UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Neighborhoods that Matter: How Place and People Affect Political Participation

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4vh40906>

Author

LeVan, Carrie Ann

Publication Date

2016

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Neighborhoods that Matter:

How Place and People Affect Individual Political Participation

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

Requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Political Science

by

Carrie Ann LeVan

2016

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Neighborhoods that Matter:

How Place and People Affect Individual Political Participation

by

Carrie Ann LeVan

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2016

Professor John R. Zaller, Chair

In this dissertation, I argue that features of neighborhood design that promote social interaction also promote political participation. I call this the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. The dissertation's key breakthrough is to measure the physical features of neighborhoods—whether homes have porches, streets are tree-lined, neighborhoods have natural gathering places—for a sample of respondents in a nationally representative survey. With this data, I demonstrate that the design of residential places promotes neighborly exchanges that subsequently help increase individual political participation. I show that place and people work together to influence individual engagement in multiple forms of participation, like voting, attending a march/boycott, joining a political group, and volunteering in a community project. I further demonstrate that the effects of neighborhoods and neighbors on participation hold for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic

status. All of which goes to show the critical role that place and people play in influencing individual political behavior.

The dissertation of Carrie Ann LeVan is approved.

Michael Edward Shin

Lorrie Frasure-Yokely

Lynn Vavreck-Lewis

John R. Zaller, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2016

*To my parents who drove me to the school on the other side of the tracks...and to my husband
whom I found while I was there.*

Table of Contents

1 Theory	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 What is the Place and People Model of Political Participation	4
1.3 Critique of Previous Research	6
1.3.1 Social Networks and Political Participation	7
1.3.2 Physical Characteristics of Place and Political Participation.....	8
1.3.3 Overview of Existing Literature	11
1.4 Place and People Model of Political Participation: A Closer Look.....	11
1.4.1 Passive Social Contact Theory.....	12
1.4.2 Civic Voluntarism Model of Participation.....	13
1.4.2.1 Passive Contact as a Source of Political Resources.....	14
1.4.2.2 Passive Contact as a Source of Political Engagement	15
1.4.2.3 Passive Contact as a Source of Political Networks.....	15
1.5 Expectations in the Real World	16
1.6 Book Overview: Toward a Place and People Model of Political Participation.....	21
2 Hypotheses.....	22
2.1 General Hypothesis: Place and People	22
2.1.1 First-Stage: Neighborhood Design and Neighboring	22
2.1.2 Second-Stage: Neighboring and Individual Political Participation	24
2.1.3 Putting it all together.....	25
2.2 Who Benefits Most?	26
2.3 Overview of Hypotheses.....	30

3 Data	31
3.1 Social Capital Benchmark Survey	32
3.1.1 Key Dependent Variables	32
3.1.2 Control Variables	34
3.2 Measuring Neighborhood Design Characteristics: Key Independent Variable	38
3.2.1 Step 1: Matching Census Tract Map to Google Map	38
3.2.2 Step 2: Random Selection of Four Points in Each Census Tract	39
3.2.3 Step 3: Locating Randomly Selected Points in Google Maps	40
3.2.4 Step 4: Street View and Observation of Architectural Features	41
3.2.5 Step 5: Coding Design Features at Each Randomly Selected Point	43
3.2.6 Step 6: Calculating the Overall “Neighborhood Design Score”	45
3.3 Overview of Data	46
3.4 Appendix	48
3.4.1 Non-Square or Non-Rectangular Shaped Census Tracts	48
3.4.2 Rural Sampling Method	48
4 Place and People: Evidence for the Model	50
4.1 First-Stage Regression Results	51
4.2 Second-Stage Regression	55
4.2.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting	56
4.2.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation	59
4.3 Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation	64
4.4 Overview of General Results	70
4.5 Appendix: Tables of Complete Results	73

5 Who Benefits Most?	77
5.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Socio-Demographic Characteristics.....	79
5.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Race.....	81
5.2.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Race.....	82
5.2.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Race.....	83
5.2.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Race.....	87
5.2.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Race.....	92
5.3 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Ethnicity	92
5.3.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Ethnicity.....	93
5.3.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Ethnicity.....	95
5.3.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Ethnicity	98
5.3.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Ethnicity	102
5.4 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Income.....	103
5.4.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Income.....	104
5.4.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Income	106
5.4.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Income.....	109
5.4.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Income.....	114

5.5 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Education.....	115
5.5.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Education	115
5.5.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Education	119
5.5.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Education	122
5.5.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Education.....	130
5.6 Overview of Who Benefits Most	130
5.7 Appendix.....	134
6 Conclusion	145
6.1 Future Research	146
6.1.1 Does Talking Lead to More Political Resources?.....	146
6.1.2 Can You Activate the Neighbor Network?	148
6.2 Place, People and American Political Participation.....	149
References.....	153

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Example of Typical Home in the Greenfield Neighborhood.....	20
Figure 3. 1 Comparison of Census Tract Map to Match in Google Maps.....	39
Figure 3. 2 Census Tract in Google Maps with XY Axes	40
Figure 3. 3 Locating the Randomly Selected Points.....	41
Figure 3. 4 360 Degree Street View in Google Maps of Randomly Selected Point	42
Figure 3. 5 Virtual Walk Down the Randomly Selected Point	43
Figure 4. 1 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Probability Voting	57
Figure 4. 2 Effect of Predicted Talk on Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation	61
Figure 4. 3 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting	66
Figure 4. 4 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non- Voting Forms of Political Participation.....	68
Figure 5. 1 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Probability of Voting, by Race.....	83
Figure 5. 2 Effect of Predicted Talk on Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Race	85
Figure 5. 3 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Race	88
Figure 5. 4 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non- Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Race	91
Figure 5. 5 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Ethnicity	94
Figure 5. 6 Effect of Predicted Talk on Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Ethnicity	96
Figure 5. 7 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Ethnicity ..	99
Figure 5. 8 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non- Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Ethnicity	102

Figure 5. 9 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Income	105
Figure 5. 10 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on the Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Income.....	107
Figure 5. 11 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Income	111
Figure 5. 12 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Income.....	112
Figure 5. 13 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Education	118
Figure 5. 14 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Education	120
Figure 5. 15 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Education	126
Figure 5. 16 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Education	129

List of Tables

Table 3. 1 Summary of Key Independent and Dependent Variables	34
Table 3. 2 Summary of Census Tract Level and Individual Level Control Variables	37
Table 3. 3 Summary of Neighborhood Design Score Variable.....	46
Table 4. 1 Building the First-Stage Model: Effect of Neighborhood Design on Frequency of Neighbor Talk	53
Table 4. 2 Results from Six Logistic Regressions: Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Various Forms of Political Participation	73
Table 4. 3 The Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation	76
Table 5. 1 Results from Six Logistic Regressions: Effect of Four Different Interactions Between Predicted Neighbor Talk and Race, Ethnicity, Income, and Education on Various Forms of Political Participation	134
Table 5. 2 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Race	136
Table 5. 3 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Ethnicity	139
Table 5. 4 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Income	141
Table 5. 5 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Education	143

Preface

This dissertation, at its root, is about the places where we live and the people who live around us. For much of my own life, I lived in two different places and had two very unique networks of people living around me. I grew up in Bakersfield, California, a city at the southern tip of the San Joaquin Valley. Known for agriculture and oil, the Dustbowl and Oakies, Law and Order, Merle Haggard and Buck Owens, Bakersfield neighborhoods—like most of the United States—were and remain segregated both racially and socioeconomically. Every neighborhood has a name and with it a stereotyped identity: Stockdale—Old Money, Rosedale—New Money, Cottonwood—Poor Blacks, Eastside—Poor Latinos, Oildale—Poor Whites. I lived in Oildale, but went to school in Stockdale, a 2-hour bus ride across town. It was this experience of seeing life on both “sides of the track,” so-to-speak, that informed both my curiosity for how neighborhoods and neighbors might matter and my dedication to show that they do.

This allowed me to observe the very distinct roles that place and people seemed to play for my family living in the “0-8”—a reference to Oildale’s zip code, 93308—versus for my friends and their families living in the Southwest of the city. Residents of Oildale were bound by place in a way that my middle class and upper-middle class friends were not. My parent’s neighbors were their networks. When we ran out of milk, or eggs, or the cliché cup of sugar, my neighbors filled that resource gap. We walked places, out of necessity: Cope’s Food Fair for freshly made salsa, and The Little Green Store, literally a little, green store where we bought candy and ice cream. My friends’ families’ networks were scattered across the city. None of my friends from school could walk to each others’ houses. They all lived in distinct, walled-in, branded housing developments: Haggin Oaks, Campus Park, Tevis Ranch, Mirage, Stockdale Estates, Seven Oaks. Their parents drove them everywhere. But these boundless networks also

played a critical role in each other's daily lives. The resources they shared with one another did not come in the tangible form of a measuring cup, but in the "Did you" questions of concerned parents: Did you sign up for the Pre-SAT; Did you apply for CSF; Did you take the SAT; Did you talk to your counselor about AP courses? If I did not know about a certain application or certification or test, these networks were there to make sure I completed them. When I discovered that all my friends had signed up to take biology in summer school, so that they could be one year ahead in science—a thing I didn't even know you could do—I quickly signed up too. These quiet tidbits to success were the resources my crosstown networks gave me.

Above and beyond these obvious perks of my dual life, this time on both sides of the track also gave me a unique perspective of how both the poor and middle class lived. And so, when I was first introduced to, and fell in love with, the world of political science, I came to the discipline with this bi-optic point-of-view. For example, when I learned that poor people do not participate in politics because they were poor—a grossly oversimplification of the SES Model of Political Participation—I could not help but question that conclusion. After all, if there was one thing that my two-hour bus ride taught me, it was that there are places where certain types of people live that are politically isolated islands. Each election cycle marked an opportunity to distinguish some places above others. While my friends' neighborhoods were littered with campaign signage—"Harvey Hall for Mayor"—my "0-8" hood" appeared comparably bare, a clear indication that while neighborhoods and neighbors may matter, some matter more than others.

This observation made it clear through my eyes that explanations for political behavior that solely focused on individual traits were missing the broader picture. This dissertation is a response to that observation.

Vita

2000	High School Diploma, Stockdale High School, Bakersfield, California
2005	B.A. Political Science, California State University, Bakersfield
2005	B.A. English, California State University, Bakersfield
2005-2008	High School English Teacher, Delano High School, Delano, California
2007	Single-Subject Teaching Credential, California State University, Bakersfield
2013	M.A. Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles
2013-2015	Teaching Fellow, University of California, Los Angeles
2014	Teaching Assistant Coordinator, University of California, Los Angeles
2015-2016	Lecturer, Pepperdine University, Malibu, California

Presentation and Publications

2011. “The Vicious Cycle: The Exclusion of Low Socioeconomic Status Voters from Mobilization Efforts.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Seattle, Washington.

2012. “Mobilizing the Poor: Spillover Effects of an Experimental Intervention to Increase Turnout.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois.

2013. “Social Networks and Participation: The Effect of Living Near a Voter on the Turnout Rate of Low and High Socioeconomic Status Voters.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois.

2013. “The Neighbor Effect: How Living Near a Voter Affects Turnout in Low, Middle and High Socioeconomic Status Neighborhoods.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois.

2014. “Low Income Neighbors and Neighborhoods: Spillover Effects of an Experimental Intervention to Increase Voter Turnout.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC.

2015. “Place, People, and Participation: How the Design Features of Neighborhoods Lead to Voting.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois.

2015. “Neighborhoods that Matter: How Place and People Affect the Participation of Poor and Racial Minorities.” Paper presented at the Politics of Race, Immigration, and Ethnicity Consortium, University of California, Riverside.

CHAPTER 1

Theory

1.1 Introduction

In 1961, Jane Jacobs wrote *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. In this love letter to the big city, Jacobs romanticizes the “good ole’ days,” where neighbors knew each other’s names, a stranger on the street was recognized as such, and residents going out of town for the weekend left their keys with Joe Cornacchia, the owner of the local delicatessen, for their house-sitters to pick-up. In her narrative, she describes these idealized neighborhoods as vibrant and lively communities, places where people lived on the streets, where “people stopped at the bar for a beer, got advice from the grocer and gave advice to the newsstand man, compared opinions with other customers at the bakery and nodded hello to the two boys drinking pop on the stoop, eyed the girls while waiting to be called for dinner, admonished the children, heard about a job from the hardware man and borrowed a dollar from the druggist, admired the new babies and sympathized over the way a coat faded” (56). For her, this life on the sidewalk is the foundation upon which the democratic process is built. These daily contacts help citizens recognize problems, recommend solutions, and organize as a group; they are the first steps of collective action.

Unfortunately, Jacobs’s love story is not a happy one. Her narrative describes how “reformists” had visions of getting people “off the streets,” in a hope to fix the “bad old city” (20). In Jacobs’s above description of a city neighborhood, people lived, worked, and played in the same place. They could walk to work, the park, the grocery store, the bar, the kids’ school.

She describes how reformists viewed the diverse use of cities as “ugly,” a source of “traffic congestion,” and a source of “ruinous uses” (222). And so to overcome these city ills, reformers set out to decentralize how people lived; they zoned cities in ways that would separate where people lived, worked, and played, so that a city would have distinct residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational spaces (1-25). For Jacobs, the great irony of these reformists was that “finally people who sincerely wanted to strengthen great cities should adopt recipes frankly devised for undermining their economies and killing them” (21). Her fear, of course, was that as communities were homogenized for single purposes, the ever-important development of inter-personal relationships between individuals would cease to form, and with it the ability for “understanding, communicating, contriving, and inventing what is required to combat a city’s difficulties” (447). The casual conversations that occurred through unplanned encounters on city streets and which, for Jacobs, laid the foundation for collective action would be lost as people were scattered into their prospective “zones.”

Forty years later, Robert Putnam painted a picture of the American community in the twenty-first century. In his description of the lonely, American bowler, Jacobs’s fears had been realized. In his study, Putnam found that Americans were decreasingly participating in civic organizations. He found that union membership dropped from 32.5 percent in 1953 to 15.8 percent in 1992. Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) membership was cut in half from 12 million members in 1964 to 5 million members in 1982. And, of course, league bowling had declined by 40 percent between the 1980’s and the 1990’s. For Putnam, much like Jacobs, the significance in these declines lies in the loss of “social interaction and occasional civic conversation over beer and pizza that solo bowlers forgo” (1995, 70). The American community Jacobs described in the sixties seemed to have perished by the mid-1990’s.

And yet, there are still places where Jacobs's idealized "street life" is still alive and well. On the corner of Sawtelle and National Boulevard, in West Los Angeles, sits Primo's Donuts, a staple in the local community since 1956. On a recent Saturday visit to the shop, I watched as Celia Primo greeted nearly every customer by name, asked about children and grandchildren, gave real estate advice, and taught a young child to count out exact change. Later, Kate Anderson, a candidate for the local school board, entered the shop with a photographer in tow. Anderson quickly asked Celia if she could spare a moment for a photograph, with the promise that Anderson would post the picture on her campaign's Facebook page, all of which indicated the importance of the donut shop's endorsement for giving the candidate credibility. A Primo's endorsement would serve as a cue to voters in the local area that Kate Anderson was "okay."

The activity within this tiny donut shop mirrors the very behavior that Jacobs describes so dearly in her book and yet, this is the very activity that should have died according to Putnam. So, what makes the corner of Sawtelle and National Boulevard a hot spot for the development of social networks? What characteristics of a place help facilitate the development of social networks, networks which influence individual political behavior, networks which Jacobs claims are the rock on which a functioning democracy is built?

This dissertation answers those questions. It explores how the characteristics of a neighborhood facilitate or inhibit opportunities for interaction between neighbors, interactions that subsequently affect individual political behavior. Over the course of this dissertation, I will examine several forms of political participation: voting, volunteering, membership in political groups, protesting, and signing petitions. I will show how an individual's decision to participate in any of these political activities is influenced by the physical attributes of one's neighborhood.

I will further argue that these characteristics of place affect individual participation because they either increase or decrease opportunities for neighbors to come into contact with one another.

I base this argument on a well-accepted premise that an individual's decision to participate in politics is affected by his access to three determinants of participation: personal resources, political interest, and mobilizing social networks (Verba et al 2001). Then a second and more debated premise, that interaction with an individual's neighbors has the potential to provide him with these determinants of participation. And, finally, a less empirically studied premise that the characteristics of where an individual lives affects whether he socializes with his neighbors.

I will argue that neighborhoods and neighbors matter because together they have the ability to help individuals overcome personal obstacles to political participation—lack of resources, political interest, mobilization—essentially leveling the participatory playing field.

1.2 What is the Place and People Model of Political Participation

In this dissertation, I will develop and test the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. This model asserts that places with *interactive characteristics* increase the opportunities for interaction between people. These interactions then help provide the determinants of individual political participation—resources, interest, and mobilization—which then increases individual political participation. So, place affects interaction between people, which in turn increases participation.

Interactive Characteristics are physical features of a place that affect the likelihood that people come into contact with one another. By physical features, I mean the architectural features of homes, the design of streets, and proximity to public or shared spaces. I will show that the presence or absence of these interactive characteristics in a place influences the

opportunities for social contact between the people who live there to occur, and subsequently that these social contacts then affect individual political participation.

To build this model, I incorporate theories from both sociology and political science. I begin with *Passive Social Contact Theory* (PSC) from sociology. Passive social contacts are chance encounters between two people. These unintended or unplanned encounters provide the opportunity for the formation of relationships between people. This process of relationship building takes time and is contingent upon whether or not these meetings occur over and over again. The physical features of a place are thought to help facilitate these repeated passive social contacts between individuals (Festinger et al, 1950; Fleming et al, 1985; Skjaeveland and Garling 1997). I then link this theory of social contact between neighbors with the *Civic Voluntarism Model of Participation* from political science. This theory of participation demonstrates that individual political participation is dependent on a person's access to three determinants of participation: personal resources, political interest, and mobilization. I use evidence to show that more frequent contacts between neighbors increases individual political participation because these interactions help provide these determinants of participation.

In order to demonstrate that *Place and People* affect individual political participation, I will show that:

1. The presence of *Interactive Characteristics* within a neighborhood increases the likelihood of social interactions between neighbors.
2. Social interactions between neighbors increase individual political participation.

I begin with a critique of the previous literature and then describe the *Place and People Model of Political Participation* in greater detail. I spend the remainder of the dissertation empirically testing the model's claims.

1.3 Critique of Previous Research

Over the last fifty years, social scientists have developed theories that explain why some citizens participate in politics. These theories range from how individual characteristics, like socioeconomic status, affect participation, to how interest in politics influence participation, to how behavior is learned through socialization during childhood, to even how the decision to participate is a “rational choice,” calculated with an analysis of a cost-benefit ratio (Verba and Nie 1972; Campbell et al. 1960; Downs 1957). Remarkably, however, these early theories have very little to say about what role either social networks or environment serve in determining an individual’s participation.

Early sociological studies, like those done by the Columbia scholars (Lazarsfeld et al., 1956), were the first to recognize the importance of social networks. They found that “by the very process of talking to one another, the vague dispositions which people have are crystallized, step by step, into specific attitudes, acts, or votes (1954, 300). For the sociologists, it is this “process of talking” that drives individual behavior. Although these scholars recognized the importance of social networks on behavior, they failed to recognize the preceding influence of place on the development of these networks.

The political psychological theories that followed these early studies also recognized the significance of social networks on individual behavior. The scholars from Michigan (Campbell et al.) state that:

“Knowledge of social processes may add much to our understanding of the fact that party allegiances not only remain stable but grow stronger over time. In addition to intra-psychic mechanisms that act in this direction, social communication in a congenial primary group may constitute a potent extra-psychic process leading to the same end. The ambiguity of the merits of political objects and events is such that people are dependent upon “social reality” to support and justify their political opinions. When primary groups engage in political discussions and are

homogeneous in basic member viewpoints, the attitudes of the individual must be continually reinforced as he sees similar opinions echoed in the social group” (293).

Here, the Michigan scholars recognize the importance of social interaction on political behavior, but they were quick to put social context in the background. They did this in favor of using methods of data collection (surveys) that largely disregarded the role of social networks and instead focused on individual characteristics. Moreover, these scholars failed to recognize the role of environment.

Today, social scientists have attempted to address the failures of these early works. There has been an increasing attempt to investigate the influence of both social networks and environment on participation. These emerging theories fall into one of two categories. The first category of research shows how social networks influence political behavior, the second, how environment affects political participation.

1.3.1 Social Networks and Political Participation

The social networking body of literature finds that personal networks affect participation in three ways. First, networks help provide low cost, political information to individuals who might not otherwise have been informed. This leads to increased levels of political participation because individuals who are more informed are more likely to participate (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Rosenstone and Hanses 1993; Verba et al 2001; Erikson 2003). Second, networks help shape personal opinions, by either reinforcing pre-existing beliefs, or by introducing new ideas. This process of influencing political opinion helps to stimulate political interest and as a result, increases individual political participation (Campbell et al. 1960; Keys 1961; Zuckerman et al. 1994; Verba et al 2001; Erikson 2003; Levine 2005). Finally, networks work to mobilize individuals, either by establishing the social norm that participating in politics is desirable

behavior, or by simply asking individuals to participate, both of which have been found to increase individual political participation (Huckfeldt 1979 and 1986; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Stolle, Gelinville, and Bienstock 1999; Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Putnam 2000; Gimpel, Dyck, and Shaw 2004; Levine 2005). Although this literature clearly demonstrates how networks influence individual behavior, it fails to address why for some individuals social networks that inform, shape, and mobilize simply do not exist. By not acknowledging how environment facilitates or inhibits the development of personal networks, these studies cannot answer this question.

1.3.2 Physical Characteristics of Place and Political Participation

The second category of research attempts to address this concern. This body of literature shows how environmental characteristics—physical features of a neighborhood—affect individual political participation. With regards to how the physical characteristics of a neighborhood affect political participation, the literature in political science is limited. Much of what we think we know about how the design of place affects political behavior is derived from the philosophy of the New Urbanists. These are architects, urban planners and developers who promote an urban design that creates walkable neighborhoods. Their ultimate objective is to design environments that bring people out of their homes and into the streets, in order to build communities that resemble Jane Jacobs' idealized neighborhood. In order to accomplish this goal, the New Urbanists promote neighborhood designs that are: 1) highly walkable—possess sidewalks, are tree-lined and possess a street grid design—2) increase access to public/shared space—parks, front porches, detached garages, smaller lot sizes, etc—3) and have multi-use zoning—neighborhoods with a mix of commercial and residential structures and access to third places like coffee shops, bars and restaurants.

The claim of the New Urbanists is that their designs will lead to greater interactions between people, which will then lead to an increased sense of community and civic engagement. The two greatest proponents of this philosophy, Andre Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, write, “By providing streets and squares of pedestrian scale, neighbors, by walking, come to know each other and to watch over their collective security” (1995). Their promise is clear, if you create environments that encourage walking, neighbors will interact and the result of these neighborly encounters will be the development of some type of civic engagement. Unfortunately, these promises are not supported with empirical research. The claims of improved civic engagement are enticing and on the surface all seem plausible, but nonetheless empirical evidence is needed.

Political scientists have begun to test the design promises of the New Urbanists and have started to find evidence that the physical characteristics of place do influence the political behavior of the people who dwell in them. Eric Oliver, for example, states that “It may well be that people who live in communities defined by garage-dominated home facades, non-grid street plans, and private backyards are less engaged than those in communities where the architecture promotes more public intercourse” (2001, pg.). For Oliver, there is a clear connection between community design and civic engagement—communities that are more walkable and that possess more shared/open space increase opportunities for *passive social contacts* between residents and this interaction between neighbors then increases political participation (Oliver 2001). This narrative of the importance of walkable and shared space design on political engagement is echoed throughout the literature. Researchers argue that design affects participation because it helps facilitate the underlying mechanism: *unscripted contact* between people. And so, the conclusion that “public sidewalks and streets are practically the only remaining site for

unscripted political activity” illustrates the important effect design can have on helping to foster these “unscripted” contacts and subsequently on individual political behavior (Hopkins and Williamson 2010; Barber 2002; Mattson 2002; Duane et al 2000; Lofland 1998; Mow and Wilkie 1997; Oldenburg 1989; Jackson 1985; Jacobs 1961).

Unfortunately, much of this research has relied on weak designs. It has used measures at high levels of aggregation, like city, MSA, or county, despite the fact that neighborhood design may vary greatly within these larger geographic areas (Hopkins and Williamson 2012; Oliver 2001; Oliver 1999). It has used easily measurable design features—like population density, age of housing stock, and average commute time—as proxy measures for actual design to draw these conclusions (Hopkins and Williamson 2012; Oliver 2001; Oliver 1999). These variables are proxy measures of actual design characteristics of place and the use of these proxy measures has one glaring weakness: They may not be measuring the design features they claim to be measuring. Take, for example, the use of “age of housing stock,” this variable is an attempt to capture the pre-WWII design aesthetic so desired by the New Urbanists—grid street design, access to third places, highly walkable, smaller lot sizes, detached garages, front porches, etc. (Flint 2006; Nozzi 2003).¹ This proxy measure for architectural features of cities, however, may also be inadvertently capturing other variables, such as: length of residency or age of residents, both of which have also been found to increase individual political participation. The use of these proxy measures, therefore, may have lead to inaccurate conclusions.

And, finally, although the underlying assertion in previous studies is that the reason neighborhood design affects participation is because it either facilitates or hinders contact between neighbors, the social interaction that they claim happen between design and

¹ This proxy is widely accepted because Urbanists have found that there are distinct differences

participation is rarely measured (Hopkins and Williamson 2012; Oliver 2001; Oliver 1999).

Most studies measure the direct effect of design on participation, with the underlying assumption that the reason design matters is because it influences neighboring.

This all serves as evidence that more research is needed in order to determine what effect architectural and physical features of neighborhoods has on neighbor interaction and individual political participation.

1.3.3 Overview of Existing Literature

In sum, previous research has helped to lay a disjointed narrative of how place and people affect individual political behavior. The literature is fragmented into several distinct subfields of research. Those who study social networks have a tendency to ignore environmental design effects on political behavior. And, those who study the effects of environmental design on behavior are just trying to figure out how to measure the features they think matter. What I aim to do is to unite these subfields of research with a cohesive model that can answer: In which environments do social networks develop and do these social networks subsequently affect individual political behavior? The *Place and People Model of Political Participation* addresses this question.

1.4 Place and People Model of Political Participation: A Closer Look

The model I put forward in this dissertation argues that both place and people play a critical role in an individual's decision to participate in politics. I argue that the characteristics of place either provide or inhibit opportunities for people to interact with one another and that the consequence of informal social contacts between people is increased levels of political participation. This is similar to Jacobs' claim that casual and chance conversations between people on lively streets provide a starting point for collective action. She writes, "Formal public

organization in cities require an informal public life underlying them, mediating between them and the privacy of the people of the city (1961, 57). For Jacobs these “informal” interactions between people are critical to the maintenance of a functioning and democratic government.

1.4.1 Passive Social Contact Theory

Passive Social Contact Theory provides a starting point for why these conversations may play such a critical role in determining political behavior. The theory describes how these casual conversations on the street extend into more meaningful relationships between people on the streets, between neighbors. The theory asserts that these spontaneous meetings lay the foundation for the formation of long-lasting and deep relationships. “These unintended encounters present the opportunity for acknowledgement of one another’s presence and a chance to discover the other’s nature through observation and conversation” (Abu-Gazze 1999). Of course the discovery of a neighbor’s “nature” is not accomplished in a single conversation, but overtime and through repeated encounters (Festinger et al, 1950; Kuper 1953; Newcomb 1961; Fleming et al, 1985; Skjaeveland and Garling 1997). The characteristics of a place help provide opportunities for these chance interactions to occur.

There are three critical components to the development of relationships between neighbors through “passive contacts.” First, these informal and unplanned encounters must happen over and over again (Kuper 1953). Whether its two moms who just happen to take their toddlers to the neighborhood park every morning at the same time, retired men drinking coffee at the same donut shop, joggers who happen to run the same path, dog-lovers playing catch at the same local dog park, workers sitting at the same bus bench waiting for public transit, gardening enthusiasts admiring each others’ hydrangeas as they water their landscape in the evening, the

opportunity to bump into the same person on a routine basis is critical. Repeated passive contacts is how strangers become familiar faces, then acquaintances, and then friends.

Second, the encounters should be by chance, not pre-planned, or scheduled. As individuals begin to discover one another's "nature," they want the freedom to end or extend the casual conversation without the obligation of a scheduled event. This is especially true if one, or both, are discovering that they do not like the other's "nature." A chance encounter at the park, on the sidewalk, in the neighborhood coffee shop, in one's front yard, or porch, provides both individuals the power to determine the terms of the encounter. These are meetings on neutral ground, places where either is free to leave, where one does not have to plan or entertain, where there are no expectations (Oldenburg 1999).

Finally, the physical characteristics of a place provide opportunities for these passive contacts to occur. The physical characteristics of a neighborhood structure encounters between neighbors because they shape the daily paths people take, provide the motivation—or lack thereof—to get out of one's house, and make private actions public. So, for example, one could also imagine neighborhoods where there are no parks for mothers of toddlers to bump into one another daily, where there are no sidewalks for dog lovers to walk their dogs, where there are no donut shops for retired coffee drinkers to meet, where there are no paths for joggers to take, where there is no access to public transit for workers to commute from that these neighborhoods inhibit the spontaneous and informal interactions between neighbors to occur. The physical features of neighborhoods, essentially, provide the opportunities for passive contacts to occur between neighbors.

1.4.2 Civic Voluntarism Model of Participation

The *Civic Voluntarism Model* of Participation (CVM) provides a theoretical explanation for how these passive contacts translate into increased levels of individual political participation. This theory of participation asserts that there are three determinants of participation: resources, engagement, and networks (Verba et al 2001). The CVM defines *resources* as more than an individual's income and educational attainment; political information and civic skills—ability to organize, write, read, communicate, etc.—are also seen as critical resources that increase the likelihood that an individual participates. *Political Engagement* is defined as having both an interest in politics and possessing political efficacy. The combination of possessing both an affinity for politics and the belief that one can influence politics have both been shown to increase political participation. *Networks* are defined as sources of political mobilization. These can be formal sources, like political parties, etc. or they can be informal sources, like friends, family, and neighbors who are politically active. Access to both forms of political networks has shown to increase individual political participation (Verba et al 2001). And, as stated previously in section 1.3.1, social networks have the ability help provide all three determinants.

1.4.2.1 Passive Contact as a Source of Political Resources

Passive contacts, like those between two neighbors, have the potential to provide individuals with the political resources that have been shown to increase political participation, resources like political information. Studies have shown that social contacts help provide individuals with information that decrease the “costs” of participation (McClurg 2004; Leighley 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Milbrath, 1965). McClurg, for example, finds that “social interaction creates opportunities for individuals to gather information about politics that allows them to live beyond personal resource constraints” (pg. 449, 2004). McClurg's finding demonstrates that these passive contacts have the potential

to help individuals overcome their own personal lack of resources, because they help provide individuals with the political information that they would not otherwise have possessed. The information delivered through passive contacts is considered “low cost,” because an individual acquires the information through the labors of the person providing it during the interaction (McClurg 2004). This increased access to “low cost” political information leads to increased levels of political participation because individuals who are more informed are more likely to participate (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba et al 2001; Erikson 2003).

1.4.2.2 Passive Contact as a Source of Political Engagement

Passive contacts also have the potential to serve as a source of political engagement. Much like how interactions disseminate political information between two people, these interactions provide opportunities for individuals to share personal political opinions, which either help reinforce pre-existing beliefs or introduce new ideas. This exchange of both political information and political opinions stimulate political engagement in two ways. First, it drives up individual political interest, because the conversation brings politics to the forefront of a person’s thoughts (Campbell et al. 1960; Keys 1961; Zuckerman et al. 1994; Verba et al 2001; Erikson 2003; Levine 2005). Second, the conversation helps provide the social cue that politics are important. The pressure to adhere to the norm subsequently increases an individual’s interest in politics, which then makes him more likely to participate (Leighley 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Milbrath, 1965).

1.4.2.3 Passive Contact as a Source of Political Networks

Finally, passive contacts have the potential to provide an individual with access to a mobilizing political network. These contacts work to mobilize individuals in two ways. First,

they can establish the social norm that participating in politics is a desirable behavior. People who receive a message regarding the desirability of political participation through passive contacts are encouraged to mirror this behavior and as a result, participate at higher rates (Knoke 1990; McClurg, 2004; Cho 2006). The desire to adhere to the norm is an effective mobilizer because “people constantly compare themselves to those with whom they have close ties and seek to emulate the attitudes and actions of these intimates” (Knoke, 1990). Passive contact theory tells us that these seemingly insignificant social interactions lead to the development of more intimate relationships and so, the social cues shared through these contacts have the potential to mobilize those who have engaged in them. Moreover, these passive contacts help provide a mobilizing network because through them people are simply asked or reminded to participate, both of which have been found to increase individual political participation (Huckfeldt 1979 and 1986; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Stolle, Gidycz, and Bolzendorn 1999; Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Putnam 2000; Gimpel, Dyck, and Shaw 2004; Levine 2005).

1.5 Expectations in the Real World

In this post-Putnam world where Alexander de Tocqueville’s “nation of joiners” has all but seemed to disappear, most social scientists are skeptical of any notion that people who meet through passive contacts would form relationships that would eventually lead to increased levels of civic action. If parents are not joining the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), blue collar workers are not engaged in their unions, eligible voters are simply not turning out on election day, and bowlers rather play alone, then neighbors are definitely not discussing politics over their backyard fences and are surely not mobilizing each other to become political activists, or so goes

the mantra. And yet, there are neighborhoods where residents met, organized, and became activists. One such place is the Greenfield neighborhood in Bakersfield, California.²

By simply looking at the statistics, this particular neighborhood does not seem like the stomping ground of a local political movement; and yet, it is. The predominately Latino neighborhood, according to the 2012 5-Year American Community Survey, boasts a family poverty rate of 27 percent, a median family income of \$36,806, an educational attainment of high school degree or higher of 64.5 percent, a non-U.S. citizen population of 64.5 percent, and Spanish speaking population of 58 percent.³ Two mothers, Gema Perez and Daliflor Loya, met in their neighborhood and became friends. In 2005, the two attended a health class in an effort to learn how to become healthier. Armed with their new knowledge, the two women decided that they would start meeting every morning to walk in their neighborhood park, because joining a local gym was simply out of their budget. Much to their dismay, they discovered that Steirn Park—their neighborhood park—was in complete disarray. The sidewalks were broken, the grass was riddled with broken glass and used hypodermic needles, drug dealers and gang members openly engaged in illicit behavior, the playground equipment was wrapped in yellow-caution tape warning children to stay off, the streetlamps were broken, the walls and street signs were smeared with graffiti, and to top it all off, aggressive, stray dogs ran rampant. The two women, along with a group of other concerned mothers decided that they needed to take action for the health and safety of their families and community.

² A city in the Central Valley of California.

³ As a point of reference, California had a family poverty rate of 15 percent, a median family income of \$60,333, an educational attainment of high school degree or higher of 81 percent, a non-U.S. citizen population of 53.7 percent, and a Spanish speaking population of 28.6 percent.

They began by contacting the police department, asking that they provide some type of security while the mothers walked in the morning. A police officer started arriving every morning for 30 minutes while the women walked. Next, they contacted the local Animal Control, asking that they remove the violent dogs. The dogs were removed. The first week the women walked, five mothers participated; the next week, more women joined and the group eventually became the Greenfield Walking Group. While they walked, the women discussed what else they could do to improve the park and make it safer for their families. They then invited the Bakersfield City Mayor, Harvey Hall, to join them, challenging him to try to push a stroller along the disjointed and crumbled sidewalks. He came, which led to the involvement of local agencies and the eventual reception of a grant from the Robert Johnson Foundation. With the help from the funds and neighborhood volunteers, the broken playground equipment was replaced, new sidewalks were poured, streetlamps were repaired, and eventually the gangs and drug dealers left. The Greenfield Walking Group had reclaimed the park for their families and their neighborhood.

By 2006, the park had been completely revitalized and the walking group had expanded their healthcare program from walking to Zumba, an aerobic routine choreographed to Latin inspired music like salsa, merengue and mambo. The incorporation of this lively calisthenics pulled more neighbors out of their homes and the group continued to grow. In 2010, Perez noticed that not only were more of her neighbors joining the walking group, but also women from a nearby neighborhood called Rexland Acres. When she suggested that the women start their own walking group for their neighborhood, the women informed Perez that their neighborhood park, Rexland Acres Park, was unsafe. And so, the Greenfield Walking Group pulled together, once

again, and taught the Rexland Acres residents how to collectively act, contact public officials, and work to revitalize their own neighborhood. It worked.

Today, the group has continued to grow. They not only continue to exercise daily at Stein Park, but have also formed a community garden, where residents of their neighborhood can grow fresh fruits and vegetables. Word of their success as community activists has spread and community agencies and national organizations, like the American Lung Association, The American Heart Association and Dignity Health, have all asked them to help spread the word about workshops and health events. The women have also been asked to visit other neighboring communities to teach those residents how they can improve their own neighborhoods. When asked whether the group's work was done, Perez responded that each success "makes you want to do more."

This narrative demonstrates how the physical features of a neighborhood can help facilitate social interactions between neighbors and how these interactions can then translate into increased levels of individual political involvement in the "real world." So, what are the physical characteristics of the Greenfield neighborhood that may have provided opportunities for passive contacts between neighbors? Although the neighborhood is not what the New Urbanists would say was ideal, there are particular design features that may have helped to increase the likelihood of passive contacts. First, many of the homes boast fenced front yards. By fencing in front yard space, homeowners are more likely to use the space, making potentially private actions—like barbecuing and children playing—public actions. As seen in Figure 1.1 below, these particular homeowners placed children's play equipment in their front yard. This home is directly across the street from the park where the Greenfield Walking Group exercises.

Figure 1.1 Example of Typical Home in the Greenfield Neighborhood

Note: Greenfield is a neighborhood in Bakersfield, CA. This home is directly across the street from Stein Park, where the Greenfield Walking Group meets daily to exercise.

Source: Google Maps

Let's also not forget the critical feature, the neighborhood contains a public park. Without access to this public and shared space, Gema and Daliflor would not have had a place to meet and exercise. The park served two purposes in the narrative. It was both a place with the potential to create paths of contact between neighbors and the source of the residents' discontent. It was also the centerpiece in Gema's and Daliflor's call to arms. The state of the "shared and public" space—the park—is what turned residents into activists.

This narrative of two neighbors turned activists illustrates two points. First, it demonstrates how the Place and People Model of Political Participation could be functioning in the "real world." When neighborhoods, like Greenfield, possess certain physical features, residents are more likely to interact and these social encounters between neighbors may lead to increased levels of political engagement. But more broadly, The Walking Group's story of successful

activism demonstrates the importance of putting individuals back into place. So much of our understanding of political participation is reliant on theories and measures that focus solely on individual characteristics (i.e. age, gender, income, education, etc.). But this story of Gema and Daliflor demonstrates how individual characteristics alone do not provide a complete picture of American political participation. By all individual measures, these two women should not have been community activists and yet, they overcame their individual characteristics (language, income, education, gender, ethnicity, etc.) that are typically understood to create barriers to political engagement and the question is: Why? What was it that made them different?

1.6 Book Overview: Toward a Place and People Model of Political Participation

I argue that putting Gema and Daliflor back into context by examining how place—where you live—and people—who lives around you—helps provide a more complete understanding of participation in America. The remainder of the dissertation is spent empirically testing the claims of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. In Chapter 2, I describe the hypotheses put forward by the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. Chapter 3 describes the data sets and measurements of key variables used in the analysis. Chapters 4 and 5 present the results. And, Chapter 6 provides a conclusion.

Chapter 2

Hypotheses

As described so far, the *Place and People Model of Political Participation* is built on the idea that the structural/physical characteristics of neighborhoods can either promote or obstruct opportunities for residents of a neighborhood to have contact with one another, and that the presence or absence of these contacts between neighbors affects individual political participation. This notion that neighborhoods and neighbors play a role in influencing individual political participation, however, has not been empirically tested. To assess the validity of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*, I developed several hypotheses regarding two essential areas of interest, presented here in order.

2.1 General Hypothesis: Place and People

The first hypothesis deals with the basic tenets of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. It proposes how neighborhoods and neighbors work in two-stages to influence individual political participation. In the first-stage, the structural/physical features of neighborhoods influence neighbor-to-neighbor contact. In the second-stage, the frequency of contact between neighbors influences an individual's propensity to participate.

2.1.1 First-Stage: Neighborhood Design and Neighboring

The claim of the New Urbanists is that design facilitates interaction when it provides opportunities for unscripted contact between neighbors and these opportunities arise in environments that are more *walkable* and that have more *public or shared space* (Leyden 2003; Oliver 2001; Putnam 2000; Duany et al 2000; Oldenburg 1989; Jackson 1985; Jacobs 1961). A

walkable design is one that is pedestrian-centered, meaning streets are narrower, gridded and tree-lined. These specific features are thought to make walking more efficient, pleasant, and safer. And for these reasons, make walking more common and encounters with neighbors more likely (Leyden 2003; Duany et al 2000; Jackson 1985). “By providing streets and squares of pedestrian scale, neighbors, walking come to know each other and to watch over their collective security” (Duany and Plater-Zyberk 23). In contrast, neighborhoods with wider streets that are truncated with cul-de-sacs are thought to make walking more tedious, which then decreases spontaneous contact between neighbors (Oliver 2001; Duany et al 2000; Jackson 1985). When neighborhoods are designed with walkable features, opportunities for neighbor-to-neighbor contact are believed to increase.

Similarly, neighborhood designs that provide their residents with *public or shared space* help increase unplanned interactions between neighbors. Although public/shared space is commonly thought of as the neighborhood park, a community center, or even a street bench, it can also come in the shape of front porches, low-fenced front yards, front gardens, stoops, any place where a resident can sit, drink coffee, relax and be seen. These types of spaces help facilitate interaction because they provide residents with places to go that are public, even when they are on private property (Abu-Gazzeh 1999; Skjaeveland and Garling 1997; Fox et al 1980). On-the-other-hand, neighborhoods designed to maximize privacy limit opportunities for residents to come into contact with their neighbors. Features like larger lot sizes, private backyards, garage-dominated facades, high-fenced front yards that block the view of front entranceways are all thought to reduce the likelihood that neighbors interact simply because they diminish opportunities for neighbors to see one another (Duany et al 2000; Oliver 2001; Jackson

1985). For this reason, neighborhoods with more public/shared space design features are thought to increase neighbor interaction. These claims of design suggest the following hypothesis:

H.1-1 Neighborhoods with *interactive features*—walkable and shared/public space—help facilitate more neighbor-to-neighbor contact than neighborhoods with *isolating features*—un-walkable and private space.

2.1.2 Second-Stage: Neighboring and Individual Political Participation

Previous research suggests that neighbors matter because, through casual conversation, they can help reduce the cost of participation. Take the simple act of voting; before voting, an individual must know: when to vote, where to vote, and for whom to vote. Finding the answers to these questions is no easy task. It takes time; it means having access to sources of information, which may mean having the financial resources to make access to sources of information—like the Internet, cable news, newspaper, etc.—plausible. Neighbors, however, through “social interaction create opportunities for individuals to gather information about politics that allows them to live beyond personal resource constraints, thereby supporting the political activity of many people” (McClurg 2003, pg. 449). These informal social networks help provide individuals with basic political information, which reduces the cost of participation and increases the likelihood that an individual does politically act (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Huckfeldt 2001; Mutz 2002a; Mutz 2002b; Erikson 2003; McClurg 2003).

But this is not the only type of information that is spread through informal social contact. Through interaction with neighbors, individuals also learn that political participation is a socially desirable behavior. Once this lesson is learned, the pressure to adhere to the social norm

encourages individuals to participate (Huckfeldt 1979; Huckfeldt 1984; Verba et al 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen 1994; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Cho 1999; McClurg 2003; Abrams et al 2010). Beyond socializing one another, these neighbor-to-neighbor networks also serve as sources of mobilization. Through them, individuals are given information about political events, rallies, marches, meetings, etc. and this type of information serves as an invitation to get involved (Huckfeldt 1979 and 1986; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Stolle, Gelinville and Bienstock 1999; Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Putnam 2000; Huckfeldt 2001; Mutz 2002a; Mutz 2002b; Gimpel, Dyck and Shaw 2004). If there is one thing that scholars have shown, it is that the simple act of being invited to participate is a powerful motivator and source of individual political participation (Milbrath, 1965; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Green and Gerber 2008).

What all of this past research reveals is that neighbor-to-neighbor contact is no inconsequential relationship. Neighbors have the power to influence individual political behavior, because they share resources (like information), generate political interest (through socialization), and mobilize each other into action (by invitation). These claims that neighbors can serve as a critical source for political resources suggest the following hypothesis:

H.1-2 Individuals who have more contacts with their neighbors will participate in politics more than individuals who have fewer contacts with their neighbors.

2.1.3 Putting it all together

The first and second-stage hypotheses, although presented as two separate phenomenon, work in coordination with one another. And, when combined lead to the following overarching hypothesis:

H. 1-3 Neighborhoods with *interactive features* facilitate greater neighbor-to-neighbor contact, and higher frequencies of neighbor-to-neighbor contact lead to more individual political participation.

Neighborhood Design → Neighbor Contact → Individual Political Participation

In order to test this hypothesis, I created a research design that is conducted at the neighborhood level, that measures the actual design features of neighborhoods—like the presence of absence of tree-lined streets—and that measures neighbor interaction, as well as individual political participation.⁴ I further adopt a two-stage regression design to test:

- Stage 1: What effect does neighborhood design characteristics have on frequency of neighbor interaction?
- Stage 2: What effect does neighbor interaction have on individual political participation?

2.2 Who Benefits Most?

The second set of hypotheses is concerned with the question: Who benefits most from neighborhoods and neighbors? Leading studies of mass behavior, as stated before, hold that basic political resources—time, money, information, interest, networks, and mobilization – substantially affect citizens’ decisions to participate in politics (Verba, Nie, Schlozman 1995). But we also know that the distribution of these political resources is not equal. The poor, uneducated, and racial/ethnic minorities are more likely to suffer a political resource shortfall

⁴ For greater detail on how design features are measured, see Chapter 3 on Data and Methods.

and participate in politics at lower rates because of it. (Bartels, 2005; Lazarsfeld, et al., 1944; Campbell, et al., 1960; Milbrath, 1965; Verba and Nie, 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993).

For individuals who lack these basic resources, political participation may be unappealing or even daunting. Casual social interaction with neighbors can, however, compensate for lack of personal resources. As Scott McClurg has written, “social interaction create[s] opportunities for individuals to gather information about politics that allows them to live beyond personal resource constraints, thereby supporting the political activity of many people” (McClurg 2003, pg. 449). These informal social networks help provide individuals with basic political information, political socialization, and mobilization, all of which reduces the cost of participation and increases the likelihood that an individual does politically act, and for disadvantaged citizens, these neighbor networks may matter more (Huckfeldt 1979 and 1986; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Stolle, Gelinville and Bienstock 1999; Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Putnam 2000; Huckfeldt 2001; Mutz 2002a; Mutz 2002b; Erikson 2003; McClurg 2003; Gimpel, Dyck and Shaw 2004). Of critical concern to political science is how physical design of neighborhoods may affect the resource gap that undermines equal political participation across social-economic groups in the United States.

The claims of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation* suggest that the physical structure of residential places—whether homes have porches, streets have sidewalks, neighborhoods have natural gathering places—can promote neighborly exchanges that may compensate for resource shortfalls and thereby increase mass participation. This suggests that neighborly exchanges may have varying effects on individuals from different socio-demographic backgrounds. For example, individuals who lack access to political resources (i.e. low

socioeconomic status, etc.) may rely more on their neighbors to fill those personal resource gaps, then someone who already possesses political resources (i.e. high socioeconomic, etc.). If this is the case, neighborly contacts would have greater effects on the participation of resource poor individuals. On-the-other-hand, individuals who lack political resources are more likely to have neighbors who also lack political resources, so that neighbor-to-neighbor contact may have less efficacy to fill resource gaps. Individuals, however, who possess political resources are more likely to have neighbors who also possess them and so, in this case, neighbor interaction would have greater effects on the participation of resource rich individuals. Or, quite possibly, both of these scenarios play out; in this case, neighbor contact would simultaneously increase the participation of both resource poor and rich individuals. For this reason, I have postulated three possible hypotheses: “The Rich Get Richer,” “Those in Need Benefit Most,” or “A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats.”

The three hypotheses, each equally plausible on the basis of the limited research that exists, are as follows:

H. 2-1 “The Rich Get Richer”: Neighborhood features that promote social interaction mainly increase turnout among resource-rich individuals—middle/high income and white—because they are more likely to live in communities in which neighborly interaction exposes them to highly informed, interested, and mobilized citizens.

H. 2-2 “Those in Need Benefit Most of All”: Pro-talk neighborhood design mainly promotes political participation among resource poor individuals—low income, low education and racial minorities—because middle/high income, highly educated and white

individuals already possess political resources, which drive their individual participation and so are “maxed out” on participation. The poor, less educated and racial minorities, however, need and can get these political resources from their neighbors when neighborhood design brings them into contact.

H. 2-3 “A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats”: Neighborhood design promotes political participation among all individuals equally, because within all strata of society contain politically active individuals likely to mobilize other citizens with whom they come into contact.

In order to test these hypotheses, I continue to use the research design described previously. However, in the second-stage analysis I use four different interactions between neighbor contact and individual characteristics (i.e. race, ethnicity, income, and education) to examine whether frequency of neighbor contact has different affects on political participation for individuals of various socio-demographic characteristics. The four different interactions allow me to test:

- Race: Do neighborhoods and neighbors produce different effects on political participation for individuals from different racial groups?
- Ethnicity: Do neighborhoods and neighbors produce different effects on political participation for individuals from different ethnic groups?
- Income: Do neighborhoods and neighbors produce different effects on political participation for individuals from different income levels?

- Education: Do neighborhoods and neighbors produce different effects on political participation for individuals from different education levels?

2.3 Overview of Hypotheses

Although social scientists have begun testing how place and people influence individual political behavior, there is still much to learn. We are still left asking: Does a person's built environment actually shape her daily encounters with neighbors? Does the presence or absence of these contacts with neighbors actually help bridge the political resource gap, making participation more likely for individuals of all socioeconomic statuses or race/ethnicity? These hypotheses allow me to test and answer these critical questions of how both place and people affect individual political participation. In order to answer these questions and test all of these hypotheses, I created a research design that is conducted at the neighborhood level, that measures actual design features (like the presence or absence of tree-lined streets), that measures neighbor interaction, as well as individual political participation, and that compares the effects of neighbor contact on participation for individuals of different socio-demographic backgrounds. I describe the data and research design in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Data

Although social scientists have begun examining how physical environments—like neighborhoods—and social environments—like neighbors—influence individual political participation, the research has generally relied on weak designs. Previous studies have used measures at high levels of aggregation, like city, MSA, or county, despite the fact that neighborhood design may vary greatly within these larger geographic areas (Hopkins and Williamson 2012; Oliver 2001; Oliver 1999). Proxy measures for design, like the percent of a census tract commuting alone, have also largely been used in an attempt to try and capture the actual physical characteristics of neighborhoods, cities, and counties, but these measures present potential problems of *measurement error* (Hopkins and Williamson 2012; Oliver 2001; Oliver 1999). And although the underlying assertion in previous studies is that the reason neighborhood design affects participation is because it either facilitates or hinders contact between neighbors, the social interaction that they claim happen between design and participation is rarely measured (Hopkins and Williamson 2012; Oliver 2001; Oliver 1999).

To overcome the shortcomings of these previous studies and to test the hypotheses put forward in Chapter 2, I needed a data set that possessed the following characteristics: measured individual political participation, measured frequency of contact with neighbors, conducted at a lower level of aggregation (i.e. neighborhood level), and measured the actual design characteristics of neighborhoods. The Social Capital Benchmark Survey (SCBS) possessed three of the four necessary characteristics. Below I describe the SCBS in greater detail and explain how I overcome its shortcomings.

3.1 Social Capital Benchmark Survey

The Social Capital Benchmark Survey (SCBS) is a nationally representative survey that was conducted in 2000. The survey contains 29,724 respondents coming from 4848 census tract within 50 communities throughout the country. For my study, I am using 8,230 respondents from 837 census tracts, which I randomly selected from the survey. The SCBS is uniquely suited to overcome the shortcomings of previous studies and to test the tenets of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation* put forward in Chapter 2.

The SCBS provides measures of self-reported participation and frequency of contact with respondents' neighbors. It also states in which census tract each respondent lives, which allows me to conduct my analysis at a lower level of aggregation.⁵ This information also allowed me to match the census tract data from the 2000 U.S. Census to the SCBS, which then provides several contextual measures, like mean household income, percent of a census tract with a Bachelor's Degree or higher, etc. All of these characteristics, help to meet three of the four necessary characteristics described previously. Unfortunately, the survey did not provide a measure of neighborhood design. However, since the survey did provide each respondent's census tract, I was also able to code specific neighborhood design characteristics at the census tract level using Google Maps' Street View feature.⁶ What follows is a description of the key dependent and independent variables, as well as a detailed description of how I measured neighborhood design characteristics.

3.1.1 Key Dependent Variables

⁵ I am operationalizing neighborhood at the census tract level, because it is the smallest level of aggregation available to measure an individual's immediate built environment (Hopkins and Williamson 2010).

⁶ I describe this process in greater detail below.

As my analysis will proceed in two stages, I have two sets of dependent variables. In the first stage, I regress the SCBS measure of talking to one's neighbors on my measure of neighborhood design characteristics and controls. This regression will demonstrate the impact of neighborhood characteristics on the dependent variable, which I call "neighbor talk." The coefficients will be used to build an instrumental measure of Neighborly Talk for the second stage of my analysis. As an instrument, this variable will be purged of measurement error and, as such, a potentially more important predictor of things neighborhood talk would be expected to predict, including voter turnout and other indicators of participation. In this second stage, political participation is my dependent variable.

Neighbor Talk

The Neighbor Talk variable measures how frequently neighbors talk at the individual level. In the SCBS, respondents were asked, "How often do you talk with or visit your immediate neighbors?" They were then given the following options: (1) Never, (2) Once a year or less, (3) Several times a year, (4) Once a month, (5) Several times a month, (6) Several times a week, (7) Just about everyday. I scaled the variable from 0-1 and it is summarized in Table 3.1. This variable will serve as the dependent variable in the first-stage of the regression analysis.

Participation Variables

I use several different variables to measure political participation, all of which serve as dependent variables in the second-stage of analysis. All of them are self-reported participation and come from the SCBS. Respondents were asked whether or not they did one of following in the last 12 months and were prompted to answer Yes (1) or No (0): Voted; Worked on a community project; Participated in a group that took local action for reform; Participated in a

political group; Signed a petition; Participated in demonstrations, boycotts, or marches. All of these variables are summarized in Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1 Summary of Key Independent and Dependent Variables

	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
<u>Dependent Variables</u>				
Neighbor Talk	0.67	0.31	0	1
<i>Participation Variables</i>				
Voted, '96	0.72	0.45	0	1
Local Reform Group	0.22	0.41	0	1
Attended march/boycott	0.09	0.28	0	1
Signed a petition	0.40	0.49	0	1
Political group	0.10	0.30	0	1
Community project	0.40	0.49	0	1

Note: All dependent variables are measured at the individual level and come from the Social Capital Benchmark Survey.

3.1.2 Control Variables

Since Neighborhood Design Characteristics are correlated with other variables, both at the Census tract and individual level, I needed to control for them. By using multivariate analysis, I will be able to parse out the variance in my outcomes that come from design features from those that come from other potential contextual effects, or that are caused by the individual characteristics of respondents. For this reason, my models include both tract-level and individual-level controls. The tract-level controls come from the 2000 U.S. Census, which I merged to the SCBS. The individual-level controls come from the SCBS.

Tract-Level Control Variables

At the census tract-level, I control for several contextual variables that are linked to both design and neighbor conversation. I control for the tract's economic diversity, racial diversity,

percent living in urban center, and the percentage of tract residents with a Bachelor's Degree or higher.⁷ These variables are summarized in Table 3.2.

I also control for three tract-level variables that have been used in past research as proxy measures of neighborhood design features and which have also been shown to affect individual political participation (Hopkins and Williamson 2011, Oliver 2001). The first is the percentage of tract residents commuting alone, which is available in the 2000 Census data. Although not a direct measure of neighborhood design, past studies argue that this variable measures the walkability of a neighborhood, assuming that neighborhoods where more residents are commuting are more car-centered, as opposed to pedestrian-centered (Hopkins and Williamson 2011). Car-centered design is believed to inhibit unplanned interaction between neighbors and reduce the amount of time available for residents to politically participate. The second is population density, measured as the logged number of people in each census tract. Past literature has shown that there is an inverse relationship between neighborhood population density and political participation. These studies argue that with more neighbors, no one feels responsible for participating (Hopkins and Williamson 2011, Oliver 2001). The final variable is the

⁷ The economic diversity of a census tract was calculated by using the index of qualitative variance (IQV), which measures the distribution of a population across different categories as the ratio of observed variation to the amount that could actually exist. The IQV formula is:
$$IQV = \frac{N(N-1)}{N^2 - \sum f_i^2}$$
 where k = number of categories (in this case, there are 10 income categories provided by the Census: less than \$10,000, \$10,000-15,000, \$15,000-25,000, \$25,000-35,000, \$35,000-50,000, \$50,000-75,000, \$75,000-100,000, \$100,000-150,000, \$150,000-200,000, and more than \$200,000), N = sum of cases (in this case, the total number of households in a Census Tract), and the $\sum f_i^2$ = the sum of the squared frequencies. The scores range from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates that there is no variation (meaning that a census tract is economically homogenous) and where 1 indicates that there is variation across the income categories (meaning that a census tract is economically heterogeneous). Racial diversity was measured using the same IQV formula, except that in its case, k = number of categories (in this case, there are 5 racial categories provided by the Census: White, Black, Asian, Indian, Other), N = sum of cases (in this case, the total number of people in a Census Tract), and the $\sum f_i^2$ = the sum of the squared frequencies. The scores range from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates that there is no variation (meaning that a census tract is racially homogenous) and where 1 indicates that there is variation across the race categories (meaning that a census tract is racially heterogeneous).

percentage of homes in a tract that were built before 1940. Past studies have used this variable as a proxy measure for architectural features of homes in a neighborhood and the overall design of the neighborhood. Urbanists argue that neighborhoods built at the beginning of the postwar era were different than homes built before that time. Prior to the postwar housing boom (late 1940's early 1950's), neighborhoods featured front porches, narrow streets, mixed-use zoning—which gave residents access to shopping, work, school, entertainment—and an overall street life, all of which is supposed to increase spontaneous contact between neighbors and subsequently increase political participation (Hopkins and Williamson 2011, Oliver 2001, Jackson 1985, Jacobs 1961). Although none of these three variables measure design features directly, they have been shown to affect individual political participation and for this reason, I will control for them in my models. All are summarized in Table 3.2.

Individual-Level Controls

I control for a standard battery of individual-level characteristics. These include income, education, race, ethnicity, citizenship, gender and age. Beyond these, I also include controls for both length of residency in one's neighborhood and homeownership, because both have been shown to affect individual political participation (Oliver 2001). Finally, I control for two attitudinal measures, a respondent's ideology and interest in politics. These are included to minimize concerns of selection bias. Selection bias occurs in studies of contextual effects, because it is possible that people have an underlying characteristic that affects where they decide to live, their predisposition to socialize with the people around them, and their propensity to participate in politics. For example, one can imagine that people with similar political characteristics systematically group themselves into particular types of neighborhoods. By

controlling for these attitudinal measures, I hope to minimize the affects of selection bias on my outcomes. All of these variables are summarized in Table 3.2.

Table 3. 2 Summary of Census Tract Level and Individual Level Control Variables

	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
<i>Tract-Level Controls</i>				
Economic diversity	0.94	0.02	0.75	0.99
Racial diversity	0.44	0.29	0.03	1.00
% Urban	0.74	0.37	0	1
% Commuting Alone	0.73	0.14	0.10	0.93
Log Population Density	6.89	2.00	-0.83	10.83
% BA or Higher	0.29	0.19	0	0.87
% Home built before 1940	0.22	0.22	0	0.86
<i>Individual-Level Controls</i>				
Income	0.31	0.52	0	1
Education	0.46	0.31	0	1
Black	0.13	0.33	0	1
Asian	0.03	0.18	0	1
Hispanic	0.07	0.26	0	1
Citizen	0.95	0.22	0	1
Gender	0.59	0.49	0	1
Age	0.26	0.16	0	0.97
Age ²	0.10	0.10	0	0.94
Years Lived in Community	0.51	0.30	0	1
Home Owner	0.68	0.46	0	1
Commute	0.11	0.09	0	1.02
Ideology	0.38	0.23	0	1
Political interest	0.64	0.32	0	1

Note: Tract level variables come from the 2000 U.S. Census. Individual level variables come from the Social Capital Benchmark Survey.

Although the SCBS provided me with many of the key variables I would need to test the validity of the Place and People Model of Political Participation, it did not provide me with a measure of neighborhood design. However, because the survey did indicate which census tract each respondent lived in, this information offered me with a path forward. Using the census tract as my operationalization of a neighborhood, I located and coded the design features of each of

the randomly selected census tracts from the SCBS in Google Maps. A detailed description of this coding process is provided in the following section.

3.2 Measuring Neighborhood Design Characteristics: Key Independent Variable

In order to overcome the absence of a measurement of neighborhood design in the SCBS, I coded specific architectural/design features that are believed to either foster or inhibit spontaneous interaction between neighbors using Google Maps Images. This process allowed me to generate the “neighborhood design characteristics” variable, which is the key independent variable in my first-stage analysis. This variable measures the presence or absence of interactive architectural/design features at the census tract level. My procedure for coding the architectural/design features of respondents’ census tracts is as follows:

3.2.1 Step 1: Matching Census Tract Map to Google Map

I acquired the census tract map for each census tract that was randomly selected from the SCBS and that was to be included in my study. I acquired the census tract maps from the U.S. Census website. I then located each census tract map in Google Maps. As the census tract map indicates the names of the roads, highways, interstates, rivers, etc. that create each census tract’s boundaries, locating each tract in Google Maps was fairly straightforward. Figure 3.1 compares the census tract map (located on the left) with its placement in Google Maps (located on the right). The red lines on the Google Map image identify the boundaries of the census tract map.

Figure 3. 1 Comparison of Census Tract Map to Match in Google Maps

Note: Comparison of the Census Tract map to the location of the Census tract in Google Maps. The map on the left is the Census Tract map; the map on the right is Google map.

3.2.2 Step 2: Random Selection of Four Points in Each Census Tract

As I could not code the architectural/design features of every possible home, street, block, etc. found in each census tract, I randomly selected four geographic points in each census tract at which I would code the design features. The random selection of each point is completed as follows:

- i. Two numbers are randomly assigned from a scale of 0-1 to create an ordered pair or coordinates on a graph. The first number refers to the horizontal position on the x-axis. The second number refers to the vertical position on the y-axis
- ii. An XY axes is laid on top of each census tract, where the x-axis runs across the base of the tract and the y-axis runs vertically from the base to the top of the tract.

- iii. Using the randomly assigned coordinates, the point is plotted using the XY axes and a random location is selected for coding.

Figure 3.2 shows how the XY axes is laid on top of each census tract. The XY axes is indicated with the two red lines (one along the horizontal base of the tract and the second along the vertical edge of the tract). The black lines continue to indicate the boundaries of the census tract.

Figure 3. 2 Census Tract in Google Maps with XY Axes

Note: XY Axes is used to help locate the randomly coordinates.

Notice that both the X-axis and Y-axis range from 0-1; this is because the two randomly selected numbers used to create the coordinates for each point are drawn from a range of 0-1.

3.2.3 Step 3: Locating Randomly Selected Points in Google Maps

Once the XY axes is placed on the census tract in Google maps, the randomly selected

point can be located. Figure 3.3 shows the selection of one randomly selected point with the hypothetical coordinates of (0.55, 0.75). The randomly selected point is indicated with the red point. Also note, that once the randomly selected point is located, Google Maps provides the option to enter “Street View.” In Figure 3.3, the red arrow indicates where the “Street View” option is made available.⁸

Figure 3. 3 Locating the Randomly Selected Points

Note: The red point indicates the location of the randomly selected point. The red arrow indicates where the Street View option appears to the user.

3.2.4 Step 4: Street View and Observation of Architectural Features

Once the randomly selected point was located and after the “Street View” option was offered, I would enter the “street view” feature in Google Maps. Upon entering the “Street

⁸ For a description of how irregularly shaped and rural census tracts were coded see 3.3 Appendix found at the end of this chapter.

View” option, I am taken to a larger street view, which then allows me the ability to virtually walk the randomly selected street.

Figure 3. 4 360 Degree Street View in Google Maps of Randomly Selected Point

Note: This is the 360 degrees street view of the randomly selected geographic point. The first image, in this series of 4 photos, is where I was taken when I selected the “Street View” image in the previous step. The following three images show the street from every angle. This is the third step in the coding process. At each angle, the neighborhood characteristics were recorded.

I can now spin the Google camera 360 degrees, allowing me the ability to observe the architectural features of the randomly selected point and record my observations.

Figure 3.4 shows the images available at the randomly selected point as the camera is turned 360 degrees. After turning the camera 360 degrees, I can also virtually walk the street, moving up and down, which I would do. I would move from one end of a street until I hit an intersection, dead-end, turn, cul-de-sac, etc. taking note of the design features as I moved down the street. If there were minor roads that intersected with the road I was sampling, I would look down to view the features of it as well. This allows me to get a sense of the features of the street as a whole. Figure 3.5 shows what was at the end of the randomly selected street.

Figure 3. 5 Virtual Walk Down the Randomly Selected Point

Note: At this point, I looked down the intersecting street to look for other neighborhood features (e.g. Cul-de-sacs, Businesses, Multifamily Housing, etc.) that may have not been visible at the randomly selected geographic point.

3.2.5 Step 5: Coding Design Features at Each Randomly Selected Point

After turning the camera 360 degrees and taking a virtual walk down the street, I then coded specific design features that are believed to either increase or decrease neighbor-to-neighbor contact. These are the design features that I coded at each randomly selected point; they were coded either 0—no the feature was not present—or a 1—yeas the feature was present:

- i. **Sidewalks:** Coded a 1, a sidewalk needed to be present on at least one side of the road.

- ii. **Fenced Front Yard:** Coded a 1, some type of fencing that created a barrier between the front yard of a home and the street needed to be in place, without obstructing the view to the front door. And, this feature needed to be present on at least 3 out of 10 houses on the randomly selected street. The fencing could be made from chain link, wood, metal, cinder block, or foliage-low hedges that created a barrier.
- iii. **Attached Garages:** Coded a 1, at least half of the homes needed to have a garage that was attached to the home, was visible in the front, and had a door.
- iv. **Hill:** Coded a 1, if the randomly selected street had an incline.
- v. **Porch:** Coded a 1, if there was some type of structural space that extended off the front of the home, was large enough—in regards to depth—to fit at least two chairs, and was elevated above street level. And this feature needed to be present on at least 3 out of 10 houses on the randomly selected street.
- vi. **Cul-de-sac:** Coded a 1, if the randomly selected street ended in a cul-de-sac, or one of the intersecting roads extending off of the randomly selected street ended in a cul-de-sac, or if the randomly selected street had a dead end, or if the randomly selected street ended in a 90 degree turn and became a second street.
- vii. **Tree Lined Streets:** Coded a 1, if trees were growing between the street and sidewalk, creating a barrier between the street and sidewalk on at least one side of the street.
- viii. **Private Front Entrance:** Coded a 1, if the front door of a home was not visible from the street, or in the case of multifamily housing, if the individual residents' front doors were not visible from the street (this happened when residents all entered through a shared

door, then entered their individual residence and that front door was not visible from the street).

After coding the presence or absence of the above listed features, I would then record and repeat. Recall that for each census tract, four geographic points were randomly selected; the design features were coded at each of those four points and then a census tract average score for each design feature was calculated. This means that each census tract has an average sidewalk, fenced front yard, attached garage, hill, porch, cul-de-sac, tree-lined street, and private front entrance score. As an example, let us take the coding of front porches. If, after coding the presence or absence of front porches in the four randomly selected points in a single census tract, I observed that front porches were only present in one of the four points, then that census tract would receive an “average porch score” of 0.25, because I only observed porches a quarter of the time. If, however, I had observed front porches in all four of the randomly selected points, then that census tract would have received an “average porch score” of 1.0, because I had observed front porches one hundred percent of the time. These “design feature average scores” are then recorded in the final database.

3.2.6 Step 6: Calculating the Overall “Neighborhood Design Score”

The final step in measuring the “Neighborhood Design” variable was to calculate an overall neighborhood design characteristics score. Up to this point in the process, I have measured the average occurrence of several individual features, but what I need is an overarching measure of how “interactive” a neighborhood’s design is. In other words, I need to know whether overall the features in a neighborhood are thought to increase or decrease neighbor-to-neighbor contact.

In order to measure this “overall neighborhood design score,” I did the following. I first generated an “interactive feature score” for each census tract. As the presence of sidewalks, tree-lined streets, porches, and fenced front yards in a neighborhood are believed to increase unplanned interactions between neighbors, I added together the average feature score for each of these design characteristics, giving each census tract an “interactive features score.” Next, I generated an “isolating feature score” for each census tract. As the presence of attached garages, cul-de-sacs, hills, and private front entrances are believed to inhibit unplanned interactions between neighbors, I added the average feature score for each of these design characteristics, giving each census tract an “isolating features score.” Finally, I subtracted the “isolating features score” for each census tract from the “interactive features score.” I then scaled the variable from 0-1, where a 0 indicates that a neighborhood has only isolating characteristics—features that are thought to reduce neighbor contact—and 1 indicates that a neighborhood has only interactive characteristics—features that are thought to increase neighbor contact. This variable is summarized in Table 3.3.

Table 3. 3 Summary of Neighborhood Design Score Variable

	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
<i>Key Independent Variable</i>				
Neighborhood Design	0.44	0.21	0	1

Note: the neighborhood design variable will serve as the key independent variable in the first-stage analysis. It is measured at the census tract level.

3.3 Overview of Data

Now that the “neighborhood design” score variable is added to the SCBS, the data set contains all of the measures necessary to test the hypotheses put forward in Chapter 2. The data set also overcomes the weaknesses of previous studies’ designs. Recall that there were three overarching complaints of previous studies. First, the studies were conducted

at high levels of aggregation, like city or MSA. This data set allows me to conduct the analysis at a lower level of aggregation, specifically at the census tract level. Second, previous studies have largely relied on proxy measures of design that are easily found in the US Census data; measures like “age of housing stock” and “average commuting time” have stood in place of actual measures of the physical design of neighborhoods. The “neighborhood design” score variable described above actually measures the presence or absence of particular features of neighborhoods—specifically those the New Urbanists claim influence neighboring. Third, many studies have claimed that the reason neighborhood design affects individual political participation is because it influences the propensity of neighbors to talk to one another, but very few studies have actually measured the talking they claim happen between design and participation. Instead, these previous studies have measured the direct effects of design on individual participation and asserted that the underlying mechanism driving the effects of design on participation is neighboring. Without actually measuring neighbor-to-neighbor talk, however, this is simply an assertion. This current data allows me to overcome this weakness, because the SCBS directly asked respondents to estimate the frequency of their contact with their nearest neighbors. With all of these measures complete, I can now test the key tenets of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. In Chapter 4, I test the general claims of the model and in Chapter 5, I examine the possibility that place and people may have varying affects on the political participation of individuals from different socio-demographic backgrounds.

3.4 Appendix

In this Appendix, I describe the coding procedure used to code the architectural/design features of both irregularly shaped (non-rectangular or non-square) census tracts, and rural census tracts. As both presented unique problems for the coding of architectural/design features of census tracts, a specified process was created for each type.

3.4.1 Non-Square or Non-Rectangular Shaped Census Tracts

In most cases, census tracts are square or rectangular in shape. In these cases, the "general sampling method," described above, was applied. However, in some cases, the census tract was triangular or unusually shaped. In these cases, the census tracts were segmented to create rectangle or square shapes within them. The perpendicular graph was then laid over each of these squares/rectangles and the four coordinates were then plotted. The number of points taken in each created rectangle or square depended on the total number of squares/rectangles that were created. So, for example, if two rectangles were created within a census tract, then two points were randomly selected in each rectangle, so that a total of four points were measured for the census tract.

3.4.2 Rural Sampling Method

Rural census tracts present two problems. First, residential homes are isolated from each other in rural census tracts. This is a problem because my theory is a theory of neighbor interaction. If individuals do not have access to neighbors, then this theory would not apply to them. Second, in many instances, the bulk of the population is clustered in one specific region within the rural census tract. This creates a problem of measurement error, because if the randomly assigned coordinates measure the architectural features of homes outside of the region where the majority of people actually live, an inaccurate depiction of the neighborhood features

will be taken. I want to measure the features of neighborhoods where the respondents of the survey most likely lived.

In order to account for these problems, the following sampling method was conducted:

1. I try to find communities within rural census tract where at least 80 percent of the census tract population lived. Many times, small townships, villages, etc. were present within geographically larger census tracts. I could then calculate what percentage of the census tract population lived within these townships, villages, etc. by simply subtracting the townships' population size from the census tract's population size.
2. If 80 percent of the population or more lived within the township, then the "general sampling method" was applied only to the township and no coordinates were selected in the remaining census tract region. In Google Maps, townships, villages, etc. are visually distinguished with shading.
3. If no region within the rural census tract possessed 80 percent or more of a census tract's population, then these census tracts were excluded from the study. This is because residents within the census tract were too isolated and the study's theory did not apply to individuals who did not have access to neighbors.

Chapter 4

Place and People: Evidence for the Model

In this chapter, I test the general tenets of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*.

The model asserts that individual characteristics—a person’s age, income, race, etc.—are not sufficient for explaining individual political participation. In order to get a complete picture of why some individuals choose to participate and others choose to abstain, an individual needs to be placed back into the physical and social context in which he lives. This means that both the place in which a person lives—neighborhoods—and the people who live around him—neighbors—can help better explain an individual’s propensity to engage in political acts.

The specific claims of the *Place and People Model* are twofold. First, the model claims that “place” matters, because the design characteristics of a neighborhood can either increase or decrease an individual’s frequency of contact with his neighbor. In particular, neighborhoods with *interactive design features*—neighborhoods that are more walkable (have sidewalks, tree-lined streets, gridded street design) and that have more shared/public space (porches, detached garages, fenced front yards, etc.)—are thought to increase the opportunities for residents of these neighborhoods to come into contact with one another. Whereas, neighborhoods with *isolating design features*—neighborhoods that are less walkable (no/less sidewalks, hills, cul-de-sacs) and that have less shared/public space (attached garages, private front entrances, etc.)—are thought to minimize or reduce contact between neighbors. Second, the model claims that “people” matter—neighbors in particular—because through contact with one another, they have the

potential to help provide each other with the political resources needed to participate in political acts, like voting, volunteering, protesting, etc.

These two assertions, when put together, describe a two-stage process; where in stage 1, neighborhood design influences the likelihood that neighbors have contact with one another and where in stage 2, having contact with one's neighbor influences his propensity to engage in any number of political acts. This then leads to the following hypothesis, which was described in greater detail in Chapter 2:

H. 1-1 Neighborhoods with *interactive features* facilitate greater neighbor-to-neighbor contact, and higher frequencies of neighbor-to-neighbor contact lead to more individual political participation.

Neighborhood Design → Neighbor Contact → Individual Political Participation

The testing of this hypothesis is the focus of analysis here in Chapter 4. My analysis proceeds in two stages. In the first, I demonstrate the effect of neighborhood design characteristics on the frequency of neighbor interaction. In the second stage, I demonstrate the effect of predicted neighbor interaction (calculated in the first stage) on multiple forms of political participation, with emphasis on how neighborhood design contributes to participation through its effect on neighborly interaction.

4.1 First-Stage Regression Results

What follows are the results from the first-stage analysis. In this regression, Neighbor Talk is my dependent variable and “neighborhood design characteristics” is my key independent variable. My model includes a large complement of individual and aggregate controls. I begin by running a simple bivariate regression to see what effect “neighborhood design” has on

“neighbor talk” without any controls. I then run a second regression that includes individual-level controls. And, finally, I run a third regression that adds tract-level controls. In all three regressions, I cluster the standard errors by census tract because my key independent variable (Neighborhood Design) is measured at the tract level. Recall that if “interactive design” features—front porches, sidewalks, tree-lined streets, etc.—really do increase opportunities for unplanned interactions between neighbors, then the “design characteristics” variable should have a positive effect on the frequency of neighbor contact. The results can be seen in Table 4.1.

The results of the simple bivariate regression (seen in the first column of Table 4.1) show a negative effect of neighborhood design on neighbor talk, suggesting that these interactive design features may actually reduce spontaneous neighbor contact. The problem with this simple model, however, is that neighborhood design and individual characteristics have an inverse relationship with neighbor talk. That is, low status, racial minorities, and younger people are all less likely to talk to their neighbors but are also more likely to live in neighborhoods with pro-talk design features. Without individual-level controls, the “neighborhood design” variable is capturing both the effects of design on talk and the effects of these individual characteristics on talk. Once individual characteristics are controlled for, the effect of “neighborhood design” on “neighbor talk” should change. And it does.

The results in the second column of Table 4.1 now show that “neighborhood design” has a small, positive, but not statistically significant effect on “neighbor talk.” By parsing out the negative effects of individual characteristics, the effect of design on talk has changed, but these results still fail to support the hypothesis. Much like the bivariate model, however, this second model ignores the importance of controlling for other contextual effects. There are several

potentially confounding variables at the tract-level that are positively correlated with “design,” but negatively correlated with “neighbor talk.

Table 4. 1 Building the First-Stage Model: Effect of Neighborhood Design on Frequency of Neighbor Talk

Variable	Bivariate Model	With Individual Controls	With Aggregate Controls
<i>Key Ind. Variable</i>			
Neigh. Design	-0.06*** (.02)	0.02 (0.01)	0.07** (0.03)
<i>Ind-Level Controls</i>			
Income		0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Education		0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Black		-0.06*** (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.01)
Hispanic		-0.06** (0.02)	-0.05** (0.02)
Citizen		0.07*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)
Gender		-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Age		0.37*** (0.08)	0.38*** (0.08)
Age^2		-0.32** (0.12)	-0.34** (0.12)
Years in Comm.		0.04** (0.01)	0.04** (0.01)
Home Owner		0.07*** (0.01)	0.06*** (0.01)
Commute		-0.07 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)
Ideology		0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Political Interest		0.07*** (0.01)	0.07*** (0.01)
Inc_miss		0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
<i>Tract-Level Controls</i>			
% Commuting			0.14*** (0.04)

Log Pop. Dens.			0.00 (0.00)
% House Built 1940			-0.02 (0.02)
% BA or Higher			0.02 (0.02)
Income Diversity			-0.13 (0.17)
Race Diversity			0.00 (0.02)
% in Urban			0.03 (0.02)
Intercept	0.69 (0.01)	0.43 (0.02)	0.40 (0.16)
N Individuals	8174	8092	8092
N Tracts	837	837	837
r^2	0.002	0.07	0.08

Note: * $p > .05$; ** $p > .01$; *** $p > .000$

For example, neighborhoods with these interactive design features are more racially diverse and have greater population densities, both of which have been shown to have negative effects on neighbor interaction. Once tract-level characteristics are controlled for, the effect of “neighborhood design” on “neighbor talk” should be positive. And it is.

The results in the third column of Table 4.1 show the effect of “neighborhood design” on “neighbor talk” is both positive and statistically significant, once both individual and tract-level controls are in place. This finding supports the hypothesis that neighborhoods with more interactive design features lead to more contact between neighbors. They suggest that neighborhood features, like front porches, detached garages, tree-lined streets, etc., help to facilitate interaction between neighbors. Interestingly, the neighborhood design proxy measures used in previous studies—percent of homes built before 1940, log population density, percent in urban—garner no statistically significant effect on neighbor contact, except for the “percent of neighborhood commuting alone.” However, the effect of this proxy measure is working in the

opposite direction of expectations. Recall that previous studies claimed that this variable was a measure of whether or not a neighborhood is car or pedestrian-centered and so, the expectation was that as the percent of a neighborhood commuting increased, the frequency of neighbor contact would decrease. The result in Table 4.1 reveals the opposite. This demonstrates the problem with using proxy measures for design.

Other than age, which has a large effect on neighbor talk, and political interest, the “neighborhood design characteristics” variable produces the largest effect on neighbor contact. Surprisingly, design features seem to affect neighbor interaction more than length of residency and just as much as whether or not the respondent was a homeowner. This is surprising because both of these measures would seem to influence neighbor interaction, simply because they are a measure of not only how long a person has lived in a place, but also how many opportunities a person has had to get to know her neighbors.

On average, respondents in the survey reported talking to their neighbor a couple times a month (when the value of the Neighbor Talk variable was about 0.67). The results presented in Table 4.1 show that Interactive design features generate a 0.07 increase in neighbor contact, which is equivalent to increasing neighbor talk from a couple times a month to about once a week. These findings support the first stage claims of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. They demonstrate that living in a neighborhood with more interactive design features—neighborhoods with more walkable and shared/public characteristics—leads to greater levels of neighbor-to-neighbor contact. The question that remains is: Is this increase in neighbor contacts enough interaction to actually influence individual political participation? I answer this in the second-stage analysis.

4.2 Second-Stage Regression

What follows are the results from the second-stage analysis. In this stage, I ran six separate logistic regression models using six binary dependent variables which measure a variety of forms of political participation: voting, working on a community project, participating in a political group, signing a petition, having membership in a group that took local reform action, or attending a political march or boycott. The key independent variable in all six models is the predicted-value of “neighbor talk” estimated in the first-stage regression. I continue to control for both tract-level and individual-level variables that are thought to affect individual participation directly.⁹ Recall that if contact with neighbors does increase individual political participation, then the effect of the predicted value of neighbor talk should have a positive effect on various forms of political participation. I begin by comparing the effects of predicted neighbor talk on voting, which can be found in Figure 4.1. I then compare the results for the other 5 forms of non-electoral political participation, which can be found in Figure 4.2.¹⁰

4.2.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting

Figure 4.1 shows the effect of predicted neighbor talk on the probability of voting. The points on Figure 4.1 represent the actual predicted probability of voting for each respondent in the survey, while the line represents the predicted probability of voting while holding all other control variables at their mean. Talking with one’s neighbor has a positive and statistically significant effect on increasing the likelihood of voting (the coefficient was 6.52, $p > 0.05$). For respondents who were predicted to speak to their neighbors several times per year (those with

⁹ These include percent of a tract commuting, tract racial diversity, tract income diversity, percent of tract with a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, individual socioeconomic status, race, age, gender, homeownership, length of time in community, and political ideology. I exclude political interest at the second-stage analysis, because political interest can also be thought of as a form of political participation. I hold political interest at its mean prior to predicting “neighbor talk” at the first-stage, as a way to hold the effects of political interest constant at the second-stage.

¹⁰ To see the complete results refer to Appendix II, Table A.

predicted neighbor talk of 0.40), the predicted probability of voting is around 30 percent, while holding all other individual-level and tract-level control variables at their mean. The predicted probability of voting increases to about 85 percent for respondents who were predicted to speak to their neighbors several times a week (those with a predicted neighbor talk of 0.80). This is a dramatic increase in the predicted probability of turnout and demonstrates the powerful role that neighbor contact can have on influencing individual political participation. These results also support the overarching claims of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*, as increases in the frequency of contact with one's neighbor subsequently increases the likelihood that one votes.

Figure 4. 1 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Probability Voting

Note: The effect of Predicted Talk on Voting in a Presidential Election is statistically significant at $p > .05$.

I began with the effect of neighbor talk on voting, because this particular form of political participation is unique in several ways from the other non-electoral forms. First, through universal suffrage, most individuals have equal access to voting. Second, when compared to other political acts, like volunteering or donating money, voting requires very little personal resources. The commitment of time and money is much lower than is necessary for other forms of political engagement, like volunteering or having membership in a political group. And finally, because there is universal suffrage and because it requires less personal resources, voting is by far the most common form of political participation. For these reasons, one might anticipate that neighbor talk would have a different effect on voting than it would on other forms of participation.

There are two potential ways that neighbor contact might affect voting differently than it would for other political acts. First, one could imagine that neighbor contact might have a smaller effect on voting, because the threshold from crossing over from non-voter to voter is so low that some individuals could make this leap on their own and do not require the extra boost of political resources they could get through conversation with their neighbors. Other forms of participation, however, require greater resources, and so, neighbors may play a more influential role in influencing an individual's likelihood of engaging in those political acts. Conversely, one could also imagine that since the threshold to voting is lower than for other forms of political participation, contact with one's neighbor may have a larger effect on individual turnout than it would on other forms. This would occur because through these conversations what little additional political resources (like a gentle reminder/invitation to vote) an individual might require to vote is easily transmitted through contact with a neighbor. Whereas, for other forms of participation, like volunteering, an individual may require political resources that are not easily

transmitted through conversation—something like time or money—and so, neighbor contact may have less of an effect on forms of participation where there are greater barriers. The results in Figure 4.2 help compare the effects of neighbor contact on voting with its effects on other forms of participation.

4.2.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation

The results in Figure 4.2 compare the effects of predicted neighbor contact on four different forms of political participation: volunteering in a community project, attending a march/boycott, having membership in a political group, participating in a group that took local reform action. The points on the plots in Figure 4.2 represent the actual predicted probability of participating in the identified political act for each respondent in the survey, while the line represents the predicted probability of participating while holding all other control variables at their mean. Note that predicted neighbor talk has a positive and statistically significant effect on all forms of political participation (except signing a petition, which is not presented in Figure 4.2, but can be found in Table 4.2 in the Appendix at the end of this Chapter). This means that as the frequency of contact with one's neighbor increases the predicted probability of participating in all four forms of political participation also increases. The results support the major claim of the *Place and People Model of Participation* that more contact with one's neighbor will lead to greater levels of individual political participation.

With regards to how the effect of neighbor contact differs between voting and other non-electoral forms of participation, the results from the logistic regressions suggest that there is no significant difference. The effect of predicted talk on volunteering is 5.25 and the effect of talk on participating in a reform group is 4.83. Both of these effects are smaller than the size of the effect of talk on vote, but not significantly smaller. The effect of predicted talk on having

membership in a political group is 9.45 and the effect of talk on attending a march/boycott is 7.51. Both of these effects are larger than the size of the effect of talk on vote, but, again, the difference is not significant.¹¹ These results suggest that for all forms of political participation (except signing a petition), having more contact with one's neighbor leads to higher levels of political engagement and that for all forms of participation, talk is equally important.

Where there is a notable difference between the effects of talk on the various forms of participation is in the predicted probabilities presented in Figure 4.2. For all non-voting forms of participation, the effect of "predicted neighbor talk" on the predicted probability of participation is exponential. Take, for example, the effect of "predicted talk" on membership in a political group, neighbor contact is predicted to have little or no effect on the probability of membership until respondents were predicted to talk to their neighbors several times a month (or when predicted neighbor talk is about 0.70). Once neighbor contact is fairly regular, these neighbor interactions begin to increase the predicted probability of having membership in a political group dramatically. And from talking to one's neighbor several times a month to several times a week (when predicted neighbor talk is 0.85), the effect increases the predicted probability of having membership in a political group from about 10 percent to around 35 percent. This is a large increase in the predicted probability of having membership in a political group for a relatively small increase in the frequency of contact between neighbors—moving from talking several times a month to several times a week—and again demonstrates the importance of neighborly interactions on individual political participation. This finding also suggests that for forms of participation that demand access to greater political resources, like having membership in a

¹¹ See Table 4.2 in the Appendix at the end of Chapter 4 for full results of the six Logistic Regressions.

political group, the frequency of contact between neighbors has to be greater than it was for voting, before it begins to influence individual participation.

Figure 4. 2 Effect of Predicted Talk on Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation

Note: The Effects of Predicted Talk on Volunteering for a Community Project and Having Membership in a Political Group are statistically significant at $p > .05$. Participating in a Group that took Local Reform and Attending a March/Boycott are significant at the $p > .10$ level. The effect of predicted talk on Signing a Petition was not statistically significant; so, those results are not displayed here.

This pattern can also be seen in the effects of predicted talk on the predicted probability of “attending a march/boycott.” Much like the effect of predicted neighbor talk on having membership in a political group, the effect of neighbor talk on the predicted probability of attending a march/boycott does not begin to increase until predicted neighbor talk is fairly frequent—several times a month or when predicted talk is 0.70. Once predicted talk hits this level, the effect of talk on predicted probability of marching is exponential. Moving from talking several times a month (when predicted talk is 0.70) to several times a week (when predicted talk is 0.85) increases the predicted probability of marching from 10 percent to 20 percent (an increase of about 10 percent). This is very similar to the effect of talk on the predicted probability of having membership in a political group. As both of these forms of participation demand a much larger commitment of time and other personal resources when compared to voting, it makes sense that they would require higher levels of neighbor interaction.

The effect of predicted neighbor talk on the predicted probability of both “working on a community project” and “participating in a reform group,” although still positive and exponential, is a bit different than the effect of talk on marching and having membership in a political group. For both of these forms of political participation, predicted neighbor talk begins to have a positive effect of the predicted probability of participating at lower frequencies of talk, when compared to both marching and membership in a political group. For both working on a community project and participating in a reform group, predicted neighbor talk begins to increase the probability of participating once neighbor talk occurs about once a month (when predicted neighbor talk is 0.50). Once talk hits this fairly regular level, the effects of neighbor talk on probability of participating increases exponentially. Moving from talking once a month (when predicted talk is 0.50) to several times a week (when predicted talk is 0.85) increases the

predicted probability of working on a community project from about 20 percent to about 60 percent and increases the predicted probability of participating in a reform group from about 10 percent to about 35 percent. Again, these results show the important role that neighbor interaction can play on influencing an individual's propensity to engage in non-voting forms of political participation. And, as both of these forms of participation demand a larger commitment of time and other personal resources when compared to voting, but less personal resources than say having membership in a political group, it makes sense that they would require middle levels of neighbor interaction.

The evidence presented in both Figures 4.1 and 4.2 demonstrate two important findings. First, for all forms of participation, excluding signing a petition, more talking between neighbors means more political engagement. This finding supports the major claim of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation* and demonstrates the critical role that both neighborhoods and neighbors play in affecting an individual's propensity to engage in political acts. Second, the results also suggest that there is a relationship between the amount of political resources needed to engage in a specific form of political participation and the amount of neighbor interaction needed to influence an individual's decision to participate. Forms of participation that require less political resources, like voting, demand less contact with neighbors before these neighborly interactions begin to positively influence individual participation. Forms of participation that require more political resources, like having membership in a political group, need more contact with neighbors before these neighborly interactions begin to positively influence individual political participation.

Of course, these results show the full effect of "predicted neighbor contact" on participation rather than the effect of the unique "design-induced" neighbor contact alone on

participation. As there are many variables that predict the likelihood that an individual talks to his neighbor, like age, an examination of the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact on individual political participation is necessary. I show the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact in the next section.

4.3 Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation

Many individual characteristics (i.e. age, time in a community, etc.) and tract-level characteristics (i.e. percent of a tract commuting alone) also generate contact with neighbors, see Table 4.1. In order to isolate the effect of only “design-induced” talk on participation, I go back to the First-Stage analysis, which showed that moving one unit on neighborhood features moves talk by .07 units. Since the neighborhood design variable varies from 0 to 1 (See Table 3.3), going from no interactive characteristics to many interactive characteristics (moving from 0 to 1 on the design score) increases talk by about 0.07 units ($1 \times .07 = .07$). Although the neighborhood design characteristics increases talk by about 0.07 units, I underestimate the effect of design on talk to 0.05 units, so that I can calculate the predicted probability of participating at even increments of neighbor talk, which varies from 0.35 to 0.85. So the next question is: What is the effect on participation of increasing talk by 0.05 units? I answer this question in this section.

The results in Figure 4.3 show the difference in the predicted probability of voting for each additional 0.05 increase of talk.¹² The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents’ self-reported frequency of talk. The effect of design-induced talk on probability of voting varies

¹² These results underestimate the true isolate effects of design-induced talk, because the actual effect of design on talk is 0.07.

depending on the frequency of talk.¹³ For respondents at very low levels of talk – that is, respondents with scores at the low end of the talk axis in Figure 4.3—an additional 0.05 units of talk has little effect on the probability of voting. In other words, small increases in talk for people who never have contact with their neighbors—like moving from never talking with one’s neighbor to having a single conversation in one year—does not generate any additional probability on that individual’s turnout. This is also true at very high levels of talk; small increases in contact for people who already regularly talk to their neighbors—like moving from talking several times a week to everyday—seems to generate no significant increases in the probability of turnout. In the middle range of talk, however, the effect of “design-induced talk” on the probability of voting is moderate in size. In this region of maximum slope, the effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting is about 0.08 points. This shows that small increases in contact, like those from interactive neighborhood design features, for those people who have moderate levels of contact with their neighbors—like moving from talking once a month to several times a month—can actually garner a large increase in the predicted probability of turnout. Overall, the average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting is 0.06. This means that the increase in contact between neighbors from interactive neighborhood design features increases the probability of voting an average of 6 percent.

Although an average increase in the probability of voting of 6 percent may seem insignificant or even small, put into comparison with the effects of intentional mobilization efforts, like mailers, a 6 percent increase on voting is actually quite large. In a synopsis of 28 different studies that all investigated the effects of mailers on turnout, Green and Gerber found that nonpartisan mailers produced an average effect on turnout of half a percentage point and for

¹³ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 4.3

partisan mailers the average effect was 0.008 percent (Green and Gerber 2008). In a similar synopsis of 41 different studies investigating the effects of phone calls on turnout, they found that phone banks produced an average effect on turnout of 2.6 percent (Green and Gerber 2008).

Figure 4. 3 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of voting, and the level of significance, see Table 4.4 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 4.

Put into the context of the effects of what other forms of intentional voter mobilization efforts do to the turnout rate of intentionally targeted voters, this effect of neighborhood design-induced

talk on voter turnout is not small at all. Again, this finding demonstrates the important role that both place and people serve in influencing individual voter turnout.

The results in Figure 4.4 show the difference in the predicted probability of participating in non-voting forms of participation for each additional 0.05 increase of talk.¹⁴ The rug plot under each plot shows the actual distribution of respondents' self-reported frequency of talk. What is revealed in Figure 4.4 is that the effect of an additional 0.05 units of talk on the other forms of participation follows a similar pattern to that found for voting, except that the point of maximum slope is at a higher frequency of neighbor talk for these more resource demanding forms of participation. This means that for non-voting forms of participation, design-induced talk has the greatest effect on probability of participation, when the frequency of neighbor contact is more regular. Take, for example, the effects of “design-induced talk” on membership in a political group. The small increase in talk from neighborhood design has the greatest increase in the probability of having membership in a political group once neighbor talk happens several times per week (or when frequency of talk is around 0.85). For voting, this happened when talk occurred once per month (or when frequency of talk is around 0.50). In this higher region of neighbor contact, the effect of design-induced talk on the probability of having membership in a political group is 0.10. This is a greater effect than what was found for voting (the effect for voting was 0.08), but is happening at higher frequency of contact. This result shows that small increases in contact, like those from interactive neighborhood design features, for those people who have high levels of contact with their neighbors—like moving from talking once a week to several times a week—can actually garner a large increase in the predicted probability of having membership in a political group.

¹⁴ These results underestimate the true isolate effects of design-induced talk, because the actual effect of design on talk is 0.07.

Figure 4. 4 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of voting, and the level of significance, see Table 4.4 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 4.

Overall, the average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of having membership in a political group is 0.03. This means that design-induced talk increases the probability of having membership in a political group an average of 3 percent. This is half the size of what the effect of design-induced talk was on turnout, and suggests that for forms of

participation that require greater political resources, like having membership in a political group, small increases in neighbor-to-neighbor contact do not have as large an effect, and that the frequency of contact has to be greater before it starts to positively influence individual participation.

The effect of design-induced talk on the other three non-voting forms of political participation—working on a community project, attending a march/boycott, participating in a group that took local reform—is very similar to what it was on membership in a political group. As seen in Figure 4.4, for all three forms of participation, design-induced talk has the greatest increase in predicated probability of participating when neighbor contact is fairly regular. Much like the effect of design-induced talk on membership in a political group, the effect of design-induced talk on attending a march/boycott hits its peak once neighbor talk is predicted to happen several times a week (or when neighbor talk is 0.85). In this region of maximum slope, the effect of design-induced talk on the probability of marching is about 0.06 points. This shows that small increases in contact, like those from interactive neighborhood design features, for those people who have high levels of contact with their neighbors—like moving from talking once a week to several times a week—can actually garner a moderate increase in the predicted probability of marching. This finding is also true for both working in a community project, which sees the effect of design-induced talk hit its maximum value once talk is happening weekly (when talk is 0.70), and for participating in a group that took local reform action, which sees the effect of design-induced talk hit its maximum value once talk is happening several times per week (when talk is 0.85).

The average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of marching is small at 0.02. For both working on a community project and participating in a group that took local reform

action, the average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of participating is slightly larger at 0.05 and 0.04, respectively. These average effects more closely resemble the average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting, which was 0.06. This means that the increase in contact between neighbors from interactive neighborhood design features increases the probability of engaging in a non-voting form of participation an average of 2 to 5 percent. These findings make sense in light of the results displayed in Figure 4.2. Recall that I showed that these non-voting forms of participation require higher levels of neighbor interaction, because these forms of participation demand greater commitments of personal resources, like time and money. Overall, these findings support the general claims of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*, as they demonstrate that a shift from living in a neighborhood with primarily *isolating features* to a neighborhood with primarily *interactive features* does lead to an increase in contact with neighbors. And furthermore, that this increase in design-induced neighbor-to-neighbor contact does have a real, though moderate, effect on individual political participation.

4.4 Overview of General Results

The evidence shown in this chapter supports the general claims of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. Specifically, the evidence demonstrates that individuals living in neighborhoods with isolating characteristics are less likely to talk to their immediate neighbors. Individuals, however, living in neighborhoods designed with primarily interactive characteristics talk to their neighbors more frequently. These findings make sense, because for residents in neighborhoods dominated by isolating features, the design provides very few opportunities for neighbors to unexpectedly meet and talk. It provides no paths for residents to walk and no destination for them to walk to, and even the homes, with their attached garages,

seem to swallow up arriving residents before the neighbors ever see them. For residents in neighborhoods with mostly interactive features, the design provides more opportunities for neighbors to “bump” into one another. The characteristics of these neighborhoods provide safe and comfortable paths for residents to walk, spaces—like porches—where residents can rest and be seen, and driveways—as opposed to attached garages—where they park; so that when they arrive home, their neighbors will know it.

The evidence presented here reveals several consequences of these increased neighbor-to-neighbor interactions. The first is that, overall, more talking between neighbors results in higher levels of individual political participation. Talking to one’s neighbor has a positive effect on voting. Individuals who talk to their neighbor several times per year are predicted to vote about 20 percent of the time; whereas, individuals who talk to their neighbor several times a week are predicted to vote about 90 percent of the time. This shows how influential a simple, unplanned conversation between neighbors can be in changing an individual’s political behavior. Similar patterns are found for non-voting forms of participation as well; as neighbor contact increases, so does the predicted probability of participating in other forms of political participation.

The evidence also suggests that the more political resources that are needed to engage in a particular political activity, the higher the frequency of neighbor contact needs to be to increase the likelihood that an individual engages in it. For example, the effect of neighbor interaction on the likelihood of having membership in a political group—a form of engagement that requires a large commitment of both time and personal resources—requires a higher frequency of contact between neighbors before membership begins to increase when compared to what is needed to positively influence the likelihood of voting. In fact, only once neighbors talk reaches about once a week does the likelihood of having membership in a political group begin to increase. A

similar pattern was found for attending a march/boycott, participating in a community project, and participating in a group that took local reform action.

Finally, I demonstrated that although neighborhood design has a relatively small effect on the frequency of neighbor contact (the effect of moving from a neighborhood with primarily isolating features to a neighborhood with primarily interactive features on neighbor contact is 0.07), the effect of design-induced neighbor-to-neighbor contact is real and significant. On average, the effect of design-induced talk of the probability of voting is 6 percent. The average effect of design-induced talk on non-voting forms of participation ranges from 2 to 5 percent. And, although these average effects, at their best, can be described as moderate in size, they are substantial when compared to the effects of typically used Get Out the Vote campaign strategies. At their best, mailers and phone bank canvassers used with the intention of stimulating voter participation, increase turnout anywhere from less than 1 percent to 2.6 percent (Green and Gerber 2008). Put into context with these strategies, design-induced talk is having a much larger impact at increasing individual turnout and a more significant effect on stimulating participation in non-voting forms of political participation. This demonstrates the critical role that neighborhoods and neighbors have to play in increasing individual political engagement.

What is still not know, however, is who benefits most from neighborhoods and neighbors? I address this question in the following Chapter.

4.5 Appendix: Tables of Complete Results

The tables presented in this Appendix provide the complete results for the evidence presented in Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4.

Table 4. 2 Results from Six Logistic Regressions: Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Various Forms of Political Participation

Variable	Voted 96		Community Project	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
<i>Key Ind. Var.</i>				
Predicted Talk	6.52*	3.3	5.25*	2.51
<i>Ind. Level</i>				
Income	0.86***	0.13	0.58***	0.11
Education	2.46***	0.17	1.66***	0.09
Black	0.6**	0.2	0.44**	0.16
Hispanic	-0.05	0.21	0.29	0.17
Citizen	4.37***	0.42	0.14	0.23
Gender	0.23***	0.07	0.2***	0.06
Age	6.26***	1.43	-0.74	1.1
Age^2	-3.52*	1.59	-1.25	1.22
Years in Comm.	0.15	0.19	0.18	0.14
Home Owner	-0.01	0.23	-0.01	0.18
Ideology	-0.21	0.16	0.24*	0.12
Commute	0.16	0.39	-0.41	0.34
Inc_miss	1.13***	0.22	0.7***	0.18
<i>Tract Level</i>				
% Urban	0.01	0.2	-0.31*	0.16
% hm. Built '40	0.04	0.19	0.37**	0.15
% Commuting	-0.99	0.59	-0.96*	0.43
Log Pop. Dens.	0.02	0.03	-0.03	0.03
Racial Div.	-0.63***	0.17	-0.17	0.13
Income Div.	-0.56	1.21	1.07	1.31
% BA or Higher	0.08	0.21	-0.01	0.16
Intercept	-8.96	1.8	-5.05	1.6
N	7869		8128	
N Tract	834		837	
R ²	0.31		0.08	
Variable	Participate in Political Group		Attend a March/Boycott	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE

<i>Key Ind. Var.</i>				
Predicted Talk	9.45**	3.97	7.51(*)	4.37
<i>Ind. Level</i>				
Income	0.33*	0.18	-0.38*	0.19
Education	1.29***	0.14	0.67***	0.15
Black	0.63**	0.24	0.65*	0.28
Hispanic	0.58*	0.26	0.54*	0.28
Citizen	-0.05	0.35	-0.18	0.37
Gender	-0.28***	0.08	-0.19*	0.09
Age	-0.29	1.84	-0.56	1.87
Age^2	-0.91	2.04	-5.8**	2.29
Years in Comm.	0.05	0.23	-0.01	0.25
Own	-0.34	0.29	-0.31	0.32
Ideology	1.26***	0.2	1.68***	0.23
Commute	0.21	0.62	0.84	0.47
Inc_miss	0.36	0.29	-0.75*	0.32
<i>Tract Level</i>				
% Urban	-0.45	0.26	-0.45	0.27
% hm. Built '40	0.34	0.22	0.63**	0.23
% Commuting	-2.48***	0.69	-2.17**	0.76
Log Pop. Dens.	-0.02	0.04	0.04	0.05
Racial Div.	0.06	0.19	0.14	0.2
Income Div.	2.07	1.75	0.07	1.68
% BA or Higher	0.23	0.26	0.49*	0.26
Intercept	-9.41	2.39	-6.21	2.42
N	8137		8129	
N Tract	837		836	
R ²	0.08		0.08	

Variable	Participate in Reform Group		Sign a Petition	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
<i>Key Ind. Var.</i>				
Predicted Talk	4.83(*)	2.9	-0.5	2.92
<i>Ind. Level</i>				
Income	0.39**	0.14	0.36	0.12
Education	1.62***	0.11	1.03	0.1
Black	0.33(*)	0.18	-0.37	0.17
Hispanic	-0.03	0.2	-0.13	0.18
Citizen	0.43(*)	0.26	1.23	0.24
Gender	-0.11	0.07	0.02	0.06
Age	0.9	1.34	2.56	1.25

Age^2	-3.07*	1.52	-4.78	1.32
Years in Comm.	-0.09	0.17	0.32	0.17
Own	-0.23	0.21	0.15	0.21
Ideology	0.93***	0.14	0.85	0.12
Commute	-0.18	0.37	-0.07	0.38
Inc_miss	0.32	0.23	0.18	0.19
<i>Tract Level</i>				
% Urban	-0.13	0.19	0.19	0.17
% hm. Built '40	0.5***	0.16	0.46	0.17
% Commuting	-1.12*	0.51	-0.83	0.53
Log Pop. Dens.	0.01	0.04	-0.05	0.03
Racial Div.	0.22(*)	0.13	-0.12	0.14
Income Div.	0.8	1.04	1.36	1.17
% BA or Higher	0.44**	0.17	0.37	0.2
Intercept	-6.25	1.57	-3.28	1.72
N	8020		8096	
N Tract	836		837	
R ²	0.09		0.07	

Note: (*) $p > .10$; * $p > .05$; ** $p > .01$; *** $p > .000$

Table 4. 3 The Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation

Freq. Neigh. Talk	Vote		Community Project		Membership in Political Group		Attend March/Boycott		Member of Reform Group	
	Pred. Prob.	Difference	Pred. Prob.	Difference	Pred. Prob.	Difference	Pred. Prob.	Difference	Pred. Prob.	Difference
0.3	0.24	0	0.09	0	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.04	0
0.35	0.3	0.07	0.11	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.02
0.4	0.37	0.08	0.14	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.07	0.02
0.45	0.45*	0.08	0.17*	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.08	0.02
0.5	0.53*	0.09	0.21*	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.1*	0.02
0.55	0.61*	0.08	0.26*	0.05	0.03*	0.02	0.03*	0.01	0.12*	0.03
0.6	0.69*	0.08	0.31*	0.06	0.05*	0.02	0.05*	0.02	0.15*	0.03
0.65	0.75*	0.07	0.37*	0.06	0.07*	0.03	0.06*	0.02	0.18*	0.04
0.7	0.81*	0.06	0.43*	0.07	0.11*	0.04	0.09*	0.03	0.22*	0.04
0.75	0.86*	0.05	0.5*	0.07	0.16*	0.06	0.12*	0.04	0.27*	0.05
0.8	0.89*	0.04	0.56*	0.07	0.23*	0.08	0.16*	0.05	0.32*	0.05
0.85	0.92*	0.03	0.63*	0.07	0.33*	0.1	0.22	0.06	0.37*	0.06
Avg. Effect	0.62	0.06	0.31	0.05	0.09	0.03	0.06	0.02	0.17	0.04

Note: These predicted probabilities are calculated by holding all control variables at their means. The values of Predicted Neighbor Talk are set from 0.30 to 0.85 at intervals of 0.05, because this was the range of predicted neighbor talk that exist in data. The interval of 0.05 was selected to coordinate with the predicted effect of Design on Talk calculated in the first-stage analysis. This is actually a modest estimate of the effect of design-induced talk on participation as the actual effect of design on talk is 0.07.

Chapter 5

Who Benefits Most?

Leading studies of mass behavior hold that basic political resources—time, money, information, interest, networks, and mobilization – substantially affect citizen decisions to participate in politics (Verba, Nie, Schlozman 1995). These studies also find that those who suffer a resource shortfall—the poor, uneducated, and racial/ethnic minorities—participate in politics at lower rates because of it. (Bartels, 2005; Lazarsfeld, et al., 1944; Campbell, et al., 1960; Milbrath, 1965; Verba and Nie, 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993).

The resource shortfall is woven deeply into the structure of society, but what about the solution? I have shown so far that both neighborhoods and neighbors matter. Specifically, I demonstrated that the physical structure of residential places—whether homes have porches, streets have sidewalks, neighborhoods have natural gathering places—can promote neighborly exchanges that help increase individual political participation. The question is: Can neighbors help compensate for resource shortfalls and thereby increase mass participation?

In this chapter, I attempt to answer this question. Specifically, I examine who benefits most from place and people. Beyond the general effects of neighbor contact on individual political participation discussed in Chapter 4, these neighborly exchanges may have varying effects on individuals from different socio-demographic backgrounds. For example, individuals who lack access to political resources—the poor, less educated, and disproportionately racial/ethnic minorities—may rely more on their neighbors to fill those personal resource gaps, then someone who already possesses political resources on their own, like the wealthy, highly

educated, and disproportionately white individuals. If this is the case, then neighborly contacts would have greater effects on the participation of resource poor individuals.

On-the-other-hand, individuals who lack political resources are more likely to have neighbors who also lack political resources; the poor, less educated, and racial/ethnic minorities tend to live amongst people like themselves. Since this is the case, it may be that in neighborhoods where the residents are all resource poor, no amount of neighbor-to-neighbor contact will produce an exchange of political resources and so, no amount of contact will help fill personal resource gaps and subsequently lead to increased levels of political participation. Individuals, however, who possess political resources—the wealthy, highly educated, and disproportionately White—are more likely to have neighbors who also possess them and so, in this case, neighbor interaction may have greater effects on the participation of resource rich individuals.

Or, quite possibly, both of these scenarios play out; in this case, neighbor contact would simultaneously increase the participation of both resource poor and resource rich individuals. For this reason, I have postulated three possible hypotheses, which I described in greater detail in Chapter 2:

H. 2-1 “The Rich Get Richer”: Neighborhood features that promote social interaction mainly increase turnout among resource-rich individuals—middle/high income and white—because they are more likely to live in communities in which neighborly interaction exposes them to highly informed, interested, and mobilized citizens.

I. 2-2 “Those in Need Benefit Most of All”: Pro-talk neighborhood design mainly

promotes political participation among resource poor individuals—low income, low education and racial minorities—because middle/high income, highly educated and white individuals already possess political resources, which drive their individual participation and so are “maxed out” on participation. The poor, less educated and racial minorities, however, need and can get these political resources from their neighbors when neighborhood design brings them into contact.

I. 2-3 “A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats”: Neighborhood design promotes political participation among all individuals equally, because within all strata of society contain politically active individuals likely to mobilize other citizens with whom they come into contact.

The testing of these hypotheses is the focus of analysis here in Chapter 5. My analysis proceeds in four sections. In the first, I compare the effects of neighbor contact on participation by race, specifically looking at the differences between Black and non-Black respondents. In the second, I compare the effects of neighbor contact on participation by ethnicity, looking at the differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics respondents. In the third, I compare the effects of neighbor contact on participation by income, looking at the differences between low, middle, and high-income respondents. And finally, I compare the effects of neighbor contact on participation by education, looking at the differences between respondents at three different levels of educational achievement.

5.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Socio-Demographic Characteristics

In order to test these three hypotheses, I rerun the second-stage analysis described in Chapter 4. Recall that in the original second-stage, I ran six separate logistic regression models using six binary variables which measure a variety of forms of political participation: voting, working on a community project, participating in a political group, having membership in a group that took local reform action, signing a petition, and attending a political march or boycott. In the previous analysis, the key independent variable in all six models was the predicted value of “neighbor talk” estimated in the first-stage regression. In the current analysis, I continue to run six separate logistic models, where the dependent variable in each model is a different binary measure of political participation. In all six models, the key independent variables are now four interaction terms between the predicted value of “neighbor talk,” and four individual characteristics: race, ethnicity, income, and education. The four interaction terms are as follows:

Interaction Term 1: (Predicted Neighbor Talk) * (Race)

Interaction Term 2: (Predicted Neighbor Talk) * (Ethnicity)

Interaction Term 3: (Predicted Neighbor Talk) * (Income)

Interaction Term 4: (Predicted Neighbor Talk) * (Education)

These four interaction terms, allow me to estimate whether the effect of “neighbor talk” is the same or different for respondents of different racial, ethnic, income, and education groups. If talking to one’s neighbor has different effects on participation for individuals of different socio-demographic groups, then the interaction terms should produce statistically significant effects on participation. If, however, neighbor-to-neighbor

contact has the same effect on individual participation, regardless of race/ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, then the interaction terms should either be statistically insignificant or the size of the effect should be near zero. I discuss the results of these six models in the remainder of this chapter.

5.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Race

In this section, I examine how an individual's race influences the effects of neighbor contact on individual political participation. Specifically, I explore whether the effect of talking to one's neighbor is the same or different between Black and non-Black respondents. If "a helping hand helps those in need," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have a greater effect on the participation of Black respondents, because historically Black Americans have had less access to political resources and so, contact with their neighbors will help fill their personal resource shortfalls (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995, Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). If "the rich get richer," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have the greatest effect on the participation of non-Black respondents, because historically White Americans have been more likely to live in communities with politically resource rich neighbors from whom they can gather the determinants of participation (Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). And if "the rising tide lifts all boats," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have no significantly different effect on participation between the two racial groups.

I first discuss the effects of neighbor talk for Black and non-Black respondents on voting, the results can be found in Figure 5.1. I then discuss the results for all non-voting forms of participation; the results can be found in Figure 5.2. For complete results of the six logistic regressions, see Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

5.2.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Race

Figure 5.1 compares the effect of neighbor talk on the predicted probability of voting between Black and non-Black respondents. The lines in the figure plot the effect of predicted probability of voting, while holding all other control variables at their mean. The red line plots the results for non-Black respondents and the black line plots the results for Black respondents.¹⁵ The points in Figure 5.1 represent the observed predicted probability of voting for each respondent in the survey; the red points are the results for non-Black respondents and the black points are the results for Black respondents.

The results show that neighbor contact continues to have a positive effect on voting (the coefficient is 6.81 and is statistically significant at the $p > 0.05$ level), even with the inclusion of the four interaction terms into the model. The effect of neighbor contact is positive for both Black and non-Black respondents and that there is no significant difference of that effect between non-Black and Black respondents. The effect of the interaction between Race and Predicted Neighbor talk on Vote is -1.15 but is not statistically significant, revealing that there neighbor contact has essentially the same positive effect on the likelihood of voting for both Black and non-Black respondents.¹⁶ Although non-Black respondents appear to have a slightly lower predicted probability of voting, non-Black and Black respondents are predicted to have the same probability of voting once frequency of talk is fairly regular. Once neighbor contact is “several times per week” (or when frequency of neighbor talk is around 0.85), Black respondents have a predicted probability of voting of 0.94 and non-Black respondents have a predicted

¹⁵ I calculated the predicted probability of voting for non-Black respondents by holding the value of race at 0; I calculated the predicted probability of voting for Black respondents by holding the value of race at 1.

¹⁶ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

probability of voting of 0.91. These results support the “rising tide” hypothesis and show that talking to one’s neighbor has a positive effect on participation regardless of race.

Figure 5. 1 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Probability of Voting, by Race

Note: The effect of Predicted Talk on Voting in a Presidential Election is statistically significant at $p > .05$. The effect of the interaction between Predicted Talk and Race on Voting is not statistically significant; so, any difference in the slope between Black and Non-Black respondents is not statistically significant.

5.2.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Race

The results in Figure 5.2 compare the effects of predicted neighbor contact on two different forms of political participation: having membership in a political group and attending a political march/boycott. The points on the plots in Figure 5.2 represent the observed predicted probability of participating in the identified political act for each respondent

in the survey, while the line represents the predicted probability of participating while holding all other control variables at their mean. Again, the red points and line represent the results for non-Black respondents and the black points and line represent the results for Black respondents. Note that predicted neighbor talk has a positive and statistically significant effect on both forms of political participation. The effect of predicted talk on having membership in a political group is 7.69 and is statistically significant at the $p < 0.10$ level. The effect of predicted talk on attending a political march/boycott is 7.39 and is statistically significant at the $p < 0.10$ level. The effect of predicted neighbor talk on the other three forms of participation not seen in Figure 5.2—signing a petition, working on a community project, and participating in a group that took local reform—is no longer statistically significant with the inclusion of the four interaction variables.¹⁷

The effect of neighbor contact on both forms of participation seen in Figure 5.2 is positive for both Black and non-Black respondents and that there is no statistically significant difference of that effect between non-Black and Black respondents. The effect of the interaction between Race and Predicted Neighbor talk on having membership in a political group is 0.61, but it is not statistically significant. The effect of the interaction on attending a march/boycott is 0.58, but it too is not statistically significant. This reveals that there is no statistically significant difference of the effect of neighbor contact on participating in either of these forms of participation between Black and non-Black respondents.¹⁸ Again, these findings support the

¹⁷ For the complete results of these three logistic regressions, see Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

¹⁸ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

“rising tides” hypothesis as it seems that contact with a neighbor is having similar effects on both forms of participation for both Black and non-Black respondents.

Figure 5.2 Effect of Predicted Talk on Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Race

Political Group Membership **March/Boycott**

Note: The Effects of Predicted Talk on Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott are significant at the $p > .10$ level. The effect of predicted talk on Signing a Petition, working on a Community Project, and Participating in a Group that Took Local Reform were not statistically significant; so, those results are not displayed here. The effect of the interaction between predicted talk and race on both Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott is not statistically significant.

There are two additional findings in Figure 5.2 that are worth discussing. First, for both forms of participation—membership in a political group and marching—Black respondents consistently are predicted to participate at a higher rate. For example, when predicted neighbor talk is set to 0.85 (or when the frequency of neighbor contact is several times per week), the predicted probability that a Black respondent has membership in a political group is 0.45 and the predicted probability that a non-Black respondent has membership is 0.29. A similar pattern is found for the predicted probability of marching. When neighbor talk is high, the predicted probability that a Black respondent marches is 0.35 and for non-Black respondents it is 0.20. Since all other control variables—both individual and tract level variables—were set to their

mean to calculate these predicted probabilities, these results illustrate the important role that race plays in influencing an individual's decision to participate in politics. These findings demonstrate that Black individuals, once individual characteristics like income and education are controlled for, are more likely to participate in a variety of forms of political participation than non-Black individuals. This finding is consistent with previous studies of the effects of race on participation (Bobo and Gilliam 1990).

Second, the results in Figure 5.2 reaffirm the finding that for forms of participation that demand greater political resources, like membership in political groups and marching/boycotting, the frequency of neighbor talk must be greater than for forms of participation that require fewer political resources, like voting. Note that neighbor talk does not begin to increase the predicted probability of either having membership or marching until the frequency of neighbor contact is around 0.65 (when neighbor talk is several times per month). Once predicted neighbor talk reaches this frequency of contact, the effect of neighbor contact on participation is exponential. Meaning, as the frequency of contact goes up, so does the size of the effect of talk on participation. For voting, neighbor talk begins to have a positive effect on the predicted probability of turning out once the frequency of neighbor contact is around .35 (when neighbor talk is several times per year). This finding is consistent with the pattern identified in Chapter 4.

Overall, the evidence presented in both Figures 5.1 and 5.2 supports the “rising tide hypothesis.” Neighbor contact has a positive effect on three forms of participation—voting, marching, and membership in a political group—and there is no statistically significant difference in the size of this effect for respondents of different racial groups. This means that neighbor talk is having a positive effect on the participation of both Black and non-black respondents, making it more likely that individuals of all racial groups participate more. Of

course, these results show the full effect of “predicted neighbor contact” on participation for respondents of different races rather than the effect of the unique “design-induced” neighbor contact alone on participation. As stated in the previous chapter, there are many variables that predict the likelihood that an individual talks to his neighbor and for that reason, an examination of the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact on individual political participation is necessary. I show the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact by race in the next section.

5.2.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Race

In order to isolate the effects of “design-induced” neighbor talk on political participation by respondent race, I calculate the effect on participation of increasing talk by 0.05 units.¹⁹ Once I have calculated the predicted probability of participating at each 0.05 incremental level of neighborhood talk for both Black and non-Black respondents, I can then measure the difference between each increase in talk for both racial groups. The difference between each 0.05 increase in talk is the additional predicted probability of participating from design-induced neighbor contact.

The results in Figure 5.3 show the difference in the predicted probability of voting for each additional 0.05 increase of neighbor-to-neighbor talk. The red line shows the results for non-Black respondents and the black line shows the results for Black respondents. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents’ self-reported frequency of talk.²⁰ Again, the red

¹⁹ As described in Section 4.3 in Chapter 4, I found that the neighborhood design characteristics increases talk by about 0.07 units. I underestimate the effect of design on talk to 0.05 units, so that I calculate the predicted probability of participating at both the lowest level of talk found in the data (0.30) and at the highest level of talk found in the data (0.85).

²⁰ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.2.

dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for non-Black respondents and the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for Black respondents.

Figure 5.3 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Race

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk for both Black and Non-Black respondents and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of voting, the level of significance, and the average size of the effect see Table 5.2 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

Much like what was found in Chapter 4, the effect of design-induced talk on probability of voting for both Black and non-Black respondents varies depending on the frequency of talk. At both very low and very high levels of talk, small increases in contact for people who rarely or who regularly talk to their neighbors seems to generate small increases in the probability of

voting. At the low and high end of talk, the effect of “design-induced talk” is anywhere between a 1.0 to 3.0 percent increase in the predicted probability of voting. This finding is true for both Black and non-Black respondents. In the middle range of talk, however, the effect of “design-induced” talk on the probability of voting is larger. Once neighbor talk is happening monthly (when frequency of contact is 0.50), the effect of “design-induced talk” is anywhere between a 6.0 to almost 8.0 percent increase in the predicted probability of voting. Again, this finding is true for both Black and non-Black respondents. The average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting is 0.05 for Black respondents and 0.06 for non-Black respondents. This means that the increase in contact between neighbors from interactive neighborhood design features increases the probability of voting an average of 5.0 to 6.0 percent for both Black and non-Black respondents. These results further demonstrate the critical role that both place and people can play on individual participation, even amongst those individuals who are disproportionately resource poor, like Black voters.

The results in Figure 5.4 show the difference in the predicted probability of participating in non-voting forms of participation—membership in a political group and marching/boycotting—for each additional 0.05 increase of talk between Black and non-Black respondents. The red line shows the results for non-Black respondents and the black line shows the results for Black respondents. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents’ self-reported frequency of talk.²¹ Again, the red dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for non-Black respondents and the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for Black respondents.

²¹ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.2.

What is revealed in Figure 5.4 is that the increase in talk from neighborhood design has a small effect on the predicted probability of having membership in a political group or marching for both Black and non-Black respondents until talk becomes fairly regular (once talk is 0.70). Before talk hits this level, the effect of design-induced talk on probability of participating ranges from 0 to 2.0 percent. Once talk between neighbors is happening at least once a week (once talk hits 0.70), the effect of design-induced talk on participating in both forms of participation begins to increase exponentially ranging from 3.0 percent to 11.0 percent at its peak. And, this pattern is true for both Black and non-Black respondents. This result shows that small increases in contact, like those from interactive neighborhood design features, for those people who have high levels of contact with their neighbors—like moving from talking once a week to several times a week—can actually garner a large increase in the predicted probability of both having membership in a political group and attending a march/boycott. For example, when talk is happening several times per week (when neighbor talk is 0.85), “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of marching by 5.0 percent for non-Black respondents and 8.0 percent for Black respondents. At this same level of neighbor talk, “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of having membership in a political group by 9.0 percent for non-Black respondents and 11.0 percent for Black respondents. This finding that neighbor talk has its greatest effect on participation when the frequency of talk is at its highest level makes sense, in light of the fact that both of these forms of participation demand greater political resources. More frequent contact between neighbors would provide more opportunities to share and exchange political resources.

Overall, The average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of marching is 3 percent for Black respondents and only 1 percent for non-Black respondents. For having

membership in a political group, the average effect of design-induced talk amongst Black respondents is 4 percent and for non-Black respondents it is 2 percent. When compared to the average effects of design-induced talk on voting, these effects are smaller, especially amongst non-Black respondents. This seems to suggest that for these more resource demanding forms of participation, increases to neighborly contacts generated by neighborhood design may not matter as much as they do for voting. The exception, however, is at the high end of the spectrum. In areas where neighbor-to-neighbor contacts are already fairly high, small increases in neighbor contact can actually increase participation in these non-voting forms of participation dramatically.

Figure 5. 4 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Race

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk for both Black and Non-Black respondents and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of participating, and the level of significance, see Table 5.2 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

5.2.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Race

These results, overall, support the “rising tide” hypothesis. I found that talking to one’s neighbor increases the predicted probability of participating and the effect of talking to one’s neighbor was not statistically different between Black and non-Black respondents. This means that neighbors seem to be having the same positive effect on political participation amongst members of both racial groups. Since racial minorities disproportionately lack access to political resources, this finding demonstrates that even in neighborhoods where the residents are less likely to have the critical resources that increase individual participation, neighbors can help fill those personal gaps. At the same time, neighbors seem to also influence the political behavior of individuals who are more likely to possess the determinants of participation, like non-Black individuals. These results suggest that all people’s political engagement, regardless of race at least, benefit from interactive neighborhoods and neighborly exchanges.

5.3 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Ethnicity

In this section, I examine how an individual’s ethnicity influences the effects of neighbor contact on individual political participation. Specifically, I explore whether the effect of talking to one’s neighbor is the same or different between Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. If “a helping hand helps those in need,” then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have a greater effect on the participation of Hispanic respondents, because historically Hispanic Americans, as an ethnic minority, have had less access to political resources and so, contact with their neighbors will help fill their personal resource shortfalls (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995, Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). If “the rich get richer,” then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have the greatest effect on the participation of non-Hispanic

respondents, because historically non-Hispanic Americans have been more likely to live in communities with politically resource rich neighbors from whom they can gather the determinants of participation (Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). And if “the rising tide lifts all boats,” then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have no significantly different effect on participation between the two ethnic groups.

I first discuss the effects of neighbor talk for Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents on voting, the results can be found in Figure 5.5. I then discuss the results for all non-voting forms of participation; the results can be found in Figure 5.6. For complete results of the six logistic regressions, see Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

5.3.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Ethnicity

Figure 5.5 compares the effect of neighbor talk on the predicted probability of voting between Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. The lines in the figure plot the effect of predicted probability of voting, while holding all other control variables at their mean. The red line plots the results for non-Hispanic respondents and the black line plots the results for Hispanic respondents.²² The points in Figure 5.5 represent the observed predicted probability of voting for each respondent in the survey; the red points are the results for non-Hispanic respondents and the black points are the results for Hispanic respondents.

The results show that the effect of neighbor contact is positive for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents and that there is no significant difference of that effect between non-Hispanic and Hispanic respondents. The effect of the interaction between Ethnicity and Predicted Neighbor talk on Vote is 1.91, suggesting that talk with a neighbor may produce a

²² I calculated the predicted probability of voting for non-Hispanic respondents by holding the value of ethnicity at 0; I calculated the predicted probability of voting for Hispanic respondents by holding the value of ethnicity at 1.

slightly greater effect on turnout for Hispanics than for non-Hispanics. However, this effect is not statistically significant, revealing that there is no difference of the effect of neighbor contact on vote between Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents.²³ Note that in Figure 5.5 Hispanic respondents are predicted to vote at a lower rate than non-Hispanic respondents, until the frequency of neighbor contact increases to several times per month (or when frequency of talk is 0.65).

Figure 5.5 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Ethnicity

Note: The effect of Predicted Talk on Voting in a Presidential Election is statistically significant at $p > .05$. The effect of the interaction between Predicted Talk and Ethnicity on Voting is not statistically significant; so, any difference in the slope between Hispanic and Non-Hispanic respondents is not statistically significant.

²³ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

It is at this frequency of neighbor-to-neighbor contact that the predicted probability of voting for Hispanics is slightly greater than the predicted probability of voting for non-Hispanics. At this rate of talk, Hispanics, while holding all other variables at their mean, have a predicted probability of voting of 76 percent. At this same rate of contact with neighbors, non-Hispanics are predicted to vote at 75 percent. This pattern continues and once the frequency of neighbor talk hits its highest rate of contact (0.85 or several times a week) Hispanic respondents have a predicted probability of voting of 94 percent, while non-Hispanics have a predicted probability of voting of 91 percent. But again, these slight differences are not statistically significant. These results, overall, support the “rising tide” hypothesis and show that talking to one’s neighbor has a positive effect on participation regardless of ethnicity.

5.3.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Ethnicity

The results in Figure 5.6 compare the effects of predicted neighbor contact on two different forms of political participation: having membership in a political group and attending a political march/boycott. The points on the plots in Figure 5.6 represent the observed predicted probability of participating in the identified political act for each respondent in the survey, while the line represents the predicted probability of participating while holding all other control variables at their mean. Again, the red points and line represent the results for non-Hispanic respondents and the black points and line represent the results for Hispanic respondents.

The effect of neighbor contact on both forms of participation, seen in Figure 5.6, is positive for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents and that there is no statistically significant difference of that effect between non-Hispanic and Hispanic respondents. The effect of the interaction between Ethnicity and Predicted Neighbor talk on having membership in a

political group is -0.66 (suggesting that talk may have a slightly larger effect on the likelihood that non-Hispanic respondents join a political group than on Hispanic respondents), but it is not statistically significant. The effect of the interaction on attending a march/boycott is 0.52 (suggesting that talk may have slightly larger effect on the likelihood that Hispanic respondents march or boycott than on non-Hispanic respondents), but it too is not statistically significant. This reveals that there is no statistically significant difference of the effect of neighbor contact on participating in either of these forms of participation between Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents.²⁴ Again, these findings support the “rising tides” hypothesis as it seems that contact with a neighbor is having similar effects on both forms of participation for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents.

Figure 5. 6 Effect of Predicted Talk on Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Ethnicity

Note: The Effects of Predicted Talk on Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott are significant at the $p > .10$ level. The effect of predicted talk on Signing a Petition, working on a Community Project, and Participating in a Group that Took Local Reform were not statistically significant; so, those results are not displayed here. The effect of the interaction between predicted talk and ethnicity on both Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott is not statistically significant.

²⁴ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

In addition to the general findings, the results in Figure 5.6 continue to reaffirm the finding that for forms of participation that demand greater political resources, like membership in political groups and marching/boycotting, the frequency of neighbor talk must be greater than for forms of participation that require fewer political resources, like voting. Note that neighbor talk does not begin to increase the predicted probability of either having membership in a political group or marching until the frequency of neighbor contact is around 0.65 (when neighbor talk is several times per month). Once predicted neighbor talk reaches this frequency of contact, the effect of neighbor contact on participation is exponential. Meaning, as the frequency of contact goes up, so does the size of the effect of talk on participation. For voting, neighbor talk begins to have a positive effect on the predicted probability of turning out once the frequency of neighbor contact is around .35 (when neighbor talk is several times per year). This finding is consistent with the pattern identified in Chapter 4 and earlier in this chapter.

Overall, the evidence presented in both Figures 5.5 and 5.6 supports the “rising tide hypothesis.” Neighbor contact has a positive effect on three forms of participation—voting, marching, and membership in a political group—and there is no statistically significant difference in the size of this effect for respondents of different ethnic groups. This means that neighbor talk is having a positive effect on the participation of both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents, making it more likely that individuals of all ethnic groups participate more. But again, these results show the full effect of “predicted neighbor contact” on participation for respondents of different ethnicities rather than the effect of the unique “design-induced” neighbor contact alone on participation. As stated in the previous chapter, there are many variables that predict the likelihood that an individual talks to his neighbor and for that reason, an examination of the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact on individual political

participation is necessary. I show the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact by ethnicity in the next section.

5.3.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Ethnicity

In order to isolate the effects of “design-induced” neighbor talk on political participation by respondent ethnicity, I calculate the effect on participation of increasing talk by 0.05 units.²⁵ Once I have calculated the predicted probability of participating at each 0.05 incremental level of neighborhood talk for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents, I can then measure the difference between each increase in talk for both ethnic groups. The difference between each 0.05 increase in talk is the additional predicted probability of participating from design-induced neighbor contact. The results in Figure 5.7 show the difference in the predicted probability of voting for each additional 0.05 increase of neighbor-to-neighbor talk for members of different ethnic groups. The red line shows the results for non-Hispanic respondents and the black line shows the results for Hispanic respondents. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents’ self-reported frequency of talk.²⁶ Again, the red dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for non-Hispanic respondents and the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for Hispanic respondents.

Much like what was found in Chapter 4, the effect of design-induced talk on probability of voting for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents varies depending on the frequency of talk. At both very low and very high levels of talk, small increases in contact for people who

²⁵ As described in Section 4.3 in Chapter 4, I found that the neighborhood design characteristics increases talk by about 0.07 units. I underestimate the effect of design on talk to 0.05 units, so that I calculate the predicted probability of participating at both the lowest level of talk found in the data (0.30) and at the highest level of talk found in the data (0.85).

²⁶ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.3.

rarely or who regularly talk to their neighbors seems to generate small increases in the probability of voting. At the low and high end of talk, the effect of “design-induced talk” is anywhere between a 2.0 to 6.0 percent increase in the predicted probability of voting. This finding is true for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents.

Figure 5. 7 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Ethnicity

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk for both Hispanic and Non-Hispanic respondents and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of voting, the level of significance, and the average size of the effect see Table 5.3 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

In the middle range of talk, however, the effect of “design-induced” talk on the probability of voting is larger. Once neighbor talk is happening monthly (when frequency of contact is 0.50),

the effect of “design-induced talk” is anywhere between a 7.0 to almost 10.0 percent increase in the predicted probability of voting. Again, this finding is true for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. The average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting is 0.06 for Hispanic respondents and 0.05 for non-Hispanic respondents. This means that the increase in contact between neighbors from interactive neighborhood design features increases the probability of voting an average of 5.0 to 6.0 percent for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. This evidence further supports the “rising tides hypothesis” as on average, design-induced neighbor talk is having just about the same average effect on voting amongst both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. Moreover, these results further demonstrate the critical role that both place and people can play on individual participation, even amongst those individuals who are disproportionately resource poor, like Hispanic voters.

The results in Figure 5.8 show the difference in the predicted probability of participating in non-voting forms of participation—membership in a political group and marching/boycotting—for each additional 0.05 increase of talk between Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. The red line shows the results for non-Hispanic respondents and the black line shows the results for Hispanic respondents. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents’ self-reported frequency of talk.²⁷ Again, the red dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for non-Hispanic respondents and the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for Hispanic respondents.

What is revealed in Figure 5.8 is that the increase in talk from neighborhood design has a small effect on the predicted probability of having membership in a political group or marching for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents until talk becomes occurs monthly (once talk is

²⁷ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.3.

0.65). Before talk hits this level, the effect of design-induced talk on probability of participating ranges from 0 to 2.0 percent. Once talk between neighbors is happening at least once a week (once talk hits 0.70), the effect of design-induced talk on participating in both forms of participation begins to increase exponentially ranging from 3.0 percent to 9.0 percent at its peak. And, this pattern is true for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. This result shows that small increases in contact, like those from interactive neighborhood design features, for those people who have high levels of contact with their neighbors—like moving from talking once a week to several times a week—can actually garner a large increase in the predicted probability of both having membership in a political group and attending a march/boycott. For example, when talk is happening several times per week (when neighbor talk is 0.85), “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of marching by 6.0 percent for non-Hispanic respondents and 8.0 percent for Hispanic respondents. At this same level of neighbor talk, “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of having membership in a political group by 8.0 percent for non-Hispanic respondents and 9.0 percent for Hispanic respondents. This finding that neighbor talk has its greatest effect on participation when the frequency of talk is at its highest level makes sense, in light of the fact that both of these forms of participation demand greater political resources. More frequent contact between neighbors would provide more opportunities to share and exchange political resources.

Overall, The average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of marching is 3 percent for Hispanic respondents and only 2 percent for non-Hispanic respondents. For having membership in a political group, the average effect of design-induced talk amongst Hispanic respondents is 3 percent and for non-Hispanic respondents it is also 3 percent. When compared to the average effects of design-induced talk on voting, these effects are smaller. This seems to

suggest that for these more resource demanding forms of participation, increases to neighborly contacts generated by neighborhood design may not matter as much as they do for voting. The exception, however, is at the high end of the spectrum. In areas where neighbor-to-neighbor contacts are already fairly high, small increases in neighbor contact can actually increase participation in these non-voting forms of participation dramatically.

Figure 5. 8 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Ethnicity

Political Group Membership

March/Boycott

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk for both Hispanic and Non-Hispanic respondents and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of participating, and the level of significance, see Table 5.3 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

5.3.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Ethnicity

These results, overall, support the “rising tide” hypothesis. I found that talking to one’s neighbor increases the predicted probability of participating and the effect of talking to one’s neighbor was not statistically different between Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents. This means that neighbors seem to be having the same positive effect on political participation amongst members of both ethnic groups. Since ethnic minorities

disproportionately lack access to political resources, this finding demonstrates that even in neighborhoods where the residents are less likely to have the critical resources that increase individual participation, neighbors can help fill those personal gaps. At the same time, neighbors seem to also influence the political behavior of individuals who are more likely to possess the determinants of participation, like non-Hispanic individuals. These results suggest that all people's political engagement, regardless of ethnicity, benefit from interactive neighborhoods and neighborly exchanges.

5.4 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Income

In this section, I examine how an individual's income influences the effects of neighbor contact on individual political participation. Specifically, I explore whether the effect of talking to one's neighbor is the same or different between low, middle, and high-income respondents. If "a helping hand helps those in need," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have a greater effect on the participation of low income respondents, because the poor have less access to political resources, and so, contact with their neighbors will help fill their personal resource shortfalls (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995, Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). If "the rich get richer," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have the greatest effect on the participation of high-income respondents, because the wealthy are more likely to live in communities with politically resource rich neighbors from whom they can gather the determinants of participation (Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). And if "the rising tide lifts all boats," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have no significantly different effect on participation between the three income groups.

I first discuss the effects of neighbor talk for low, middle, and high-income respondents on voting, the results can be found in Figure 5.9. I then discuss the results for all non-voting

forms of participation; the results can be found in Figure 5.10. For complete results of the six logistic regressions, see Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

5.4.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Income

Figure 5.9 compares the effect of neighbor talk on the predicted probability of voting between low, middle, and high-income respondents. The lines in the figure plot the effect of predicted probability of voting, while holding all other control variables at their mean. The black line plots the results for low-income respondents, the red line plots the results for middle-income respondents and the yellow line plots the results for high-income respondents.²⁸ The points in Figure 5.9 represent the observed predicted probability of voting for each respondent in the survey; the black points are the results for low-income respondents, the red points are the results for middle-income respondents and the yellow points are the results for high-income respondents.

The results show that the effect of neighbor contact is positive for members of all three income groups and that there is no significant difference of that effect between low, middle, and high-income respondents. The effect of the interaction between Income and Predicted Neighbor talk on Vote is 0.80, suggesting that talk with a neighbor may produce a slightly greater effect on turnout for higher income respondents. However, this effect is not statistically significant, revealing that there is no difference of the effect of neighbor contact on vote between members of the three income groups.²⁹ Note that in Figure 5.9, high-income respondents are consistently

²⁸ I calculated the predicted probability of voting for Low-Income respondents by holding the value of income at 0; I calculated the predicted probability of voting for Middle-Income respondents by holding the value of income at 0.50; I calculated the predicted probability of voting for High-Income respondents by holding the value of income at 1.0.

²⁹ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

predicted to vote at a higher rate than both middle and low-income respondents, regardless of the frequency of neighbor contact. This pattern emerges not because neighbor contact is having a greater effect on wealthy individuals, but simply illustrates the important role that income itself has on voting. In fact, the slopes of the three lines demonstrate that neighbor contact is increasing the probability of voting at the same rate for members of all three income groups. The space between the three lines reveals the effect that income has on turnout, when all other variables are held at their mean.

Figure 5.9 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Income

Note: The effect of Predicted Talk on Voting in a Presidential Election is statistically significant at $p > .05$. The effect of the interaction between Predicted Talk and Income on Voting is not statistically significant; so, any difference in the slope between Low, Middle, or High-income respondents is not statistically significant.

The big takeaway from Figure 5.9 is that neighbor contact is having the same positive effect on all respondents, regardless of income. At the lowest frequency of neighbor contact, when neighbor contact is .35 (talk several times per year), low, middle, and high-income respondents have a predicted probability of voting of 22 percent, 28 percent, and 34 percent, respectively. Once the frequency of neighbor contact increases to its highest rate, when neighbor contact is .85 (several times per week), low, middle, and high-income respondents have a predicted probability of voting of 88 percent, 93 percent, and 96 percent, respectively. This is a total increase of predicted probability of voting of 66 percent for low-income respondents, 65 percent for middle-income respondents, and 62 percent for high-income respondents. These values of the total increase of predicted probability of voting further reveal that neighbor contact is essentially having the same effect on respondents from all three income levels, which supports the “rising tide” hypothesis and shows that talking to one’s neighbor has a positive effect on participation regardless of income.

5.4.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Income

The results in Figure 5.10 compare the effects of predicted neighbor contact on two different forms of political participation: having membership in a political group and attending a political march/boycott. The points on the plots in Figure 5.10 represent the observed predicted probability of participating in the identified political act for each respondent in the survey, while the lines represent the predicted probability of participating while holding all other control variables at their mean. Again, the black points and line represent the results for low-income respondents, the red points and line represent the results for middle-income respondents, and the yellow points and line represent the results for high-income respondents.

The effect of neighbor contact on both forms of participation, seen in Figure 5.10, is positive for respondents in all three income groups and that there is no statistically significant difference of that effect between low, middle, and high-income respondents. The effect of the interaction between Income and Predicted Neighbor talk on having membership in a political group is 1.84 (suggesting that talk may have a slightly larger effect on the likelihood that high-income respondents join a political group than on low-income respondents), but it is not statistically significant. The effect of the interaction between Income and Predicted Neighbor talk on attending a march/boycott is 1.68 (suggesting that talk may have slightly larger effect on the likelihood that high-income respondents march or boycott than low-income respondents), but it too is not statistically significant.

Figure 5. 10 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on the Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Income

Note: The Effects of Predicted Talk on Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott are significant at the $p > .10$ level. The effect of predicted talk on Signing a Petition, working on a Community Project, and Participating in a Group that Took Local Reform were not statistically significant; so, those results are not displayed here. The effect of the interaction between predicted talk and income on both Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott is not statistically significant.

This reveals that there is no statistically significant difference of the effect of neighbor contact on participating in either of these forms of participation between low, middle, and high-income

respondents.³⁰ Again, these findings support the “rising tides” hypothesis, as it seems that contact with a neighbor is having similar effects on both forms of participation for all respondents, regardless of income level.

In addition to the general findings, the results in Figure 5.10 continue to reaffirm the finding that for forms of participation that demand greater political resources, like membership in political groups and marching/boycotting, the frequency of neighbor talk must be greater than for forms of participation that require fewer political resources, like voting. Note that neighbor talk does not begin to increase the predicted probability of either having membership or marching until the frequency of neighbor contact is around 0.65 (when neighbor talk is several times per month). For example, the predicted probability of marching for low, middle and high-income respondents is near zero, until, for all three income groups, the frequency of neighbor talk hits 0.50 (when neighbor talk is once a month). Once predicted neighbor talk reaches this frequency of contact, the effect of neighbor contact on participation is exponential. The predicted probability of marching for low, middle, and high-income respondents increases to 7 percent, 6 percent, and 5 percent respectively, once the frequency of neighbor talk hits 0.65. And once the frequency of neighbor talk peaks, when neighbor talk is 0.85 or once neighbors talk several times a week, the predicted probability of marching is about 20 percent for members of all three income groups. This shows, again, that for those more resource demanding forms of participation, like attending a march, the frequency of neighbor talk needs to be greater. This is also true for the effect of neighbor talk on membership in a political group and is also consistent with the pattern identified earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 4.

³⁰ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

Overall, the evidence presented in both Figures 5.9 and 5.10 supports the “rising tide hypothesis.” Neighbor contact has a positive effect on three forms of participation—voting, marching, and membership in a political group—and there is no statistically significant difference in the size of this effect for respondents of different income groups. This means that neighbor talk is having a positive effect on the participation of low, middle, and high-income respondents, making it more likely that individuals of all income groups participate more. But again, these results show the full effect of “predicted neighbor contact” on participation for respondents of different income levels rather than the effect of the unique “design-induced” neighbor contact alone on participation. As stated in the previous chapter, there are many variables that predict the likelihood that an individual talks to his neighbor and for that reason, an examination of the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact on individual political participation is necessary. I show the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact by ethnicity in the next section.

5.4.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Income

In order to isolate the effects of “design-induced” neighbor talk on political participation by respondent income level, I calculate the effect on participation of increasing talk by 0.05 units.³¹ Once I have calculated the predicted probability of participating at each 0.05 incremental level of neighborhood talk for low, middle, and high-income respondents, I can then measure the difference between each increase in talk for the three income groups. The difference between each 0.05 increase in talk is the additional predicted probability of participating from design-

³¹ As described in Section 4.3 in Chapter 4, I found that the neighborhood design characteristics increases talk by about 0.07 units. I underestimate the effect of design on talk to 0.05 units, so that I calculate the predicted probability of participating at both the lowest level of talk found in the data (0.30) and at the highest level of talk found in the data (0.85).

induced neighbor contact. The results in Figure 5.11 show the difference in the predicted probability of voting for each additional 0.05 increase of neighbor-to-neighbor talk for members of different income groups. The black line shows the results for low-income respondents, the red line shows the results for middle-income respondents and the yellow line shows the results for high-income respondents. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents' self-reported frequency of talk.³² Again, the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for low-income respondents, the red dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for middle-income respondents, and the yellow dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for high-income respondents.

Much like what was found in Chapter 4 and earlier in this current chapter, the effect of design-induced talk on probability of voting for low, middle, and high-income respondents varies depending on the frequency of talk. At both very low and very high levels of talk, small increases in contact for people who rarely or who regularly talk to their neighbors seems to generate smaller increases in the probability of voting. At the low and high end of talk, the effect of “design-induced talk” is anywhere between a 2.0 to 6.0 percent increase in the predicted probability of voting. This finding is true for respondents of all three income levels. In the middle range of talk, however, the effect of “design-induced” talk on the probability of voting is larger. Once neighbor talk is happening monthly (when frequency of contact is 0.50), the effect of “design-induced talk” is anywhere between a 7.0 to 9.0 percent increase in the predicted probability of voting. Again, this finding is true for members of all three income groups. The average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting is 6.0 percent for low-income respondents, 5.4 percent for middle-income respondents and 5.2 percent for high-income

³² A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.4.

respondents. This means that the increase in contact between neighbors from interactive neighborhood design features increases the probability of voting an average of 5.0 to 6.0 percent for respondents, regardless of income. This evidence further supports the “rising tides hypothesis” as on average, design-induced neighbor talk is having just about the same average effect on voting amongst low, middle, and high-income respondents. Moreover, these results further demonstrate the critical role that both place and people can play on individual participation, even amongst those individuals who are resource poor, like low-income voters.

Figure 5. 11 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Income

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk Low, Middle, and High-Income respondents and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of voting, the level of significance, and the average size of the effect see Table 5.4 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

The results in Figure 5.12 show the difference in the predicted probability of participating in non-voting forms of participation—membership in a political group and marching/boycotting—for each additional 0.05 increase of talk between low, middle, and high-income respondents. The black line shows the results for low-income respondents, the red line shows the results for middle-income respondents and the yellow line shows the results for high-income respondents. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents' self-reported frequency of talk.³³ Again, the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for low-income respondents, the red dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for middle-income respondents and the yellow dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for high-income respondents.

Figure 5. 12 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Income

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk for Low, Middle, and High-Income respondents and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of participating, and the level of significance, see Table 5.4 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

³³ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.4.

What is revealed in Figure 5.12 is that the increase in talk from neighborhood design has a small effect on the predicted probability of having membership in a political group or marching for low, middle, and high-income respondents until talk occurs monthly (once talk is 0.65). Before talk hits this level, the effect of design-induced talk on probability of participating ranges from 0 to 2.0 percent. Once talk between neighbors is happening at least once a week (once talk hits 0.70), the effect of design-induced talk on participating in both forms of participation begins to increase exponentially ranging from 3.0 percent to 11.0 percent at its peak. And, this pattern is true for respondents from all three income groups. This result shows that small increases in contact, like those from interactive neighborhood design features, for those people who have high levels of contact with their neighbors—like moving from talking once a week to several times a week—can actually garner a large increase in the predicted probability of both having membership in a political group and attending a march/boycott. For example, when talk is happening several times per week (when neighbor talk is 0.85), “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of marching by 5.0 percent for both low and middle-income respondents and 6.0 percent for high-income respondents. At this same level of neighbor talk, “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of having membership in a political group by 8.0 percent for low-income respondents 9.0 percent for middle-income respondents and 11.0 percent for high-income respondents. This finding that neighbor talk has its greatest effect on participation when the frequency of talk is at its highest level makes sense, in light of the fact that both of these forms of participation demand greater political resources. More frequent contact between neighbors would provide more opportunities to share and exchange political resources.

Overall, The average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of marching is 2 percent for all three income groups. For having membership in a political group, the average effect of design-induced talk amongst low-income respondents is 2 percent and for both middle and high-income respondents it is 3 percent. When compared to the average effects of design-induced talk on voting, these effects are smaller. This seems to suggest that for these more resource demanding forms of participation, increases to neighborly contacts generated by neighborhood design may not matter as much as they do for voting. The exception, however, is at the high end of the spectrum. In areas where neighbor-to-neighbor contacts are already fairly high, small increases in neighbor contact continue to produce dramatic increases in the likelihood of participating in these non-voting forms of participation.

5.4.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Income

These results, overall, continue to support the “rising tide” hypothesis. I found that talking to one’s neighbor increases the predicted probability of participating and the effect of talking to one’s neighbor was not statistically different between respondents of different income groups. This means that neighbors seem to be having the same positive effect on political participation amongst members of low, middle, and high-income groups. Since the poor disproportionately lack access to political resources, this finding demonstrates that even in neighborhoods where the residents are less likely to have the critical resources that increase individual participation, neighbors can help fill those personal gaps. At the same time, neighbors seem to also influence the political behavior of individuals who are more likely to possess the determinants of participation, like middle and high-income individuals. These results suggest that all people’s political engagement, regardless of income level, benefit from interactive neighborhoods and neighborly exchanges.

5.5 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Participation, Analysis by Education

In this section, I examine how an individual's education influences the effects of neighbor contact on individual political participation. Specifically, I explore whether the effect of talking to one's neighbor is the same or different between respondents with a high school diploma, some college, or advanced college degree. If "a helping hand helps those in need," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have a greater effect on the participation of respondents with only a high school diploma, because those with lower levels of education have less access to political resources, and so, contact with their neighbors will help fill their personal resource shortfalls (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995, Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). If "the rich get richer," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have the greatest effect on the participation of highly educated respondents (those with advanced degrees), because the highly educated are more likely to live in communities with politically resource rich neighbors from whom they can gather the determinants of participation (Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993). And if "the rising tide lifts all boats," then I would expect that predicted neighbor contact would have no significantly different effect on participation between the three educational attainment levels.

I first discuss the effects of neighbor talk for low, middle, and highly educated respondents on voting, the results can be found in Figure 5.13. I then discuss the results for all non-voting forms of participation; the results can be found in Figure 5.14. For complete results of the six logistic regressions, see Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

5.5.1 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Voting, By Education

Figure 5.13 compares the effect of neighbor talk on the predicted probability of voting between low, middle, and highly educated respondents. The lines in the figure plot the effect of

predicted probability of voting, while holding all other control variables at their mean. The black line plots the results for respondents with a high school diploma, the yellow line plots the results for respondents with some college and the red line plots the results for respondents with advanced degrees.³⁴ The points in Figure 5.13 represent the observed predicted probability of voting for each respondent in the survey; the black points are the results for respondents with a high school education, the yellow points are the results for respondents with some college and the red points are the results for respondents with advanced degrees.

The results in Figure 5.13 reveal two findings. First, they show the important role that education plays on influencing an individual's likelihood of voting. Notice that at very low levels of neighbor talk, when neighbor talk is 0.35 (talk happens several times per year), respondents with advanced degrees have a predicted probability of voting of just about 65 percent, while holding all other variables at their mean. The predicted probability of voting for respondents with lower levels of education—some college and high school—is significantly lower. Respondents with a high school diploma, at this low level of neighbor contact, have a predicted probability of voting of only 8 percent and for respondents with some college, their predicted probability of voting is 28 percent, while holding all other variables at their mean. This demonstrates the critical role that education plays in positively affecting turnout and is consistent with previous research.

That being said, the results in Figure 5.13 also reveal the important role that talking to a neighbor can have in helping to reduce that disparity between individuals with different levels of

³⁴ I calculated the predicted probability of voting for respondents with a High School Diploma by holding the value of education at 0; I calculated the predicted probability of voting for respondents with Some College by holding the value of education at 0.50; I calculated the predicted probability of voting for respondents with Advanced Degrees by holding the value of education at 1.0

education. The effect of the interaction between Education and Predicted Neighbor talk on Vote is -1.78, suggesting that talk with a neighbor may produce a smaller effect on turnout for respondents with higher levels of education than for respondents with lower levels of education. This result is illustrated in Figure 5.13. Notice that although respondents with advanced degrees are consistently predicted to turnout at higher rates as contact with a neighbor increases, the gap in predicted probability of voting between those with advanced degrees and those with only a high school diploma shrinks as talk increases. As talk moves from happening several times per year (when talk is 0.35) to happening several times per week (when talk is 0.85), the predicted probability of voting for respondents with only a high school diploma moves from 8 percent to 80 percent. This is an overall increase of predicted probability of voting of 72 percent. For respondents with advanced degrees, this same shift in neighbor talk moves the predicted probability of voting from 64 percent to 98 percent, which is an overall increase of predicted probability of voting of 34 percent. These changes in contact with neighbors shrink the gap in probability of voting between those with low levels of education and those with high levels from 56 percent difference in predicted probability of voting to only an 18 percent difference.

Although the overall increase in predicted probability for those with advanced degrees is smaller than it was for respondents with a high school diploma, this does not mean that talk is not playing an important role for these more highly educated respondents; in fact, neighbor contact is playing essentially the same role amongst these highly educated respondents as it is amongst the respondents with only a high school education. The effect of the interaction between Education and Predicted Neighbor Talk is not statistically significant, revealing that there is no difference of the effect of neighbor contact on vote between respondents with various levels of

education.³⁵ The results in Figure 5.13 simply demonstrate that for individuals who already are predicted to vote at a high rate—like those with advanced degrees—their likelihood of voting can only increase so much. After all, a person can only vote up to 100 percent of the time; highly educated people are just closer to that cap than those with lower levels of education.

Figure 5. 13 Effect of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Education

Note: The effect of Predicted Talk on Voting in a Presidential Election is statistically significant at $p > .05$. The effect of the interaction between Predicted Talk and Education on Voting is not statistically significant; so, any difference in the slope between respondents with a High School Diploma, Some College, or an Advanced Degree is not statistically significant.

³⁵ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

Overall, these results support the “rising tide hypothesis.” Contact with a neighbor has a positive effect on the probability of voting for all respondents, regardless of educational attainment. Any difference in the effect of talking with one’s neighbor on individual turnout between individuals of various educational attainments is not statistically significant. This means that talking with one’s neighbor is essentially having the same positive effect on turnout for highly educated individuals as it is on the turnout of those with less or low education. In other words, all people’s probability of voting benefits from talking to their neighbors.

5.5.2 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Non-Voting Forms of Participation, by Education

The results in Figure 5.14 compare the effects of predicted neighbor contact on two different forms of political participation: having membership in a political group and attending a political march/boycott. The points on the plots in Figure 5.14 represent the observed predicted probability of participating in the identified political act for each respondent in the survey, while the line represents the predicted probability of participating while holding all other control variables at their mean. Again, the black points and line represent the results for respondents with a high school diploma, the yellow points and line represent the results for respondents with some college, and the red points and line represent the results for respondents with advanced degrees.

The effect of neighbor contact on both forms of participation, seen in Figure 5.14, is positive for all respondents, regardless of level of education. As the frequency of neighbor contact goes up, so does the predicted probability of both having membership in a political group and marching/boycotting. The effect of the interaction between Education and Predicted Neighbor talk on having membership in a political group is 1.41 (suggesting that talk may have a larger effect on the likelihood that respondents with advanced degrees join a political group than

on respondents with a high school diploma), but it is not statistically significant. The effect of the interaction on attending a march/boycott is -1.44 (suggesting that talk may have smaller effect on the likelihood that respondents with advanced degrees march or boycott than on respondents with a high school diploma), but it too is not statistically significant. This reveals that there is no statistically significant difference of the effect of neighbor contact on participating in either of these forms of participation between respondents of different educational attainment levels.³⁶ Again, these findings support the “rising tides” hypothesis as it seems that contact with a neighbor is having similar effects on both forms of participation for all respondents, regardless of level of education.

Figure 5. 14 Effects of Predicted Neighbor Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Education

Political Group Membership

March/Boycott

Note: The Effects of Predicted Talk on Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott are significant at the $p > .10$ level. The effect of predicted talk on Signing a Petition, working on a Community Project, and Participating in a Group that Took Local Reform were not statistically significant; so, those results are not displayed here. The effect of the interaction between Predicted Talk and Education on both Having Membership in a Political Group and Attending a March/Boycott is not statistically significant.

³⁶ See Table 5.1 in the Appendix at the end of this chapter for complete results of this logistic regression.

In addition to the general findings, the results in Figure 5.14 continue to reaffirm the finding that for forms of participation that demand greater political resources, like membership in political groups and marching/boycotting, the frequency of neighbor talk must be greater than for forms of participation that require fewer political resources, like voting. Note that neighbor talk does not begin to increase the predicted probability of either having membership or marching until the frequency of neighbor contact is around 0.65 (when neighbor talk is several times per month). Once predicted neighbor talk reaches this frequency of contact, the effect of neighbor contact on participation is exponential. Meaning, as the frequency of contact goes up, so does the size of the effect of talk on participation. For example, before the frequency of talk hits that 0.65 level, the probability of marching for all respondents ranges from 1 percent to 4 percent. Once the frequency of talk reaches the 0.65 level, the probability of marching begins to increase dramatically for all respondents, ranging from 5 percent to 26 percent. For voting, neighbor talk begins to have a positive effect on the predicted probability of turning out once the frequency of neighbor contact is around .35 (when neighbor talk is several times per year). This finding is consistent with the pattern identified in Chapter 4 and noted earlier in this chapter.

Overall, the evidence presented in both Figures 5.13 and 5.14 supports the “rising tide hypothesis.” Neighbor contact has a positive effect on three forms of participation—voting, marching, and membership in a political group—and there is no statistically significant difference in the size of this effect for respondents of different ethnic groups. This means that neighbor talk is having a positive effect on the participation of all respondents, making it more likely that individuals of all education levels participate more. But again, these results show the full effect of “predicted neighbor contact” on participation for respondents of different educational attainment levels rather than the effect of the unique “design-induced” neighbor

contact alone on participation. As stated in the previous chapter, there are many variables that predict the likelihood that an individual talks to his neighbor and for that reason, an examination of the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact on individual political participation is necessary. I show the isolated effects of design-induced neighbor contact by education in the next section.

5.5.3. Isolated Effects of Design-Induced Neighbor Contact on Political Participation, by Education

In order to isolate the effects of “design-induced” neighbor talk on political participation by respondent education, I calculate the effect on participation of increasing talk by 0.05 units.³⁷ Once I have calculated the predicted probability of participating at each 0.05 incremental level of neighborhood talk for respondents at the three different levels of educational attainment, I can then measure the difference between each increase in talk for individuals with different levels of education. The difference between each 0.05 increase in talk is the additional predicted probability of participating from design-induced neighbor contact. The results in Figure 5.15 show the difference in the predicted probability of voting for each additional 0.05 increase of neighbor-to-neighbor talk for members of different education levels. The black line shows the results for respondents with a high school diploma, the yellow line shows the results for respondents with some college, and the red line shows the results for respondents with an advanced degree. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents’ self-reported frequency of talk.³⁸ Again, the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for

³⁷ As described in Section 4.3 in Chapter 4, I found that the neighborhood design characteristics increases talk by about 0.07 units. I underestimate the effect of design on talk to 0.05 units, so that I calculate the predicted probability of participating at both the lowest level of talk found in the data (0.30) and at the highest level of talk found in the data (0.85).

³⁸ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.5.

respondents with a high school diploma, the yellow dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for respondents with some college and the red dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for respondents with an advanced degree.

The results in Figure 5.15 diverge slightly from what was found earlier both in this current chapter and in Chapter 4. Recall that earlier results showed that the effect of design-induced talk on probability of voting is dependent on the frequency of talk. At both very low and very high levels of talk, small increases in contact for people who rarely or who regularly talk to their neighbors seemed to generate small increases in the probability of voting. In the middle range of talk, however, the effect of “design-induced” talk on the probability of voting was larger. In this current figure, however, the pattern has changed.

The results reveal that the effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting for respondents of different education levels is dependent on both the frequency of talk *and* the level of education. For respondents with advanced degrees, the effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting peaks at very low levels of talk. In fact, once the frequency of contact reaches several times per year, or when neighbor talk is 0.35, design-induced talk is predicted to increase the probability of voting by 6.0 percent, for those respondents with advanced degrees. After that peak, however, small increases in talk seem to have only small effects on the probability that respondents with advanced degrees vote. And once the frequency of talk is several times per month, when neighbor talk is 0.65, the effect drops to a 2.0 percent increase in probability of voting. And from there, any increases in contact with neighbors seems to have no substantive effect on probability of voting for these highly educated respondents. For respondents with some college, those with middle levels of education, the effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting better mirrors earlier results. At both low and high

levels of neighbor talk, small increases in contact result in small increases in the probability of voting. In the middle range of talk, design-induced contact appears to have large increases in the probability of voting. When talk between neighbors is happening at least once a month, when neighbor talk is 0.50, design-induced talk is predicted to increase the probability of voting 8.0 percent for respondents with some college. This is a large and positive effect on the likelihood of voting for these respondents with a middle level of education.

For respondents with a high school diploma, the effect of design-induced on the probability of voting peaks at higher levels of neighbor-to-neighbor contact; this is the opposite of what was found for those with advanced degrees. At low levels of talk, small increases in contact with neighbors generate moderate increases in the probability of voting. For example, when neighbor talk happens several times per year, when neighbor talk is 0.35, design-induced talk is predicted to increase the probability of voting by 3.0 percent for respondents with a high school diploma. This is the level of talk where respondents with advanced degrees saw the effect of design-induced talk peak. Once the frequency of contact reaches several times per month, when neighbor talk is 0.65, design-induced talk is predicted to increase the probability of voting 9.0 percent for these respondents with a high school diploma. And, unlike what has been documented earlier, even after this peak in the effect of design-induced talk on the probability of voting, small increases in talk continue to have large effects on the likelihood of turning out. Even at the highest level of talk, when talk happens several times per week or when talk is 0.85, design-induced talk is predicted to increase the probability of voting by 6.0 percent for those respondents with a high school diploma. For both respondents with some college and advanced degrees, when neighbor talk reached this high frequency of contact, the effect of designed-

induced talk was only predicted to increase the probability of voting 2.0 and 1.0 percent, respectively.

The major takeaway from the results in Figure 5.15 is that education seems to matter in a way that race, ethnicity and income did not. For the most part, design-induced talk (small increases in talk) seemed to affect the voting habits of all groups in similar ways. Regardless of race, ethnicity, and income, small increases in talk increased turnout the most at middle-frequencies of neighbor contact and this was true for Black, Non-Black, Hispanic, Non-Hispanic, Low, Middle, and High income respondents. Design-induced talk, however, is affecting the probability of voting for people with different levels of education uniquely. Small increases in talk benefit the probability of voting for highly educated people the most at low frequencies of neighbor contact. For those with mid-levels of education, design-induced talk increased the probability of voting the most at middle frequencies of neighbor contact. And for those with low-levels of education, design-induced talk increased the probability of voting the most at high frequencies of neighbor contact.

The results suggest that the effect of neighborhoods and neighbors on influencing an individual's probability of voting may be mitigated by that person's level of education. Highly educated individuals receive little benefits to their probability of voting with small increases in contact with their neighbors. On average, design-induced talk increases their likelihood of voting by 2.8 percent. For individuals with less education, however, small increases in contact with neighbors, like those generated by interactive design features, can have substantively meaningful benefits to their probability of voting. On average, design-induced talk increases their likelihood of voting by 6.0 percent. This finding makes sense for two reasons. First, people with higher educations already vote at high levels; so, there is not much room for their

likelihood of voting to increase, because they already vote at such a high level. And second, people with low levels of education do not have the personal resources like information, interest, etc. and so may rely on their neighbors more to help fill those political resource gaps, which would also explain why design-induced talk has the greatest increase in probability of voting at a high frequency of neighbor talk for those with less education.

Figure 5. 15 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Voting, by Education

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk for respondents with different education levels and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of voting, the level of significance, and the average size of the effect see Table 5.5 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

Moreover, these results further demonstrate the critical role that both place and people can play on individual participation, especially amongst those individuals who are disproportionately resource poor, like low-educated voters. This being said, recall that the differences between the effects of neighbor talk on vote for respondents with varying levels of education was not statistically significant; so, these observed patterns are simply suggestive of how education may be mitigating the effects of place and people on voter turnout.

The results in Figure 5.16 show the difference in the predicted probability of participating in non-voting forms of participation—membership in a political group and marching/boycotting—for each additional 0.05 increase of talk between respondents with different levels of education. The black line shows the results for respondents with a high school diploma, the yellow line shows the results for respondents with some college, and the red line shows the results for respondents with an advanced degree. The rug plot shows the actual distribution of respondents' self-reported frequency of talk.³⁹ Again, the black dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for respondents with a high school diploma, the yellow dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for respondents with some college and the red dashes indicate the distribution of neighbor talk for respondents with an advanced degree.

What is revealed in Figure 5.16 is more similar to what was found earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 4. It shows that the increase in talk from neighborhood design has a small effect on the predicted probability of having membership in a political group or marching for respondents of all education levels until talk occurs monthly (once talk is 0.65). Before talk hits this level, the effect of design-induced talk on probability of participating ranges from 0 to 2.0 percent. Once talk between neighbors is happening at least once a week (once talk hits 0.70), the

³⁹ A table of these results can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, Table 5.5.

effect of design-induced talk on participating in both forms of participation begins to increase exponentially ranging from 3.0 percent to 12.0 percent at its peak. And, this pattern is true for respondents of all education levels. This result shows that small increases in contact, like those from interactive neighborhood design features, for those people who have high levels of contact with their neighbors—like moving from talking once a week to several times a week—can actually garner a large increase in the predicted probability of both having membership in a political group and attending a march/boycott. For example, when talk is happening several times per week (when neighbor talk is 0.85), “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of marching by 5.0 percent for respondents with a high school diploma, 6.0 percent for respondents with some college and 6.0 percent for respondents with advanced degrees. At this high-level of neighbor contact, design-induced talk is affecting respondents at all levels of education about the same.

There is a slight deviation of this finding when it comes to the probability of having membership in a political group. At this same high-level of neighbor talk, “design-induced talk” is predicted to increase the probability of having membership in a political group by 5.0 percent for respondents with a high school diploma, 9.0 percent for respondents with some college, and 12.0 percent for respondents with advanced degrees. Much like what was found earlier, design-induced talk is having its greatest effect on the likelihood of joining a political group when the frequency of contact with neighbors is at the highest level and this is true for all respondents despite education level. Unlike what was found earlier, the size of this effect is much larger for those with the highest level of education. This finding that neighbor talk has its greatest effect on participation when the frequency of talk is at its highest level and amongst those with the highest education makes sense, in light of the fact having membership in a political group

demands greater political resources. More frequent contact between neighbors would provide more opportunities to share and exchange political resources and having the skills developed with a higher education seem to create an ideal environment for fostering increased levels of engaging in this form of political participation.

Figure 5. 16 Effect of "Design-Induced" Talk on Predicted Probability of Participating in Non-Voting Forms of Political Participation, by Education

Note: These incremental measures were calculated by first finding the predicted probability of participating at every .05 increment of talk for respondents with varying levels of education and then finding the difference between each probability of participating. To see the actual values of the predicted probability, the difference between each predicted probability of participating, and the level of significance, see Table 5.5 in the Appendix found at the end of Chapter 5.

Overall, the average effect of design-induced talk on the probability of marching is 1.5 percent for respondents with a high school diploma, 1.7 percent for respondents with some college and 2.0 percent for respondents with advanced degrees. For having membership in a political group, the average effect of design-induced talk amongst respondents with a high school diploma is 1.4 percent, 2.6 percent for respondents with some college and 4.1 percent for respondents with advanced degrees. When compared to the average effects of design-induced talk on voting, these effects are smaller, especially amongst respondents with high school

diplomas. This seems to suggest that for these more resource demanding forms of participation, increases to neighborly contacts generated by neighborhood design may not matter as much as they do for voting. The exception, however, is at the high end of the spectrum. In areas where neighbor-to-neighbor contacts are already fairly high, small increases in neighbor contact can actually increase participation in these non-voting forms of participation dramatically.

5.5.4. Overview of Effects of Neighbor Talk on Participation, by Education

These results, overall, support the “rising tide” hypothesis. I found that talking to one’s neighbor increases the predicted probability of participating and the effect of talking to one’s neighbor was not statistically different between respondents with varying levels of education. This means that neighbors seem to be having the same positive effect on political participation amongst individuals with all levels of education. Since individuals with lower education disproportionately lack access to political resources, this finding demonstrates that even in neighborhoods where the residents are less likely to have the critical resources that increase individual participation, neighbors can help fill those personal gaps. At the same time, neighbors seem to also influence the political behavior of individuals who are more likely to possess the determinants of participation, like highly educated individuals. These results suggest that all people’s political engagement, regardless of education, benefit from interactive neighborhoods and neighborly exchanges.

5.6 Overview of Who Benefits Most

The overarching takeaway from all of these results is that I find support for the “rising tides” hypothesis. There was no statistically different effect of neighbor contact on political participation for individuals of different racial, ethnic, income, or education

groups. Essentially, neighbor talk is having the same positive effect on individual political participation, regardless of these individual characteristics. This means that all individuals' participation benefit from talking to their neighbors.

A more nuanced look at this overarching finding reveals that neighbor contact has a larger effect on the likelihood that an individual votes than it does on whether or not an individual participates in a non-voting form of participation, like attending a march/boycott or joining a political group. On average, moving from talking with a neighbor several times per year to talking with a neighbor several times per week increased the probability an individual voted by about 63 percent. This same increase in talk with neighbors, on average, increased the probability an individual joined a political group by about 33 percent or that an individual attended a march/boycott by about 24 percent. This was true, again, for all respondents regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or education. Despite the fact that the effect of neighbor contact on non-voting forms of participation was smaller than it was on voting, the effect was still positive and meaningful, and again, true for all respondents.

I also show that one need not dramatically increase contact with neighbors in order to garner meaningful increases in participation, like the increase described above. Small increases in contact with neighbors, like those generated from interactive design features, can also have substantively meaningful affects on individual political participation. And, this was true for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, income, and education. On average, a 5 point increase in talk—like moving from talking with a neighbor several times per month to once a week—increases the probability that an individual votes by about 5 percent. This is true for all individuals, except for highly educated individuals whose

turnout was already projected to be high and so had very little “room” to increase turnout. An average 5 percent increase in vote may seem small, but put into context of what other forms of intentional voter mobilization efforts garner, it is actually large. On average, mailers have been found to have no effect on turnout and phone calls made through phone banks have been found to increase turnout by an average of 2.6 percent (Green and Gerber 2008). This shows that the small increases in neighbor contact from interactive design can actually increase turnout more than these typically used Get-Out-the-Vote strategies.

The effect of design-induced contact on non-voting forms of participation was smaller, but still relevant. On average, a small increase in talk, like that from design-induced talk, increases the probability that an individual joins a political group by about 3.0 percent and that an individual attends a march/boycott by about 2.0 percent; this was true for all respondents. And once again, although increases in participation of 3.0 and 2.0 percent may seem small; they are not insignificant. Both joining a political group and attending a march/boycott are more resource demanding activities than voting, and yet small increases in talk with neighbors are yielding larger or equal increases in the probability that individuals participate in either of these forms of participation than what is generated from sending mailers and calling with phone banks does for increasing turnout. This illustrates the critical role that neighborhoods and neighbors can play in stimulating engagement in even resource demanding forms of participation.

The overarching substantive takeaway from all of these results is that both neighborhoods and neighbors can have meaningful effects on individual political participation. And, this is true for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, income, and education. For resource poor individuals—racial/ethnic minorities, the poor, and those

with little education—this means that neighborhoods and neighbors can help fill their political resource gaps, increasing their individual political participation. For resource rich individuals, this means that neighborhoods and neighbors can help increase their likelihood of engaging in even more resource demanding forms of participation—like having membership in political groups and attending marches/boycotts—that they are not participating in already. And for all individuals, this means that neighborhoods and neighbors have the potential to help facilitate a politically engaged citizenry that better mirrors the socio-demographic composition of the nation as a whole.

5.7 Appendix

The tables presented in this Appendix provide the complete results for the evidence presented in Figures 5.1 through 5.16.

Table 5.1 Results from Six Logistic Regressions: Effect of Four Different Interactions Between Predicted Neighbor Talk and Race, Ethnicity, Income, and Education on Various Forms of Political Participation

Variable	Vote 96		Membership in Political Group	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
<i>Interaction</i>				
Black	1.26	0.98	0.21	1.16
Predicted Talk	6.81*	3.42	7.69(*)	4.18
Blk x Pred.				
Talk	-1.12	1.58	0.61	1.78
Hispanic	-1.19	1.25	0.91	1.35
Hisp. x Pred.				
Talk	1.91	2.06	-0.66	2.15
Income	0.34	0.7	-0.94	0.89
Inc. x Pred.				
Talk	0.8	1.04	1.84	1.25
Education	3.64**	1.36	0.33	1.17
Educ. x Pred.				
Talk	-1.78	2.04	1.41	1.7
<i>Ind. Level</i>				
Citizen	4.42***	0.43	0.04	0.35
Gender	0.23***	0.07	-0.28***	0.08
Age	6.33***	1.43	-0.24	1.83
Age^2	-3.58*	1.59	-0.9	2.02
Years in				
Comm.	0.16	0.19	0.05	0.23
Home Owner	0.01	0.23	-0.32	0.29
Ideology	-0.21	0.16	1.26***	0.2
Commute	0.14	0.39	0.22	0.61
Inc. Miss	1.15***	0.22	0.34	0.28
<i>Tract Level</i>				
% Urban	0.01	0.2	-0.45(*)	0.26
% Hm. Built				
'40	0.04	0.19	0.35(*)	0.22
% Commuting	-0.96(*)	0.59	-2.47***	0.69
Log Pop. Dens	0.02	0.03	-0.02	0.04
Racial Div.	-0.64***	0.17	0.07	0.2
Income Div.	-0.53	1.22	2.2	1.74
% BA of	0.07	0.22	0.22	0.25

Higher Intercept	-9.28	1.9	-8.46	2.53
N	7849		8137	
N Tract	834		837	
R^2	0.31		0.08	
Variable	Attend a March/Boycott		Community Project	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
<i>Interaction</i>				
Black	0.29	1.01	1.29(*)	0.72
Predicted Talk	7.39(*)	4.53	3.82	2.67
Blk x Pred.				
Talk	0.58	1.58	-1.45	1.11
Hispanic	0.24	1.08	-0.43	0.82
Hisp. x Pred.				
Talk	0.52	1.77	1.12	1.33
Income	-1.5*	0.77	0.3	0.49
Inc. x Pred.				
Talk	1.68	1.12	0.4	0.69
Education	1.62	1.12	-0.07	0.75
Educ. x Pred.				
Talk	-1.44	1.67	2.55*	1.09
<i>Ind. Level</i>				
Citizen	-0.15	0.37	0.12	0.23
Gender	-0.19*	0.09	0.2***	0.06
Age	-0.56	1.87	-0.63	1.1
Age^2	-5.72**	2.29	-1.34	1.23
Years in				
Comm.	0.01	0.25	0.19	0.14
Home Owner	-0.3	0.32	0.02	0.18
Ideology	1.68***	0.23	0.25*	0.12
Commute	0.86(*)	0.47	-0.42	0.34
Inc. Miss	-0.78**	0.32	0.7***	0.18
<i>Tract Level</i>				
% Urban	-0.45(*)	0.27	-0.31*	0.16
% Hm. Built				
'40	0.63**	0.23	0.37**	0.15
% Commuting	-2.13**	0.76	-0.97*	0.43
Log Pop. Dens	0.05	0.05	-0.03	0.03
Racial Div.	0.13	0.2	-0.16	0.13
Income Div.	0.1	1.67	1.15	1.3
% BA of				
Higher	0.47(*)	0.25	0.01	0.16
Intercept	-6.25	2.54	-4.16	1.7
N	8129		8128	
N Tract	836		837	
R^2	0.08		0.08	

Variable	Reform Group		Sign a Petition	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
<i>Interaction</i>				
Black	1.01	0.84	0.71	0.79
Predicted Talk	4.2	3.12	0.73	3.01
Blk x Pred.				
Talk	-1.12	1.29	-1.72	1.2
Hispanic	-0.45	1.12	-1.63(*)	0.87
Hisp. x Pred.				
Talk	0.69	1.83	2.64(*)	1.4
Income	0.53	0.64	0.5	0.55
Inc. x Pred.				
Talk	-0.2	0.92	-0.21	0.78
Education	0.7	0.93	2.76***	0.73
Educ. x Pred.				
Talk	1.36	1.35	-2.54*	1.06
<i>Ind. Level</i>				
Citizen	0.41	0.26	1.19***	0.25
Gender	-0.11	0.07	0.01	0.06
Age	0.96	1.35	2.56*	1.25
Age^2	-3.15*	1.53	-4.78***	1.32
Years in				
Comm.	-0.08	0.17	0.33*	0.17
Home Owner	-0.23	0.21	0.16	0.21
Ideology	0.94***	0.14	0.85***	0.12
Commute	-0.2	0.37	-0.07	0.38
Inc. Miss	0.32	0.23		
<i>Tract Level</i>				
% Urban	-0.13	0.19	0.18	0.19
% Hm. Built			0.19	0.17
'40	0.5***	0.16	0.46**	0.17
% Commuting	-1.13*	0.51	-0.81	0.53
Log Pop. Dens	0.01	0.04	-0.05	0.03
Racial Div.	0.23(*)	0.13	-0.13	0.14
Income Div.	0.82	1.05	1.3	1.17
% BA of				
Higher	0.45**	0.17	0.36(*)	0.2
Intercept	-5.83	1.74	-4.04	1.79
N	8020		8096	
N Tract	836		837	
R ²	0.09		0.07	

Note: (*) $p > .10$; * $p > .05$; ** $p > .01$; *** $p > .000$

Table 5. 2 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Race

Vote				
Black			Non-Black	
Frequency of Neigh. Talk	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff
0.3	0.43	0	0.23	0
0.35	0.5	0.07	0.29	0.06
0.4	0.56	0.06	0.36	0.07
0.45	0.63	0.07	0.44	0.08
0.5	0.69	0.06	0.52	0.08
0.55	0.74	0.05	0.6	0.08
0.6	0.79	0.05	0.67	0.07
0.65	0.83	0.04	0.74	0.07
0.7	0.86	0.03	0.8	0.06
0.75	0.89	0.03	0.84	0.04
0.8	0.92	0.03	0.88	0.04
0.85	0.94	0.02	0.91	0.03
Avg. Effect		0.04		0.06

Membership in Political Group				
Black			Non-Black	
Frequency of Neigh. Talk	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.4	0.02	0.01	0.01	0
0.45	0.02	0	0.02	0.01
0.5	0.03	0.01	0.02	0
0.55	0.05	0.02	0.03	0.01
0.6	0.08	0.03	0.05	0.02
0.65	0.11	0.03	0.07	0.02
0.7	0.17	0.06	0.1	0.03
0.75	0.24	0.07	0.14	0.04
0.8	0.34	0.1	0.2	0.06
0.85	0.45	0.11	0.29	0.09
Avg. Effect		0.04		0.02

Attend March/Boycott				
Black			Non-Black	
Frequency of Neigh. Talk	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.02	0.01	0.01	0
0.4	0.02	0	0.01	0

0.45	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01
0.5	0.04	0.01	0.02	0
0.55	0.05	0.01	0.03	0.01
0.6	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.01
0.65	0.1	0.03	0.06	0.02
0.7	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.02
0.75	0.2	0.06	0.11	0.03
0.8	0.27	0.07	0.15	0.04
0.85	0.35	0.08	0.2	0.05
Avg. Effect		0.03		0.02

Note: These predicted probabilities are calculated by holding all control variables at their means. The values of Predicted Neighbor Talk are set from 0.30 to 0.85 at intervals of 0.05, because this was the range of predicted neighbor talk that exist in data. The interval of 0.05 was selected to coordinate with the predicted effect of Design on Talk calculated in the first-stage analysis. This is actually a modest estimate of the effect of design-induced talk on participation as the actual effect of design on talk is 0.07.

Table 5.3 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Ethnicity

Vote				
Frequency of Neigh. Talk	Hispanic		Non-Hispanic	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff
0.3	0.17	0	0.27	0
0.35	0.23	0.06	0.33	0.06
0.4	0.3	0.07	0.4	0.07
0.45	0.39	0.09	0.47	0.07
0.5	0.49	0.1	0.55	0.08
0.55	0.59	0.1	0.62	0.07
0.6	0.68	0.09	0.69	0.07
0.65	0.76	0.08	0.75	0.06
0.7	0.83	0.07	0.81	0.06
0.75	0.88	0.05	0.85	0.04
0.8	0.92	0.04	0.89	0.04
0.85	0.94	0.02	0.91	0.02
Avg. Effect		0.06		0.05

Membership in a Political Group				
Frequency of Neigh. Talk	Hispanic		Non-Hispanic	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.4	0.02	0.01	0.01	0
0.45	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01
0.5	0.04	0.01	0.02	0
0.55	0.05	0.01	0.03	0.01
0.6	0.07	0.02	0.05	0.02
0.65	0.11	0.04	0.07	0.02
0.7	0.15	0.04	0.1	0.03
0.75	0.21	0.06	0.15	0.05
0.8	0.29	0.08	0.22	0.07
0.85	0.38	0.09	0.3	0.08
Avg. Effect		0.03		0.02

Attend March/Boycott				
Frequency of Neigh. Talk	Hispanic		Non-Hispanic	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.4	0.02	0.01	0.01	0

0.45	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01
0.5	0.04	0.01	0.02	0
0.55	0.05	0.01	0.03	0.01
0.6	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.01
0.65	0.1	0.03	0.06	0.02
0.7	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.02
0.75	0.19	0.05	0.11	0.03
0.8	0.26	0.07	0.15	0.04
0.85	0.34	0.08	0.21	0.06
Avg. Effect		0.03		0.02

Note: These predicted probabilities are calculated by holding all control variables at their means. The values of Predicted Neighbor Talk are set from 0.30 to 0.85 at intervals of 0.05, because this was the range of predicted neighbor talk that exist in data. The interval of 0.05 was selected to coordinate with the predicted effect of Design on Talk calculated in the first-stage analysis. This is actually a modest estimate of the effect of design-induced talk on participation as the actual effect of design on talk is 0.07.

Table 5. 4 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Income

Vote						
Freq. of Neigh. Talk	Low Income		Middle Income		High Income	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.
0.3	0.22	0	0.28	0	0.34	0
0.35	0.28	0.06	0.34	0.06	0.41	0.07
0.4	0.34	0.06	0.42	0.08	0.5	0.09
0.45	0.41	0.07	0.5	0.08	0.58	0.08
0.5	0.49	0.08	0.58	0.08	0.66	0.08
0.55	0.56	0.07	0.65	0.07	0.73	0.07
0.6	0.63	0.07	0.72	0.07	0.8	0.07
0.65	0.7	0.07	0.78	0.06	0.85	0.05
0.7	0.76	0.06	0.83	0.05	0.89	0.04
0.75	0.81	0.05	0.87	0.04	0.92	0.03
0.8	0.85	0.04	0.91	0.04	0.94	0.02
0.85	0.89	0.04	0.93	0.02	0.96	0.02
Avg. Effect		0.06		0.05		0.05

Membership in a Political Group						
Freq. of Neigh. Talk	Low Income		Middle Income		High Income	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.4	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.45	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
0.5	0.02	0	0.02	0	0.02	0
0.55	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.01
0.6	0.05	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.05	0.02
0.65	0.07	0.02	0.08	0.03	0.08	0.03
0.7	0.1	0.03	0.11	0.03	0.13	0.05
0.75	0.14	0.04	0.17	0.06	0.2	0.07
0.8	0.19	0.05	0.24	0.07	0.29	0.09
0.85	0.27	0.08	0.33	0.09	0.4	0.11
Avg. Effect		0.02		0.03		0.03

Attend March/Boycott						
Freq. of Neigh. Talk	Low Income		Middle Income		High Income	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.4	0.02	0.01	0.01	0	0.01	0

0.45	0.02	0	0.02	0.01	0.01	0
0.5	0.03	0.01	0.02	0	0.02	0.01
0.55	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.02	0
0.6	0.05	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.01
0.65	0.07	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.05	0.02
0.7	0.09	0.02	0.08	0.02	0.07	0.02
0.75	0.13	0.04	0.11	0.03	0.1	0.03
0.8	0.17	0.04	0.16	0.05	0.15	0.05
0.85	0.22	0.05	0.21	0.05	0.21	0.06
Avg. Effect		0.02		0.02		0.02

Note: These predicted probabilities are calculated by holding all control variables at their means. The values of Predicted Neighbor Talk are set from 0.30 to 0.85 at intervals of 0.05, because this was the range of predicted neighbor talk that exist in data. The interval of 0.05 was selected to coordinate with the predicted effect of Design on Talk calculated in the first-stage analysis. This is actually a modest estimate of the effect of design-induced talk on participation as the actual effect of design on talk is 0.07.

Table 5. 5 Effects of "Design-Induced" Talk on the Predicted Probabilities of Various Forms of Political Participation, by Education

Vote						
Freq. of Neigh. Talk	High School		Some College		Advanced Degree	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.
0.3	0.08	0	0.28	0	0.64	0
0.35	0.11	0.03	0.34	0.06	0.7	0.06
0.4	0.14	0.03	0.42	0.08	0.76	0.06
0.45	0.19	0.05	0.49	0.07	0.8	0.04
0.5	0.25	0.06	0.57	0.08	0.84	0.04
0.55	0.32	0.07	0.64	0.07	0.87	0.03
0.6	0.4	0.08	0.71	0.07	0.9	0.03
0.65	0.49	0.09	0.77	0.06	0.92	0.02
0.7	0.58	0.09	0.82	0.05	0.94	0.02
0.75	0.66	0.08	0.86	0.04	0.96	0.02
0.8	0.74	0.08	0.9	0.04	0.97	0.01
0.85	0.8	0.06	0.92	0.02	0.98	0.01
Avg. Effect		0.06		0.05		0.03

Membership in Political Group						
Freq. of Neigh. Talk	High School		Some College		Advanced Degree	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.4	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.02	0.01
0.45	0.01	0	0.02	0.01	0.02	0
0.5	0.02	0.01	0.02	0	0.04	0.02
0.55	0.02	0	0.03	0.01	0.06	0.02
0.6	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.02	0.08	0.02
0.65	0.04	0.01	0.08	0.03	0.13	0.05
0.7	0.06	0.02	0.11	0.03	0.19	0.06
0.75	0.09	0.03	0.16	0.05	0.28	0.09
0.8	0.13	0.04	0.23	0.07	0.38	0.1
0.85	0.18	0.05	0.32	0.09	0.5	0.12
Avg. Effect		0.01		0.02		0.04

Attend March/Boycott						
Freq. of Neigh. Talk	High School		Some College		Advanced Degree	
	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.	Pred. Prob.	Diff.
0.3	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
0.35	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.02	0.01
0.4	0.01	0	0.02	0.01	0.02	0

0.45	0.01	0	0.02	0	0.03	0.01
0.5	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.01
0.55	0.02	0	0.03	0	0.05	0.01
0.6	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.02	0.07	0.02
0.65	0.05	0.02	0.06	0.01	0.09	0.02
0.7	0.07	0.02	0.09	0.03	0.12	0.03
0.75	0.1	0.03	0.12	0.03	0.15	0.03
0.8	0.14	0.04	0.16	0.04	0.2	0.05
0.85	0.19	0.05	0.22	0.06	0.26	0.06
Avg. Effect		0.01		0.02		0.02

Note: These predicted probabilities are calculated by holding all control variables at their means. The values of Predicted Neighbor Talk are set from 0.30 to 0.85 at intervals of 0.05, because this was the range of predicted neighbor talk that exist in data. The interval of 0.05 was selected to coordinate with the predicted effect of Design on Talk calculated in the first-stage analysis. This is actually a modest estimate of the effect of design-induced talk on participation as the actual effect of design on talk is 0.07.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I offer evidence to support the claims of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation* and have shown that both place and people influence individual political engagement. I have demonstrated that the design of neighborhoods affects the frequency at which neighbors come into contact with one another. The evidence shows that individuals living in neighborhoods with isolating characteristics—attached garages, private front entrances, cul-de-sacs, etc.—talk to their immediate neighbors less often. Individuals, however, living in neighborhoods designed with primarily interactive characteristics—front porches, sidewalks, gridded and tree-lined streets, etc.—talk to their neighbors more frequently. I then showed that talking to neighbors leads to greater levels of individual political participation. The evidence reveals that this was true for all forms of participation, except for signing a petition. A more nuanced discussion of the results also revealed that forms of participation that require few political resources—like voting—demand less frequent contacts with neighbors; whereas, forms of participation that require greater political resources—like volunteering for a community project, having membership in a political group, or attending a march/boycott—demand more frequent interactions with neighbors before talk begins to generate positive effects on individual political engagement.

I also demonstrated that neighborhoods and neighbors matter for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or education. Specifically, the evidence showed that contact with neighbors produced the same, positive effect on individual political participation for all people, no matter their individual characteristics. The evidence further demonstrated that even small

increases in the frequency of talk with neighbors, like those produced from interactive design features, have real and substantively meaningful affects on individual political participation; and again, this was true for all people, regardless of individual socio-demographic characteristics.

Overall, I have shown that neighborhoods and neighbors matter, because together they influence individual political participation. These findings, again, were true for different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. They persist for different forms of participation, including resource demanding forms of political engagement like having membership in a political organization and volunteering in a community project. All of this evidence supports the tenets of the *Place and People Model of Political Participaiton*.

I end with an examination of areas for future research on the effects of both place and people on participation, focusing on questions left unanswered here. I then discuss the implications of how the *Place and People Model of Political Participation* fits into the broader conversation of American political engagement.

6.1 Future Research

There are several unanswered questions, and certainly many more, not addressed here. In this section I focus on two areas for future exploration. The first focuses on the underlying assumption of the *Place and People Model of Political Participation*. The second examines a question of how to put the *Place and People* findings into practice.

6.1.1 Does Talking Lead to More Political Resources?

The major finding of this book is that the design of place influences the frequency of talk between neighbors and that the subsequent effect of talk between neighbors is that it leads to more political participation. The underlying assumption of why talk between neighbors leads to more participation is that through contact with neighbors there is an

exchange of political resources. This means that talk with a neighbor leads an individual to have more political information, more time, more interest in politics, or more invitations to get involved, all of which are critical to individual political engagement. I, however, have not tested the relationship between talk with neighbors and the accumulation of these political resources, which leaves the following question unanswered: Does talking to one's neighbor lead to an increase in political resources? Understanding why contact with neighbors leads to more political participation is critical to fully comprehending the underlying mechanism that helps to build a politically engaged community.

Examining whether contact with a neighbor leads to the gathering of political resources will require carefully constructed measures of them. The standard survey questions used to measure access to political resources may not be sufficient for measuring the "shape and form" that political resources exchanged through neighborly contacts may take. For example, political information is typically measured by asking respondents in a survey to name their two Senators, or some type of objective test of political knowledge. This, however, may not be the best way to tap into the type of political information shared through contact with neighbors. Conversations between neighbors are most likely not overtly political and probably do not lead to increases in this type of political knowledge, which means that this measure of political information would fail to capture the type of information that is most likely to be exchanged between neighbors. The problem is, today, we do not know what "type" of political information is being exchanged between neighbors and so, constructing a variable that actually captures it is a challenge.

This may also be true for the other forms of political resources. Current measures of political interest and political mobilization may not be the most accurate ways of detecting

how neighbors might be mobilizing or building interest with each other. This means that new measures for capturing exactly what is exchanged in neighborly conversations needs to be constructed, in order to confirm what is the underlying mechanism functioning between neighbor-to-neighbor contact and individual political participation.

6.1.2 Can You Activate the Neighbor Network?

Throughout the book, I have shown that neighborhoods and neighbors work together to influence individual political participation. More specifically, I have shown that certain types of neighborhoods better facilitate interaction between neighbors, interactions that then play a critical role in influencing individual political participation. What I have not shown, however, is how or if these neighbor interactions can be activated to more explicitly serve as a source of political resources. I am left wondering: Can you activate the neighbor network to serve as a greater source of political mobilization?

As I stated in the previous section, most likely, neighborly conversations are not overtly political. Neighbors are probably not sitting on front porches and exchanging Get-Out-the-Vote messages. But what if they did? Previous studies attempting to encourage and capture these types of political exchanges between neighbors have found no success. For example, in a 2008 field experiment, Nickerson tested whether or not contact with a GOTV canvasser produced a spillover effect on the turnout of the neighbor of the individual contacted. He found no spillover effect of contact on individual turnout between households (Nickerson 2008). This means that contact with a canvasser increased the turnout of the person contacted, but not the turnout of his neighbor. The underlying conclusion of studies, like this one, is that neighbors do not serve as sources of political

mobilization, and has lead to the broad acceptance that neighbors do not mobilize each other to participate. Of course, I have shown in this current book that they can.

The problem with these early studies is that they ignore the role of neighborhood design. I would assert that perhaps these earlier works were looking in the wrong places. My research suggests that canvassing in the right types of neighborhoods may lead to spillover effects between neighbors. It may be that canvassing in neighborhoods with “isolating features” would lead to no spillover between neighbors, but that canvassing in neighborhoods with “interactive features” would lead to spillover between neighbors. A reevaluation of the ability for neighbors to serve as a source of political mobilization needs to be conducted, in order to fully understand how place and people work together to impact individual political behavior. This unanswered question further illustrates the importance of incorporating considerations of place into our theories of individual political behavior. However, without conducting this research the importance of contextual effects is still unclear.

6.2 Place, People and American Political Participation

Countless studies have demonstrated the importance of political resources, like time, money, information and mobilization, in influencing individual political participation (Verba et al 2002; Verba and Nie 1972; Campbell et al. 1960; Downs 1957). The literature has also documented the fact that these political resources are not evenly distributed in society and that those who are less likely to have access to them—low socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic minorities—are therefore less likely to participate (Bartels, 2005; Lazarsfeld, et al., 1944; Campbell, et al., 1960; Milbrath, 1965; Verba and Nie, 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). Gaining access to these political resources is then quinessential

in increasing participation amongst both these underrepresented populations and the general public.

Traditionally, political science research has looked to individual characteristics—income, education, family history, etc.—as the primary source of these resources, largely ignoring the potential contextual sources (Verba et al 2002; Verba and Nie 1972; Campbell et al. 1960). But the promise of how individual characteristics would translate into aggregate increases in political participation has not been realized. For example, individual education is by far the greatest predictor of political participation. Scholars anticipated that as the number of people achieving greater levels of education increased, so would political engagement. And yet, it has been well documented that despite the rising number of people earning a college degree, fewer people are participating (Putnam 2000). This is true not only for resource demanding forms of participation—like joining a political group, volunteering, and attending a march or rally—but also for voting. In response to this pattern, a rising number of studies in the field have begun turning their attention to contextual sources of political resources (Hopkins and Williamson 2010; Barber 2002; Mattson 2002; Duane et al 2000; Oliver 2001; Oliver 1999; Lofland 1998; Mow and Wilkie 1997; Oldenburg 1989; Jackson 1985). This current study is part of that growing conversation.

Emerging out of this shift to examining contextual effects on individual political behavior came the notion that where people lived may matter, especially when it came to understanding why some people participate and others do not. Critics and scholars in this area of study asserted that “It may well be that people who live in communities defined by garage-dominated facades, non-grid street plans, and private backyards are less engaged than those in communities where the architecture promotes more public intercourse” (Oliver 2001). These claims that the design

of neighborhoods has a direct effect on neighborly exchanges have primarily been supported by observational and case study evidence or through the use of proxy measures of design. The evidence presented in this book offers empirical support to their claims and overcomes the weaknesses of previous research in three ways. First, the analysis was conducted at a lower level of aggregation, the census tract, which provides a more accurate depiction of an individual's immediate built environment. Second, it provides actual measures of neighborhood design features that were thought to influence neighbor interaction, as opposed to proxy. Finally, unlike previous studies that measured the direct effects of design on various forms of individual political behavior, this current study measures the talking that previous studies claimed was the mechanism working between design and participation. It reveals that neighborhood design matters because it has a direct effect on neighbor-to-neighbor contact. And that neighbor interaction matters because it has a direct effect on individual political participation.

What all of this evidence reveals is that contextual effects—where people live and who lives around them—can effect both community engagement and individual political participation. As the design of American neighborhoods has undergone a dramatic shift from pedestrian-centered to car-centered starting at the turn of the century, the effects of these physical changes to place on political engagement have been negative. The real world consequence of which is that Americans have grown disconnected not only from each other, but also from the democratic process. Of course, “neighborhood is not everything, it is something—individuals are not isolated atoms, far removed from their surroundings,” and if we as a society, strive for universal representation, we need to begin to consider how the way we construct communities affects the behavior of the individuals who live there (Baybeck and McClurg 518).

Looking forward, there is still much to learn regarding how place and people affect individual political participation, but one thing for certain is both neighborhoods and neighbors matter.

References

- Abrams, Samuel, Torben Iversen and David Soskice. 2010. "Informal Social Networks and Rational Voting." *British Journal of Political Science*. 41:2, pp 229-257.
- Abu-Ghazze, Tawfiq M. "Housing Layout, Social Interaction, and the Place of Contact in Abu-Nuseir, Jordan." *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 19:41-73.
- Adams, William C., and Dennis J. Smith. (1980). Effects of Telephone Canvassing on Turnout Preferences: A Field Experiment. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 44 (Autumn): 389-95.
- Angrist, Joshua D., Guido W. Imbens, and Donald Rubin. (1996). Identification of Causal Effects Using Instrumental Variables. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 91 (June): 444-55.
- Arceneaux, Kevin, Alan S. Gerber, and Donald P. Green. (2005). Comparing Experimental and Matching Methods Using a Large-Scale Voter Mobilization Experiments. *Political Analysis*, 14:37-62.
- Baybeck, Brady and Scott D. McClurg. "What Do They Know and How Do They Know It? An Examination of Citizen Awareness of Context." *American Politics Research*. November 2014.
- Bartels, Larry M. (2005). Homer Gets a Tax Cut: Inequality and Public Policy in the American Mind. *Perspectives on Politics*, 3:15-31.
- Berelson, Bernard R., Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago: University Press.
- Bergen, Daniel E., Alan S. Gerber, Donald P. Green, and Costas Panagopoulos. (2005). Grassroots Mobilization and Voter Turnout in 2004. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 69.5: 760-77.
- Berry, Jeffery M., Kent E. Portnoy, and Ken Thomson. 1990. "The Political Behavior of Poor People." in Christopher and Paul E. Peterson eds. *The Urban Underclass*. pp. 357-74.
- Bledsoe, Timothy, Susan Welch, Lee Sigelman, and Michael Combs. 1995. "Residential Context and Racial Solidarity among African Americans." *American Journal of Political Science* 39:434-58.
- Bobo, Lawrence and Frank D. Gilliam, Jr. 1990. "Race, Sociopolitical Participation, and Black Empowerment." *American Political Science Review* 84: 377-93.
- Calthorpe P. and W. Fulton. 2001. *The Regional City*. Island Press: Washington, DC.

- Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. (1960). *The American Voter*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Cho, Wendy K Tam. 1999. "Naturalization, Socialization, Participation: Immigrants and (Non-)Voting." *Journal of Politics* 61(4): 1140-55.
- Cho, Wendy K.; Tam Cho; James Gimpel; Joshua J. Dyck. 2006. "Residential Concentration, Political Socialization, and Voter Turnout." *The Journal of Politics*. 68.1: 156-167.
- Cohen, Cathy J.; Michael C. Dawson. 1993. "Neighborhood Poverty and African American Politics." *The American Political Science Review*. 87.2: 286-302.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper Row.
- Duany, Andres and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk. 1995. "Neighborhoods and Suburbs." *Design Quarterly*. 164: 10-23.
- Duany, Andres and Elizabeth Plater-Syberk. 2000. *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*. North Point Press: New York.
- Erikson, Bonnie. 2003. "Social Networks: The Value of Variety." *Contexts* 2:1, 25-31.
- Eldersvelds, Samuel J. (1956). Experimental Propaganda Techniques and Voting Behavior. *American Political Science Review*, 50 (March): 154-65.
- Fischer Claude. 1982. *To Dwell among Friends: Personal Networks in Town and City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Fleming, R., A. Baum and J. F. Stinger. 1985. "Social Support and the Physical Environment." In *Social Support and Health*. Eds. S. Cohen and L. S. Syme. Academic Press: Orlando, pps. 327-344.
- Fox, Bonnie, John Fox and Robert W. Marans. 1980. "Residential Density and Neighbor Interaction." *The Sociological Quarterly*. 21.3: 349-359.
- Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. 1999. "Does Canvassing Increase Voter Turnout? A Field Experiment." *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 96: 10939-10942.
- Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. 2000. "The Effects of Canvassing, Phone Calls, and Direct Mail On Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment." *Yale University* (April): 1-40.
- Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and David W. Nickerson. 2002. "Getting Out the Youth Vote in Local Elections: Results from Six Door-to-Door Canvassing Experiments." *Yale University* (May): 1-26.

- Giles, Michael W., and Arthur S. Evans. 1985. "External Threat, Perceived Threat, and Group Identity." *Social Science Quarterly* 66(10): 50-66.
- Giles, Michael W., and Arthur S. Evans. 1986. "The Power Approach to Intergroup Hostility." *Journal of Conflict and Resolution* 30(3): 469-86.
- Giles, Michael W. and Kaenan Hertz. 1994. "Racial Threat and Partisan Identification." *American Political Science Review* 88: 317-26.
- Gimpel, James G.; Joshua J. Dyck; Daron R. Shaw. 2004. "Voters, and Turnout Variability across Neighborhoods." *Political Behavior*. 26.4: 343-375.
- Gosnell, Harold F. (1937). *Machine Politics*: Chicago Model. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology*. 78:347-67.
- Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. 2008. *Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout Second Edition*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Green, Donald P and Alan S. Gerber. 2005. "Recent Advances in the Science of Voter Mobilization." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 601.6.
- Green, Donald P. 2010. "Chapter 9: Interference Between Experimental Units" in *Field Experimentation: Design, Analysis, and Interpretation*. Unpublished.
- Grober, Jens and Arthur Schram. 2006. "Neighborhood Information Exchange and Voter Participation: An Experimental Study." *American Political Science Review*. 100.2: 235-248.
- Guterbock, Thomas, and Bruce London. 1983. "Race, Political Orientation, and Participation: An Empirical Test of Four Competing Theories." *American Sociological Review* 48:439-453.
- Haeberle, Steven. 1985. *Planting the Grassroots: Structuring Citizen Participation*. New York: Praeger.
- Hopkins, Daniel J. and Thad Williamson. (2012). "Inactive by Design? Neighborhood Design and Political Participation." *Political Behavior*. 34:79-101.
- Huckfeldt, Robert. "Political Participation and the Neighborhood Social Context." *American Journal of Political Science*. 23.3: 579-592.
- Huckfeldt, Robert. 1984. "Political Loyalties and Social Class Ties: The Mechanism of

- Contextual Influence.” *American Journal of Political Science* 28:2, 399-417.
- Huckfeldt, Robert. 1986. *Politics in Context: Assimilation and Conflict in Urban Neighborhoods*. New York: Agathon.
- Huckfeldt, Robert and John Sprague. 1995. *Citizens, Politics, and Social Communication: Information and Influence in an Election Campaign*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Huckfeldt, Robert. 2001. “The Social Communication of Political Expertise.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 45:2, 651-69.
- Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Random House: New York.
- Jackson, Kenneth. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jones, Bryan, Saadia Greenberg, and Joseph Drew. 1980. *Service Delivery in the City, Citizen Demand and Bureaucratic Rules*. New York: Longman.
- Kennedy, Leslie W. 1978. Environmental Opportunity and Social Contact: A True or Spurious Relationship.” *The Pacific Sociological Review*. 21:2, pp. 173-186.
- Key, V.O., Jr. 1961. *Public Opinion and American Democracy*. New York: Knopf.
- Knoke, David. 1990. “Networks of Political Action: Toward Theory Construction.” *Social Forces*. 68.4:1041-1063.
- Lazarsfeld, Paul F., Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet. 1944. *The People’s Choice: How the Voter Makes up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*. New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce.
- Leighley, Jan E. 1995. “Attitudes, Opportunities and Incentives: A Field Essay on Political Participation.” *Political Research Quarterly*. 48: 181-209.
- Leighley, Jan, and Arnold Vedlitz. 1999. “Race, Ethnicity and Political Participation Competing Models and Contrasting Expectations.” *Journal of Politics* 61:1092-1114.
- LeVan, Carrie. 2010. “The Vicious Cycle: The Exclusion of Low Socioeconomic Status Voters from Mobilization Efforts.” Unpublished Paper.
- Leydon, Kevin M. 2003. “Social Capital and the Built Environment: The Importance of Walkable Neighborhoods.” *American Journal of Public Health*. 93:9, pgs 1546-1551.
- Marable, Manning. 1992. *The Crisis of Color and Democracy: Essays on Race, Class, and Power*. Monroe, ME: Common Courage.

- McClurg, Scott. 2003. "Social Networks and Political Participation: The Role of Social Interaction in Explaining Political Participation." *Political Research Quarterly*. 56.4: 449-464.
- McConnell, Margaret; Betsy Sinclair; and Donald Green. 2010. "Detecting Social Networks: Design and Analysis of Multilevel Experiments." Unpublished Paper.
- McDonald, Michael, and Samuel Popkin. (2001). The Myth of the Vanishing Voter. *American Political Science Review* 95.4: 963-974.
- Michelson, Melissa R. 2003. "Getting Out the Latino Vote: How Door-to-Door Canvassing Influences Voter Turnout in Rural Central California," *Political Behavior* 25.3: 247-63.
- Milbrath, Lester W. 1965. *Political Participation: How and Why Do People Get Involved in Politics?* Chicago: Rand McNally & Company.
- Mutz, Diana C. 2002a. "The Consequences of Cross-Cutting Networks for Political Participation." *American Journal of Political Science*. 4:4, 838-855.
- Mutz, Diana C. 2002b. "Cross-Cutting Social Networks: Testing Democratic Theory in Practice." *American Political Science Review*. 96:1, 111-126.
- Nickerson, David W. 2008. "Is Voting Contagious? Evidence from Two Field Experiments." *American Political Science Review*. 102.1: 49-57.
- Oldenburg, Ray. 1999. *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*. Marlowe & Company, 3rd Edition.
- Oliver, Eric. 1999. "The Effects of Metropolitan Economic Segregation on Local Civic Participation." *American Journal of Political Science* 43:186-212.
- Oliver, Eric. 2001. *Democracy in Suburbia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Patterson, Thomas. (2002). *The Vanishing Voter*, New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Price, David E. and Michael Lupfer. (1973). Volunteers for Gore: The Impact of a Precinct-Level Canvass in Three Tennessee Cities." *Journal of Politics*, 35.2 (May): 410-438.
- Putnam, Robert D. 1995. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." *Journal of Democracy* 6(1):65-78.
- Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Ramirez, Ricardo. 2005. "Giving Voice to Latino Voters: A Field Experiment on the

- Effectiveness of a National Nonpartisan Mobilization Effort.” Theme Issue, “The Science of Voter Mobilization,” ed. Donald P. Green and Alan S. Gerber. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 601(September): 66-84.
- Rosenstone, Steven J. and John Mark Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Shingles, Richard. 1981. “Black Consciousness and Political Participation, The Missing Link.” *American Political Science Review* 76: 109-15.
- Skjaeveland, Oddvar and Tommy Garling. 1997. “Effect of Interactional Space on Neighboring.” *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 17: 181-198.
- Stoloff, Jennifer A., Jennifer L. Glanville, and Elisa Jayne Bienenstock. 1999. “Women’s Participation in the Labor Force: The Role of Social Networks.” *Social Networks* 21:91-108.
- Tate, Katherine. 1991. “Black Political Participation in the 1984 and 1988 Presidential Elections.” *American Political Science Review* 85: 1159-76.
- Teixeira, Ruy A. 1987. *Why Americans Don’t Vote: Turnout Decline in the United States. 19660-1984*. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Teixeira, Ruy A. 1992. *The Disappearing American Voter*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute.
- Verba, Sidney and Norman H. Nie. 1972. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay L. Schlozman, Henry E. Brady, and Norman Nie. 1993. “Race, Ethnicity and Political Resources: Participation in the United States.” *British Journal of Political Science*. 23: 453-497.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay L. Schlozman, Henry E. Brady, and Norman Nie. 1993. “Citizen Activity: Who Participates? What Do They Say?” *American Political Science Review*. 87: 303-318.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay L. Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995 *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay L. Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. “Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation.” *American Political Science Review*. 89: 271-294.
- Walker, Jack L. Jr., “Three Modes of Political Mobilization.” Paper presented at the annual

- meeting of the American Political Science Association, 1984.
- Wilson William J. 1991. "Public Policy Research and *The Truly Disenfranchised*." In *The Urban Underclass*, ed. Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson. Washington: Brookings Institution.
- Wolfinger, Raymond E. 1974. *The Politics of Progress*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Wolfinger, Raymond E. and Steven Rosenstone. 1980. *Who Votes?* New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.
- Wong, Janelle. 2005. "Getting Out the Vote among Asian Americans in Los Angeles County: A Field Experiment." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 601.1: 102-14.
- Zuckerman, Alan S., Nicholas A. Valentino, and Ezra W. Zuckerman. 1994. "A Structural Theory of Vote Choice: Social and Political Networks and Electoral Flows in Britain and the United States." *Journal of Politics* 56:4, 1008-1033.