second edition include the following:

- An expansion and elaboration of the basic sociospatial model (Chapter 1).
- New material on the origins of urban settlements and the origins of urban planning in Renaissance Rome (Chapter 2).
- Greatly expanded discussion of classical urban theory, including the work of Ferdinand Toennies, Roderick McKenzie's approach to human ecology, and social area analysis (Chapter 6).
- Thorough revision of the discussion of women, gender roles and urban space, and ethnic communities (Chapter 7).
- New material on street gangs and urban space (Chapter 10).
- New discussion of planned communities and the "new urbanism" (Chapter 14).

To make this edition more user friendly, we have enhanced the program of boxed inserts. In some cases, we have moved standard material in the text into boxes that highlight important work in the field. Some new boxes present important concepts discussed in the text (e.g., the sociospatial approach in Chapter 1; theories of urban problems in Chapter 10). Other boxes summarize classic studies in urban sociology (e.g., V. Gordon Childe's description of the urban revolution in Chapter 2; Ferdinand Toennies' discussion of community and society in Chapter 6; and Hunter's and Dahl's competing theories of urban political structures in Chapter 11). We have added boxes highlighting important recent scholarship in both urban sociology and urban studies (e.g., Massey and Denton's work on urban apartheid in Chapter 6; consideration of the impact of shopping malls in Chapter 9; William Julius Wilson's study *When Work Disappears* in Chapter 10; and a critical discussion of what has become known as the new urbanism in Chapter 14). We hope these boxes offer instructors additional opportunities to make the study of urban sociology come alive for their students.

The development of *The New Urban Sociology* through two editions has been an extended project stretching over many years. It could not have been accomplished without the crucial help provided by a number of people. We wish to thank friends in academia for their support: Bob Antonio, David Diaz, Joe Feagin, Harvey Kaye, Chigon Kim, Nestor Rodriguez, Eric Monkkonen, Peter Muller, Leonard Wallock, and Talmadge Wright in the United States; Phil Gunn, Lena Lavinias, Sandra Lincioni, and Sueli Schiffer in Brazil; Alexandros Lagopoulos and Nikos Komninos in Greece; Chris Pickvance in England; Dorel Abraham in Romania; and Jens Tonboe in Denmark. Randy Roethle and Tanya Krall (University of Wisconsin–Green Bay) provided editorial support for the second edition.

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Finally, as the writer of any textbook quickly learns, the long working hours and need for concentration can interfere with the everyday flow of family life. We are most fortunate to have two very understanding and supportive families. Mark's wife, Jennifer, and two boys, Felix and Zev, and Ray's wife, Dulce, and daughters, Leilani, Heather, and Jessica, were very patient as we prepared the second edition. It is they to whom we dedicate this book.

Mark Gottdiener

Ray Hutchison

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CHAPTER

I

THE NEW URBAN SOCIOLOGY

It is morning across the United States, and people have brushed off sleep and prepared themselves for the day. Though most Americans live within metropolitan regions, they meet their circumstances in different ways. Using composite types constructed from case studies, newspaper or magazine stories, and personal observations, here are several examples of everyday life:

Larry Worthington lives in Costa Mesa, a section of Orange County, California, adjacent to Los Angeles. He is a lawyer and works for the county in another town, Santa Ana. Larry is married and has two children and a dog. Both he and his wife work. They own a house, two cars, and a small boat that they occasionally take sailing on weekends. The Worthingtons' combined income is over \$100,000 a year, yet they are not affluent. Their housing costs alone amount to \$30,000 a year, because housing in Orange County is very expensive. Car payments and maintenance add several thousand more in bills, but life would not be possible without an automobile in southern California. Because both of the Worthingtons work, they must pay for after-school day care for their children—another expense of several thousand a year. When all costs are added up, this family cannot meet every obligation, and so end each year in debt.

On this typical morning Larry is stuck in the inevitable lineup of cars on the freeway. His 20-mile commute to work takes him an average of 1½ hours each way. He has plenty of time to consider his looming debts as well as the daily needs of his job while waiting for the stop-and-go traffic to advance a few more inches. He tries to focus on music from the car stereo.

Every morning around five o'clock, Esther Hernandez wakes up with the first sounds of advancing traffic. She can't help it. She lives outdoors on a subway grate located on the corner of 40th Street and Lexington Avenue in Manhattan. Esther is homeless. When she first came to New York from the Dominican Republic, she found work