



City Lights: Urban-Suburban Life in the Global Society

E. Barbara Phillips

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The second edition of this successful urban studies text has been fully updated to highlight issues facing cities in an ever-shrinking global society. Skillfully blending perspectives from the social sciences with insights from the visual arts and humanities, this lively and imaginative text provides a comprehensive introduction to cities and how they work. Focusing on the U.S. city, it covers the major traditional topics, including urbanization and suburbanization, the two faces of community, spatial and social structure, economic base, and decision-making. In addition, the revised edition treats such specialized topics as personal space, and the impact of new technologies on architecture and politics.

Phillips takes the point of view that what you see depends on how you look at it and how you define an urban problem determines its solution. In systematic fashion, she shows how scholarly controversy and public debates over urban policy are rooted in deep-seated differences: differences in political ideologies, research methods, theoretical orientations, academic disciplines, and/or levels of analysis.

Phillips starts from several basic premises: no one has cornered the truth about cities (or anything else); even the loneliest town is linked in a worldwide system due to the urban-global interlock, and things urban-suburban are best understood in a broader context from an interdisciplinary outlook.

The book offers numerous case studies, photoessays, examples, and firsthand accounts of such interesting and timely subjects as ethnic identity, ZIP codes as neighborhoods, big cities in poor countries, women's space, alternative urban-suburban futures, multiculturalism, temporary or contingent work, the entanglement of race and class, gated communities, and local fiscal crisis, placing these issues in broad analytical contexts. Developed and tested in the classroom, this rich and highly readable text features a wide range of illustrative materials and learning aids. Projects in each chapter and the book's evenhanded approach to a variety of perspectives encourage students to develop their personal acquaintance with and knowledge about urban life. Excerpts from classic works, lists of key terms, and suggestions for further learning make this book a valuable tool for students in urban studies and a variety of urban-oriented courses, particularly urban sociology, city planning, urban politics, and urban history.

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