

The Community Question Revisited: The Social Networks of American Urbanites, Suburbanites, and Ruralites*

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Using the 1985 social network data collected in the General Social Survey conducted by the NORC, this paper reexamines the issue of 'the community question' formulated and first tested by Wellman (1979) with his East York network data and later by Tsai and Sigelman (1982) with sociability items from the General Social Survey data also by the NORC. The main reason for doing this is because this newly obtained network data on national representative sample is more appropriate and complete in testing the hypotheses derived from the issue of 'the community question' than those previous studies. The results of our analysis show some general similar results to those found in the previous studies using regional or non-network data though some differences were also found. In general, no conclusive or consistent support for the three different competing interpretations is found, although some rather interesting results that were not revealed in those previous studies were found. Some critiques and suggestions concerning the nature of the network data in the General Social Survey and the community question in general were made and raised for future efforts.

1. Introduction
2. Data, Methods, and Research Hypotheses
3. Social Network Variables: The Dependent Variables
4. Findings
5. Conclusions and Discussions

* Paper Presented at the American Sociological Association Annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, August 1988.

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社區問題再探：美國都市居民、近郊居民及 鄉村居民之社會網絡

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摘 要

本文是以國家意見研究中心(NORC)所做之「社會普查」1985年社會網路資料為據,對Wellman所提出之「社區問題」做進一步的檢驗與探討。「社區問題」曾由Wellman本人率先以East York的網路資料檢測之。其後,蔡勇美與Sigelman二人也以NORC所做「社會普查」中的「社交性項目」作檢驗。筆者認為新獲之有關National Representation Sample網路資料,當能更完備的檢測由「社區問題」所演出的假設,故撰寫此文。分析結果顯示:本研究與前述兩項研究有一般的共同結論,當然也發現了一些差異點。但是,儘管此一研究有前者所未得之發現,然三者間之優劣問題,則未有決定性之定論。為往後之努力計,本文對「社會普查」中網路資料之性質與一般性的社區問題,也提出了一些批評與建議。