

The Space Between Us

The Space Between Us brings the connection between geography, psychology, and politics to life. By going into the neighborhoods of real cities, Enos shows how our perceptions of racial, ethnic, and religious groups are intuitively shaped by where these groups live and interact daily. Through the lens of numerous examples across the globe and drawing on a compelling combination of research techniques including field and laboratory experiments, big data analysis, and small-scale interactions, this timely book provides a new understanding of how geography shapes politics and how members of groups think about each other. Enos' analysis is punctuated with personal accounts from the field. His rigorous research unfolds in accessible writing that will appeal to specialists and non-specialists alike, illuminating the profound effects of social geography on how we relate to, think about, and politically interact across groups in the fabric of our daily lives.

Ryan D. Enos is Associate Professor of Government at Harvard University, Massachusetts. He is a leading expert on the intersection of geography, psychology, and politics. His research has appeared in various scholarly publications, such as the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* and the *American Political Science Review*, and in worldwide news outlets, such as *The New York Times*. Prior to earning his PhD, he was a high school teacher on the South Side of Chicago, an urban space which inspired much of his research.

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The Space Between Us
Social Geography and Politics

RYAN D. ENOS

Harvard University



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In memory of Zim.

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Preface

The scenes that illustrate this book are all about us. For illustrations, please look closely at real cities. While you are looking, you might as well also listen, linger and think about what you see.

– Jane Jacobs[†]

Among the reasons that the scientific study of society is both difficult and exciting is that society never stops changing.

This book is about what happens when different groups of people live close together – sharing small towns, large cities, states, and countries – yet remain separated in geographic space and, as a result, separated in psychological, social, and political space as well. In ways that have not previously been made clear, this property of being close, yet far, penetrates our psychology and affects our thoughts, behaviors, and collective well-being. It paradoxically repels us from the groups to which we are already close. These repelling forces have shaped behavior, as far as scholars can tell, for all of human history. Yet increasingly, especially in the West, people from different groups that were once widely separated are moving into closer and closer contact, changing the context in which many of us live. This makes those repelling forces more important.

Moreover, these forces influence our democratic institutions. They affect whom we vote for and whether we will share our resources with groups other than our own. Recent events remind us of why this is important.

I finished this book on October 20, 2016. On November 8, Donald Trump was elected President. Although not my primary focus, in revising the manuscript for publication, I added analysis showing that Trump's election appears to have been aided by the very prejudices I explore in this book. My contention in this book is that people living in certain places were affected, probably much more than they realize, by specific aspects of the

social geography in which they live. That is, their attitudes and behaviors (such as voting for Trump versus voting for Hillary Clinton) were affected by the size of another group (in this case, Latinos), by the nearness of that group to where they themselves live, and by the extent to which the two groups live in segregation. Thus, in areas where the Latino population had recently grown, previously Democratic non-Latino voters shifted their support to Trump, a candidate who centered his campaign around anti-immigrant demagoguery.

Time and reflection will tell how significant Trump's election was in the course of American history, but there is little doubt that it is significant to many people now. Partisan and ideological concerns aside, the millions of people demonstrating in the streets indicate that people feel that something important is going on. As a social scientist, I too have a sense that we are in a potentially consequential moment. Trump's rise and the success of populist politicians in Europe are a testament to the continued relevance of the ancient prejudices I explore. His election also reminds us that the tentacles of these prejudices extend beyond the domains in which they have an immediate effect. Propelled into office partly by voters' distaste for immigrants, Trump is now attempting to change America's course on healthcare, climate policy, defense, trade, and taxes. Some of these changes, if implemented, will ripple across the globe.

In this book, I try to show the continuity of the influence of social geography across time and space, so that we can understand why the cases of African Americans in Chicago and ultra-Orthodox Jews in Jerusalem have so much to tell us about why Latino immigration seemed to have such sway over Anglo voters in Pennsylvania and other Rust Belt states in 2016; or why Arab and African immigration to Europe is affecting voters there.

The influence of social geography can also be seen, I believe, in how the increasing geographic divide between Democrats and Republicans is widening the already yawning partisan gulf in social and political preferences; this, too, was reflected in the last election. In Chapter 1, I will ask you to consider how attitudes and behaviors of Chicago residents would be different if all the same people lived in Chicago but the South Side were not almost entirely Black and the North Side white. Extending this thinking, I believe, helps us to answer what our behavior would be like if Massachusetts were not blue and Oklahoma were not red. I think it can help to answer why "us versus them" seems increasingly to coincide with "here versus there."

To me, these connections are obvious, but I've spent a lot of time with the evidence. My hope is that by laying out that evidence to others, such connections will enter the conversation as we continue to deal with the wonderful complexities of diversity in a democracy. As data become available, we can look at the trends from 2016 and other recent elections and test, update, and modify the understanding I have offered in this book. So far, some of my findings seem to hold up quite well and seem to help us understand what is

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currently going on. Most likely, others will eventually have to be reexamined. But that is the nature of the scientific investigation of the social world. The world keeps turning and the lives of the people in it keep churning and it is beautifully complicated to study.

Cambridge, Massachusetts
February 2017

Acknowledgments

The seeds of this book were in the dissertation I completed at UCLA in 2010.¹ Of course, as is normal with science, much of the theory and evidence has been updated, revised, or discarded since then.

It took me a long time to get to the point of filing that paper dissertation at Young Library on a, as always, beautiful spring day in Los Angeles. It took me an even longer time to get to the point of putting the final touches on this book on a cold winter day in Cambridge. I never would have been in a position to do either without many people and it is my sincere hope that they understand how much I appreciate them, even if I cannot adequately express it.

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At Harvard, my colleagues who have continued to teach me how to be a scholar and teacher and to support my growth. My graduate students who have taught me so much and put their faith in me. You really are the best part of the job. My research assistants without whom much of this book would not have been written. My undergraduate students who inspire and intimidate me.

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My family.

My two best friends: my amazing, capable, intelligent, and beautiful daughters.

In October 2004, I met a girl at Liquid Kitty on Pico Boulevard in West Los Angeles. In May 2010, from Boston, she was doing rush corrections on my dissertation as I prepared to submit it. In 2017, I have a family and have been unbelievably fortunate. I no longer need her to proof-read my writing, but that girl at Liquid Kitty made it all possible and continues to make it all possible – and wonderful.