The Community Question: The Intimate Networks of East Yorkers[1]

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The Community Question has set the agenda for much of sociology. It is the question of how large-scale social systemic divisions of labor affect the organization and content of primary ties. Network analysis is proposed as a useful approach to the Community Question, because, by focusing on linkages, it avoids the a priori confinement of analysis to solidary groupings and territorial units. Three contentions about the Question are evaluated: arguments that Community is Lost, Saved, or Liberated. Data are presented about the structure and use of the "intimate" networks of 845 adult residents of East York, Toronto. Intimate networks are found to be prevalent, composed of both kin and nonkin, nonlocal, asymmetric, and of sparse density. Help in dealing with both emergencies and everyday matters is available from almost all intimate networks, but from only a minority of intimate ties. The data provide broad support for the Liberated argument, in conjunction with some portions of the Saved argument.

COMMUNITY AS NETWORK

The Community Question has set the agenda for much of sociology. It is the question of how large-scale social systemic divisions of labor affect the organization and content of primary ties. The Question thus has formed a crucial sociological nexus between macroscopic and microscopic analysis. It has posed the problem of the structural integration of a social system and the interpersonal means by which its members have access to scarce resources.

In considering the Community Question, sociologists have been espe-

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cially concerned with assessing the impact of industrialization and bureaucratization on a variety of primary ties: in the neighborhood, in kinship groups, in interest groups, and on the job. Urban sociologists, in particular, have been interested in this matter. From Tönnies ([1887] 1955) to Fischer (1977), they have investigated the effects of industrial bureaucratic social systems on communal structures, with particular reference to the following: (*a*) the increased scale of the nation-state's activities, with a concomitant low level of local community autonomy and solidarity (e.g., Tilly 1973, 1975); (*b*) the development of narrowly instrumental bureaucratic institutions for production and reproduction (cf. Castells 1976); (*c*) the large size of cities, with the consequent population and organizational potential for diverse interest groups; (*d*) the high social density of interactions among the segments of the population (even where spatial density is low), with the ensuing complexities of organizational and ecological sorting;[2] (*e*) the diversity of persons with whom city dwellers can come into contact under conditions of heightened mobility; and (*f*) widespread networks of cheap and efficient transportation facilities, letting contact be maintained with greater ease and over longer distances (cf. Meier 1968). The increased velocity of transactions facilitates interactional density: the large-scale city is accessible, centralized control can more effectively be imposed, and links to diverse social networks can more readily be maintained.

Unfortunately, in many community analyses, the basic structural concerns of the Community Question have become confounded with two other sociological concerns: (1) a preoccupation with the conditions under which solidary sentiments can be maintained, reflecting a continuing, overarching sociological concern with normative integration and consensus; and (2) a preoccupation with locating primary ties in local areas, reflecting urban sociology's particular concern with spatial distributions.

As a result of this confounding, the fundamentally structural Community Question has often been transmuted into a search for local solidarity, rather than a search for functioning primary ties, wherever located and however solidary. (It is my underlying argument that the proper concern of sociologists is the analysis of social structure and social linkages, with questions of social sentiments and spatial distribution holding important, but secondary, positions.) Analyses have tended to take as their starting point extrinsic mappings of local area boundaries and then proceeded to enquire into the extent of communal interaction and sentiment within these

[2] Early formulations of this point were in terms of high spatial density, but such formulations have been called into question by both the suburban dispersion and doubts about the social effects of crowding and density. In any event, analyses of spatial density tend to use interactional density as an intervening variable (see Freedman 1975), and if the questionable premise is not valid, the useful conclusion still remains (see Abu-Lughod 1969; Tilly 1970).

boundaries. They have thus assumed, a priori, that a significant portion of an urbanite's primary ties are organized by locality. Such a territorial perspective, searching for answers to the Community Question only within bounded population aggregates, has been especially sensitive to the evaluation of community solidarity in terms of shared values (see the discussions in Friedmann 1974; Howard 1974). Consequently, when there has been an observed dearth of locally organized solidary behavior and sentiments, the assumption has easily been made that "community" has decayed. Such assumed losses of community have been prevalent in the contemporary milieu of frequent residential mobility and spatially dispersed networks and activities.

Conceptualizing the interpersonal life of the city dweller as the central node linking together complex network structures leads to quite different analytic concerns from conceptualizing it as a membership in a discrete solidarity. Hence I propose an examination of the Community Question from a network analytic perspective. The utility of the network perspective is that it does not take as its starting point putative solidarities—local or kin—nor does it seek primarily to find and explain the persistence of solidary sentiments. It attempts to avoid individual-as-unit research perspectives, with their inherent social psychologistic explanatory bases, seeing internalized attitudes as determining social relations.

Instead, social network analysis is principally concerned with delineating structures of relationships and flows of activities. By looking directly at linkages rather than at solidarities, the network perspective enables us to focus directly on the basic structural issues posed by the Community Question.[3] Such an approach can do much to free the study of community from normative and spatial predilections.

This paper presents a social network analysis of the Community Question debate in urban sociology, as informed by a study of close ("intimate") ties in East York, Toronto. I first review three current Community Question arguments from a network analytic perspective: contentions that

[3] Although often mistakenly thought of as a collection of techniques, network analysis is essentially an analytic perspective which focuses on structured relationships between individuals and collectivities. As yet, there is no commonly agreed upon definition. Some of the salient characteristics of network analysis are that it gives attention to (*a*) structured patterns of relationships and not the aggregated characteristics of individual units analyzed without reference to their connectivity; (*b*) complex network structures and not just dyadic ties; (*c*) the allocation of scarce resources through concrete systems of power, dependency, and coordination; (*d*) network boundaries, clusters, and cross-linkages; and (*e*) complex structures of reciprocal relationships and not just symmetrical relationships or simple hierarchies. For summaries of the network perspective see Emerson (1962), White (1965), Mitchell (1969, 1974), Barnes (1972), Kemper (1972), Craven and Wellman (1973), and White, Boorman, and Breiger (1976). See also the bibliographies of Wellman and Whitaker (1974), Freeman (1976), and Klovdahl (1977).

Community is now "Lost," "Saved," or "Liberated" (the arguments are more fully discussed in Wellman and Leighton 1979). I then examine these arguments in the light of the data. Last, I discuss some of the broader implications of this review and the findings for the analysis of the Community Question.

COMMUNITY: LOST, SAVED, LIBERATED

Community Lost

The Lost argument was the first urban sociological response to the Community Question (e.g., Tönnies [1887] 1955), and it is still significantly influencing the current debate.[4] The argument holds many urban phenomena to be concrete and concentrated manifestations of industrial bureaucratic societies. It contends that the division of labor in these societies has attenuated communal solidarities. Primary relationships in the city now are "impersonal, transitory and segmental" (Wirth 1938, p. 12). Instead of being fully incorporated into a single solidary community, urbanites are seen as being limited members of multiple social networks, sparsely knit and loosely bounded. Their weak, narrowly defined, and disorganized ties are rarely available or useful for help in dealing with contingencies. Consequently, urbanites are now bound to the city by webs of secondary affiliations.

The Lost argument has occupied an important place in North American thought, from Jeffersonian antiurbanism through Progressive reformism (e.g., Woodsworth [1911] 1972) and "Chicago school" urban sociology (e.g., Park 1925*a*; Wirth 1938) to recent jeremiads against "mass society," both scholarly (e.g., Nisbet 1969) and popular (e.g., *Death Wish* [1974]). The argument's emphasis on the alleged disorganizing effects of attenuated communal solidarities has been reflected in substantive accounts of such diverse areas as collective action, crime, migration, poverty, and suburbia (see the critical reviews of Valentine 1968; Feagin 1973; Mostacci 1976).[5]

The Lost argument has usefully sharpened awareness of potential relationships between industrial bureaucratic divisions of labor and structures of primary ties. Yet, because of its assumption that strong primary ties naturally occur only in densely knit, self-contained solidarities, the argument has unduly neglected the question of whether primary ties have been structurally transformed, rather than attenuated, in industrial bureaucratic social systems.

[4] See the reviews of Stein (1960), Nisbet (1969), Gusfield (1975), and Castells (1976). Good examples of nonurban sociological uses of the Lost argument can be found in the political analyses of Kornhauser (e.g., 1968) and Gurr (e.g., 1969); see also Tilly's critiques (e.g., 1978).

[5] See White and White's (1962) and Marx's (1964) historical accounts of American antiurbanism.

Community Saved

Many urban scholars have been dismayed by the Lost argument's emphasis on urban disorganization. In reaction, they have developed the Saved argument during the past 30 years, contending that neighborhood and kinship solidarities have continued to flourish in industrial bureaucratic social systems. The Saved argument asserts that such communal solidarities have persisted because of their continued efficacy in providing support and sociability, communal desires for informal social control, and ecological sorting into homogeneous residential and work areas (see Keller 1968; Suttles 1972). While granting that contemporary urban milieus also foster membership in more narrowly based multiple social networks, the Saved argument maintains that many of these networks tend to develop solidary features: single-stranded ties often broaden in scope as new aspects of the informal relationship develop (see Craven and Wellman 1973; Pickvance 1975), and densely knit, self-contained clusters of ties often emerge in initially sparse networks. Members of such networks are often important sources of assistance in mediating with formal bureaucratic structures and in coping with contingencies (e.g., Young and Wilmott 1957; Gans 1962, 1967; Liebow 1967; Stack 1974).[6]

Much of the Saved argument's case has rested on the sheer empirical demonstration of the continued vitality of those urban primary ties which had been pronounced Lost. Communal structures have been extensively documented in the Saved argument, in contrast with the Lost argument's analytic presentation of urbanites as aggregates of disconnected individuals. While some proponents of the Lost argument have alleged an association between communal disorganization and poverty (cf. Valentine's [1968] critique), those who have developed the Saved argument have found much evidence of solidary networks among poorer, traditional, or ethnic minorities seeking to maintain their resources against the claims of a centralizing state (cf. Tilly 1978). In the Saved argument, human beings are regarded as inherently gregarious, apt to organize communities under all circumstances. By the early nineteen sixties, the Saved argument had become the new orthodoxy, with the publication of such works as Gans's (1962) study of an "urban village," Greer's (1962) theoretical development of postwar survey research, and Jacobs's (1961) assertion of the vitality of dense, diverse central cities.

[6] There are clear similarities here to analyses of the importance of solidary ties in bureaucratic workplaces (e.g., Benyon 1973; Braverman 1974).

The problem of solidary ties.—Although the Lost argument's assertion of urban social disorganization has been rebutted, theoretically and empirically, this work has been accomplished by studies emphasizing the persistence of bounded communal solidarities. Such studies, while properly questioning the Lost argument's conclusions, have unfortunately not considered fully the Lost argument's useful starting point: that the contemporary division of labor may have strongly affected the structure of primary ties. Because Saved scholars have looked only for—and at—the persistence of communal solidarities in neighborhoods, in kinship systems, and on the job, it has been difficult to assess the position of solidary ties within overall social networks.[7] Weaker, more sparsely knit, more loosely bounded ties are all apt to be poorly represented in the Saved studies (see the discussion in Granovetter [1973]). While some Saved analyses have been quite concerned with external linkages, these linkages have been seen as radiating outward from a bounded communal base—often a small-scale territory or neighborhood (cf. Janowitz 1952; Greer 1962; Suttles 1972; Hunter 1975; Warren and Warren 1976; Warren 1978).

Thus the basic Community Question, dealing with the structure and use of primary ties, has been confounded in both the Lost and Saved arguments with questions about the persistence of solidary sentiments and territorial cohesiveness. But, whereas the Lost argument laments their demise, the Saved argument praises their persistence.

Community Liberated

The Liberated argument has developed out of the analytic juxtaposition of the Lost and Saved arguments. The Liberated argument affirms the prevalence and importance of primary ties but maintains that most ties are not now organized into densely knit, tightly bounded solidarities. The argument contends that: (*a*) the separation of residence, workplace, and kinship groups involves urbanites in multiple social networks with weak solidary attachments; (*b*) high rates of residential mobility weaken existing ties and retard the creation of strong new ones; (*c*) cheap, effective transportation and communication reduce the social costs of spatial distances, enabling the easy maintenance of dispersed primary ties; (*d*) the scale, density, and diversity of the city and the nation-state, in combination with widespread facilities for interaction, increase possibilities for access to loosely bounded, multiple social networks; and (*e*) the spatial dispersion of primary ties and the heterogeneity of the city make it less likely that those with whom an urbanite is linked will themselves be densely knit into solidary communities.

[7] Perhaps only Edward Banfield (1958) has gone out searching for solidary ties and not found any.

The Liberated argument has been systematically developed and tested only during the past 10 years.[8] Its take-off point has been that work of the Saved argument which has given analytic attention to urbanites' limited involvement in their local communities and to their external linkages beyond local boundaries (see also Merton 1957; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Taub et al. 1977). Taking this work further, the Liberated argument has abandoned the local area as the starting point for analyzing the Community Question and inquired directly into the structure of primary ties.

The Liberated argument contends that primary ties now tend to form sparsely knit, spatially dispersed, ramifying structures instead of being bound up within a single densely knit solidarity (see Kadushin 1966; Shulman 1972, 1976; Granovetter 1973; Laumann 1973; Breiger 1974; Shorter 1975; Fischer 1976; Walker 1977). While such ties may have fewer strands in the relationship than those in which kinship, residence, and work are combined, they are prevalent and important sources of sociability and support.

The argument suggests that primary ties are often dispersed among multiple, sparsely interconnected social networks. These networks, by their very nature, are not "institutionally complete" (Breton 1964), self-contained "urban villages." Their sparsely knit, ramifying structures provide a broad range of direct and indirect connections to the dispersed and differentiated resources of industrial bureaucratic social systems. Obtaining resources through such a sparsely knit network is not a matter of obligations due a member of a solidarity. Instead, it is a matter of the quality of the particular dyadic ties, the ease of maintaining contact, the ability of network members to provide indirect connections to additional resources, the extent to which additional members of a network can be mobilized to provide assistance, and the connectivity between networks (see Cohen 1969; Lee 1969; Bott 1971; Boissevain 1974; Granovetter 1974; Howard 1974; Walker 1974; Jacobson 1975; Fischer et al. 1977; Wireman 1978).

Answers and questions.—The Liberated argument has usefully freed the Community Question from its local roots. Yet a number of questions remain, because asserting that one should not set out initially to search for solidarities is quite different from asserting the nonexistence of such solidarities. First, to what extent do continuing kinship and local systems

[8] Some earlier scholars, who principally made the Lost argument, were also more optimistic at times about the consequences of this change in community structure. In their celebration of the potential for making choices among networks in the city, they prefigured the Liberated argument. For example, Georg Simmel contended that the urbanite, freed from a single encapsulating solidarity, had gained "freedom of movement . . . [and] a specific individuality to which the division of labor in the enlarged group gives both occasion and necessity . . ." ([1902–3] 1950, p. 417; see also [1908] 1971, p. 121). Robert Park's work (e.g., 1925*a*, [1925*b*] 1967) conveys a sense of excitement about the possibilities for individual action in the hurly-burly of the city.

structure primary ties? Second, are there no costs to maintaining ties over distance and no advantages to the quick physical accessibility afforded by proximity? Third, are there structural pressures toward the formation of solidarities, as friends of friends become friends of each other, as these increasingly dense clusters tend to interact more with each other and less across network boundaries, and as network members develop new strands in their relationships (see White 1965)? Fourth, are there circumstances—for example, lack of physical mobility or material resources, cultural differences—which can maintain dense, bounded solidarities? Fifth, is the maintenance of solidary sentiments dependent upon an unambiguous attachment to only one densely knit, tightly bounded communal structure?

Posing these questions is not to vitiate the Liberated argument, but to acknowledge that the formulation of the Community Question in network analytic terms has not only performed a useful critique of the Lost and Saved arguments but also provided us with a new structural perspective toward evaluating empirically some of their continuing concerns.

THE COMMUNITY QUESTION IN TORONTO

The foregoing analysis of the Community Question debate has developed concurrently with our research group's study of primary ties in Toronto. This research has been concerned with a number of issues which permeate the three arguments: To what extent are primary ties prevalent in industrial bureaucratic cities? To what extent is their composition based on kinship and neighborhood solidarities rather than on friendship? How homogeneous are urbanites' primary networks? How self-contained or ramified? How densely knit? What are the structural conditions associated with the availability of interpersonal assistance through these primary ties? The Lost, Saved, and Liberated arguments give quite different answers to these questions.

The Toronto research into such matters has been primarily survey based, supplemented by field work and focused interviews. The data discussed in this paper are derived from a 1968 random-sample survey of 845 adults (aged 18 and over) residing in the Toronto borough of East York. East York (1971 population = 104,645) is an upper-working-class/lower-middle-class, predominantly British-Canadian, inner suburb. Most residents live in small private houses or high-rise apartments; there are rarely more than two adults per household (see Gillies and Wellman 1968; Wellman 1976). East York has had the reputation of being one of the most solidary areas of Toronto. As such, it is a particularly interesting site at which to investigate the Community Question.

The survey asked respondents to provide detailed information about their six closest intimates ("the persons outside your home that you feel closest to"), the ranked strength of closeness of their relationship with the respondent, their gender and socioeconomic status, the basis of their relationship (e.g., mother, neighbor), where they live, how often they are in contact (and by what means), and the kinds of assistance available in the relationships. Information was sought about the structure of these small egocentric intimate networks by inquiring into the respondents' reports of the interconnecting close ties among the sets of intimates named (N = 3,930 intimates).[9]

Findings from this investigation of intimate ties will be presented in the next two sections. Despite the limitations of an analysis restricted to a quantitative case study of strong intimate ties, the data can help inform the Community Question debate. Research into the nature of primary ties is continuing in Toronto. Barry Leighton and I are now conducting in-depth reinterviews of a small subsample of the original respondents. A future monograph (Wellman, Shulman, Wayne, and Leighton, in preparation) will address such complementary matters as the nature of ties weaker than intimacy, the network dynamics of utilizing primary ties, longitudinal changes in primary networks (see also Crump 1977), and the relationship of solidary sentiments to network structures.

THE SOCIAL BASES OF INTIMACY

Relational Bases

Almost all (98%) East Yorkers report having at least one intimate tie; the majority (61%) report having five or more. Most have intimate ties with both kin and friends. For the sample taken as a whole, about half of all the intimate ties are with kin and about half are with unrelated individuals, predominantly "friends" who are not currently neighbors or co-workers (table 1).

The strongest intimate ties (in terms of the respondents' relative strength of closeness to these extrahousehold intimates) are usually with immediate kin (adult children, parents, and siblings), a traditional basis for solidary

[9] The questions to the respondents relevant for this paper were: "I'd like to ask you a few questions about the people outside your home that you feel closest to; these could be friends, neighbours or relatives. Please write in their initials, . . . with the one you feel closest to on the first line, the next closest on the second line, and so on. Will you now tell me the relationship to you of each person you have written down. . . . Now, for the first person listed, . . . Where does he/she live? How often do you *see* him/her? How often are you in touch by *phone* or *letter*? . . . Which of these do you rely on for help in everyday matters? Which of these do you rely on for help in an emergency? . . . [After six intimates:] I'd like to know which of the people . . . are close to one another. Tell me about the first one, please. Which of the others are close to that person? Which are close to Person 2? [etc.]" The data were originally collected in a study directed by Donald B. Coates, with Barry Wellman as co-director. See Coates et al. (1970, 1976). See also Wayne (1971).

TABLE 1

STRENGTH OF INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP BY RELATIONSHIP TO RESPONDENT

STRENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP (Ranked)	RELATIONSHIP								
	(All Kin)	Child	Parent	Sibling	Other Relative	Friend	Neighbor	Co-worker	TOTAL
1	525	106	153	167	99	226	32	28	811
	(27.1)	(46.7)	(45.0)	(28.2)	(12.7)	(15.3)	(13.1)	(13.0)	(20.9)
2	448	61	94	119	174	279	43	27	797
	(23.1)	(26.9)	(27.6)	(20.1)	(22.3)	(18.9)	(17.6)	(12.5)	(20.6)
3	352	30	38	128	156	298	55	36	741
	(18.2)	(13.2)	(11.2)	(21.6)	(20.0)	(20.2)	(22.4)	(16.7)	(19.1)
4	265	18	28	77	142	280	38	43	626
	(13.7)	(7.9)	(8.2)	(13.0)	(18.2)	(19.0)	(15.5)	(19.9)	(16.2)
5	193	8	20	52	113	227	42	46	508
	(10.0)	(3.5)	(5.9)	(8.8)	(14.5)	(15.4)	(17.1)	(21.3)	(13.1)
6	155	4	7	49	95	166	35	36	392
	(8.0)	(1.8)	(2.1)	(8.3)	(12.2)	(11.2)	(14.3)	(16.7)	(10.1)
N	1,938	227	340	592	779	1,476	245	216	3,875
% of total	50.0	5.9	8.8	15.3	20.1	38.1	6.3	5.6	100.0
Mean rank	2.8	2.0	2.1	2.8	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.7	...

NOTE.—$\chi^2 = 441.3$, $P < .001$; gamma = .27; nos. in parentheses are percentages; missing data = 55.

ties. Furthermore, when neighbors and co-workers are considered as intimates at all, the ties with them are likely to be comparatively weak (table 1).

Most East Yorkers specialize in one type of intimate relationship, kin or friend, but they also maintain one or two other types of intimate ties. A sizable minority are "superspecialists": 19% name only kin and 18% name only nonkin. Kin and nonkin intimates tend to be in different clusters of their intimate networks and not to have intimate ties with each other. All of an East Yorker's intimates, though, are indirectly tied to each other through the respondent; many may also have nonintimate direct connections with one another.

The multiple bases of the intimate ties (kinship, friendship, etc.) and the lack of direct connections between the relationally different intimates are in accord with the Liberated argument (see Laumann 1973; Verbrugge 1977; Fischer et al. 1977). Yet multiplicity does not mean equality. Most East Yorkers feel closer to kin than to unrelated intimates, and the greater number of their intimate ties tend to be bound up in one type of relationship.

The prevalence and importance of kinship ties is congruent with the Saved argument (e.g., Litwak 1960; Adams 1968; Klatzky 1971; Gordon 1977). However, in treating kinship systems as separate analytic entities, such Saved arguments may have underplayed the multiple bases of contemporary urban intimate networks. Our data suggest a synthesis of the Liberated and the Saved arguments: the variety of intimate ties potentially provides access to a more diverse array of resources, while heavy involvement with kin retains connections to a somewhat solidary system.

Spatial Expanse

The distribution of intimates' residences reveals that these strong primary ties of East Yorkers are situated in a broad field of interaction in Metropolitan Toronto and beyond. The great majority of East Yorkers' intimates live within Metropolitan Toronto, but only a small minority (13%) live in the same neighborhoods as their respondents (table 2). The metropolitan area thus bounds the effective field of interaction more than does the neighborhood. However, one-quarter of the intimates live outside Metropolitan Toronto, some as far away as Vancouver and New Delhi.

The distances at which intimate links are apt to be maintained vary markedly with the relational basis of the tie. Distant ties are much more likely to be with kin than with friends: 34% of intimate kin live outside Metropolitan Toronto, more than twice the percentage of unrelated intimates (table 2). Furthermore, ties with kin are the more actively main-

TABLE 2

RESIDENCE OF INTIMATES BY RELATIONSHIP TO RESPONDENT

RESIDENCE	RELATIONSHIP						
	Child	Parent	Sibling	Other Relative	Friend	Neighbor	Co-worker	TOTAL
Same neighborhood	9 (4.0)	23 (6.8)	25 (4.2)	54 (6.9)	194 (13.1)	182 (74.3)	18 (8.3)	505 (13.0)
Elsewhere in East York	23 (10.1)	35 (10.3)	63 (10.6)	85 (10.9)	211 (14.3)	38 (15.5)	28 (13.0)	483 (12.5)
City of Toronto	26 (11.5)	94 (27.6)	130 (22.0)	176 (22.6)	441 (29.9)	10 (4.1)	83 (38.4)	960 (24.8)
Elsewhere in Metro Toronto	108 (47.6)	50 (14.7)	147 (24.8)	227 (29.1)	359 (24.3)	10 (4.1)	71 (32.9)	972 (25.1)
Outside Metro Toronto	61 (26.9)	138 (40.6)	227 (38.3)	237 (30.4)	271 (18.4)	5 (2.0)	16 (7.4)	955 (24.6)
N	227	340	592	779	1476	245	216	3875
% of total	5.9	8.8	15.3	20.1	38.1	6.3	5.6	100.0

NOTE.—$\chi^2 = 1203.0$, $P < .001$; gamma = −.32 (relationship ordered by mean closeness rank for kin and nonkin (see table 1)); nos. in parentheses are percentages.

tained distant intimate ties, with a much higher frequency of in-person and telephone interaction.

The wide spatial expanse of intimate networks is facilitated by the telephone. Indeed, telephone contact between intimates is usually more frequent than is in-person contact (table 3). The two modes of communication are generally complementary and not substitutive; it is quite rare for there to be a good deal of telephone conversation between intimates without there also being frequent in-person meetings.[10]

Perhaps the greater bandwidth of communication available through in-person meetings provides necessary information to reaffirm, reinforce, and readjust relationships maintained routinely by telephone. In no instance is an intimate tie sustained solely through telecommunications.

Distant ties.—Contemporary transportation and communication facilities have lessened, but not eliminated, the constraints of distance on maintaining intimate contact. Intimates who live far from East York tend to have a different relationship, having much less frequent telephone and

TABLE 3

RELIANCE ON DIFFERENT MODES OF CONTACT, CONTROLLED BY INTIMATES' RESIDENTIAL LOCATION (%)

MODE AND FREQUENCY OF CONTACT	RESIDENTIAL LOCATION				
	Same Neighborhood	Elsewhere in East York	City of Toronto	Elsewhere in Metro Toronto	Outside Metro Toronto
In person weekly or more often; telephone weekly or more often	51.9	53.4	43.0	38.8	6.8
In person weekly or more often; telephone twice per month or less	31.5	15.5	13.1	11.6	4.8
In person twice per month or less; telephone weekly or more often	4.8	9.5	20.9	20.8	21.8
In person twice per month or less; telephone twice per month or less	11.9	21.5	23.0	28.8	66.7
Total	100.1	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.1
N	505	483	975	984	947
χ^2 ($P < .001$)	31.0	95.2	85.9	123.8	53.5
Conditional gamma (in person by telephone for each residential location)	.61	.77	.56	.64	.63

NOTE.—Zero-order gamma (in person by telephone, uncontrolled by residential location) = .67; partial gamma (in person by telephone, controlled by residential location) = .62.

[10] One straightforward exception is that intimates living on the same block rarely use the telephone for contact.

in-person contact.[11] Their infrequent contact ratifies the tie, and a potential is retained for more intensive use when needed. The minority of those distant intimates who do interact frequently tend to maintain contact by telephone (table 3).

Clearly, many of the long-distance intimate ties are rather dormant in their actual functioning, maintained through infrequent contact and structural embeddedness (see also F. Katz 1966; P. Katz 1974). However, the very existence of these semidormant ties may usefully link East Yorkers to other connections. Furthermore, these are intimate ties and not just distant links to kin and friends. There is the memory of past interaction and the anticipation of future use. When necessary, the costs of distance can be overridden by an emergency, as when a respondent flew 2,100 miles to nurse a sick mother in Calgary although Sunday telephone calls had sufficed for the previous 10 years (see also Boswell's [1969] Zambian example).

Local ties.—The great majority of East Yorkers' intimate networks are not organized into local solidarities. Few have more than one intimate who resides in their own neighborhood.

Yet East York's pride in its local community ties is not without foundation. Although the borough contains less than 5% of Metropolitan Toronto's population, fully one-quarter of the respondents' intimate ties are to other East Yorkers, and the percentage is even higher for ties to intimates who are not kin (see table 2). Furthermore, many now-distant ties had local origins (Shulman 1972).

Most East Yorkers also have useful ties with neighbors, although these rarely reach the strength of intimacy. On the average, they talk with five neighbors regularly and visit in the homes of three (Gates, Stevens, and Wellman 1973). Such local ties are used for easy sociability and assistance when quick physical accessibility is an important consideration.

The data on the spatial expanse of intimacy provide support for a synthesis of the Liberated and the Saved arguments. East York is neither a Gansian "urban village" nor a "community without propinquity" (Webber 1963). While local ties are real and important, their importance comes from their being only a component of a diverse array of relationships. Intimate ties are organized into local solidarities even less often than they are into solidary kinship systems. Indeed, the car, the telephone, and the airplane help maintain many kinship ties. Yet space is still a constraint; there are distances for each tie at which the cost of keeping in contact becomes too great for it to remain viable.

[11] Indeed, the nature of the relationships may affect the spatial expanse of the tie, as when an aging mother decides to rent an apartment near her daughter.

Network Structure

Density.—The mean density of East Yorkers' intimate networks is 33%; that is, one-third of all possible intimate ties between respondents' intimates are actually reported to exist. Only one-fifth of the networks have a density greater than 50% (table 4), although many intimates are more weakly connected to each other (cf. Granovetter 1973). Thus, the great majority of respondents are not encapsulated within the bounds of one solidary group, but are linked through their intimates to multiple, not strongly connected, social networks. The prevalent sparse density supports the Liberated argument.[12]

There are significant clusters of density within networks, though. Kinship systems often foster close ties among members, and those intimate networks which are predominantly composed of kin tend to be more densely knit than the others (see table 4). Kin members of intimate networks also tend to form densely knit clusters within the rather sparse overall networks. Intimate friends, in contrast, tend either to be unconnected to other intimates or to be linked dyadically to them.

Reciprocity.—Shulman's associated study (1972, 1976) interviewed 198 of the intimates named by a subsample ($N = 71$) of our respondents and

TABLE 4

KIN AND FRIENDS IN INTIMATE NETWORKS BY DENSITY

Density of Networks (Grouped) (%)	N	%	Cumulative %	% Kin in Such Networks	% Friends in Such Networks
0–25	388	47.1	47.1	36.4[a]	53.2[a]
26–50	261	31.7	78.8	56.9	35.9
51–75	65	7.9	86.7	56.9	37.0
76–100	110	13.3	100.0	73.7	20.1
Total	824	...	...	49.5	42.1
F(3,820)	...	...	...	48.6*	36.6*

[a] Rows do not add to 100% because co-worker and neighbor intimates are not included.
* $P < .01$.

[12] This is called "sparse density" (or "sparsely knit") because less than a majority of all possible interconnections actually appear. However, Harrison White has pointed out that, without standards for comparison, we have no firm theoretical or empirical grounds for expecting higher density, especially when studying strong ties of intimacy (personal communication). Jack Wayne, using the same procedure as employed here, found the density of reported ties between intimates in an inland Tanzanian area (Kigoma) to be 76% (personal communication). Ties between respondents and intimates have been excluded in the density calculations, as such ties exist by definition. Links were calculated symmetrically: if a respondent reported intimate no. 1 to be close to intimate no. 2, it was also assumed that he or she perceived intimate no. 2 to be close to intimate no. 1.

asked them, in turn, who their intimates were. Overall, only 36% of the surveyed intimates reciprocally named East Yorkers as their intimates. The closest intimates (those ranked first by mutual respondents) were markedly more likely to see each other as mutual intimates. Others acknowledged return ties to the East Yorkers but weaker ones than intimacy. They have intimate relationships but different ones from those of the East Yorkers. These ramifying, nonreciprocating ties are in keeping with the Liberated argument and argue against the Saved argument's notion of tightly bounded, mutually oriented solidarities.[13]

Ramifications.—Taken together, the variety of types of intimate ties, the sparse network density, and the often-unreciprocated character of intimate bonds strongly suggest a ramified, loosely bounded web of primary ties, rather than an aggregation of densely knit, tightly bounded solidary communities. Only a minority of an East Yorker's intimates reciprocate intimacy, and only a minority of intimates are reported to be intimate with each other. The overall structure of intimate relationships is in accord with the Liberated argument.

Yet the data also indicate some basis for the closer structural integration suggested by the Saved argument. There are often dense clusters within more sparsely knit networks. Furthermore, many of those who are not intimately connected with each other are linked together in other important ways: as friends, acquaintances, neighbors, co-workers, and nonintimate kin. Using such less restrictive criteria, there is much structural connectivity.

THE AVAILABILITY OF HELP FROM INTIMATES

If East Yorkers are to avoid the direct dependence on formal bureaucratic resources seen by the Lost argument, they must be able to obtain assistance through their primary ties. Although such assistance might come through many ties, it is reasonable to expect that much reliance would be placed on help from intimates, the people outside the household to whom they feel closest.[14]

[13] Shulman's findings (1972, 1976) indicate that the symmetry assumption may well overstate the density of the networks when only intimate ties are considered, although we wonder if the respondents would have perceived the asymmetry present in the ties between their intimates. This lack of reciprocity gives a structural basis for expecting wide disparities in the extent to which an urbanite is chosen as an intimate (see Rapoport and Horvath's [1961] study of a biased friendship network). This, in turn, indicates the structural prevalence of "brokerage" nodes, whose heavily chosen incumbents link together a number of social networks.

[14] Our in-depth interviews indicate that respondents often perceive their intimate connections as a type of general utility. While they know that they might need help from intimates at some time, and maintain their ties in part for that purpose, often they do not have any precise idea of what contingencies will in fact develop. The treatment

The structural situation of East Yorkers, linked to intimates by means of sparse networks rather than solidary groups, is reflected in the nature of the help reportedly available. In support of the Liberated argument, we find that the great majority of East Yorkers (81%) report that help in emergency situations is available to them from somewhere in their intimate network. A smaller majority (60%) report help to be available through their intimate networks in dealing with everyday matters; such routine help is often available as part of less intensive relationships (e.g., with acquaintances, neighbors, co-workers), and there is less use of intimate relations for it.

While assistance in emergencies is available from the great majority of intimate networks, it is not available from the majority of intimate relationships. Only a minority of intimates, 30%, help in emergencies, and only 22% help in dealing with everyday matters. Thus, East Yorkers can almost always count on help from at least one of their intimates, but they cannot count on such help from most of them.

To some extent these data are consistent with the Lost argument's concerns about the attenuation of supportive primary ties. However, the data support more fully a differentiated conceptualization of intimacy, consistent with the Liberated argument's analysis of the division of labor in primary networks. Intimacy (or closeness) is not a unidimensional construct. "Helping" is a defining attribute of a minority of intimate relationships, while others may be based on sociability, structural or normative obligation, or propinquity (see Leyton 1974). The remainder of this section examines the effect of relational and structural factors in these differentiated networks on the likelihood that a respondent regards an intimate as a provider of assistance. Two path diagrams summarize the interrelationships; table 5 presents the correlation matrix for both diagrams.[15]

of help as a generalized resource is a conservative estimate of its availability from intimates. East Yorkers may count on help from some other intimates for specific contingencies, defined by the relationship and the resources available, while not thinking of these intimates as being generally helpful. It is the generalized role relationship of "helper," clearly evident in our in-depth interviews and field work, that is of interest here. Such membership in general-purpose helping relationships challenges a market model of assistance, in which a seeker rationally determines a need, scans all available sources, and calls upon them in ranked order of probable utility. Not only is the provision of help determined by networks, but so may be the perception and utilization of available channels. Indeed, the very provision of help may precede—and define—the putative seeker's desire to enter into a help-receiving relationship.

[15] Earlier analyses (e.g., Wellman et al. 1971) indicate that there are no appreciable direct associations between such social categorical variables as age and SES and the availability of help. They thus were omitted from the analysis for this paper. See Wellman (1977) for cross-tabulations presenting more detailed information about the relationships between the network variables and the availability of help.

TABLE 5

ZERO-ORDER CORRELATION MATRIX FOR PATH DIAGRAMS

	Parent/ Child	Lives inside Metro Toronto	Co-worker	Centrality	In-Person Contact	Closeness Strength	Telephone Contact	Emergency Assistance
Lives inside Metro Toronto	−.100							
Co-worker (fig. 2 only)	−.102	.101						
Centrality	.236	−.079	−.092					
In-person contact	−.028	.346	.437	−.012				
Closeness strength	.267	−.011	−.098	.044	.035			
Telephone contact	.205	.282	.008	.098	.337	.212		
Emergency assistance from intimate (fig. 1)	.180	.105	−.021	.054	.147	.280	.197	
Everyday assistance from intimate (fig. 2)	.112	.134	.093	.065	.202	.221	.248	.444

Kinship

The most antecedent variable in the path models traces the continuing effect of kinship ties. The role of the extended family as a special provider of assistance is confined among East Yorkers to intimate parents and (adult) children. Other intimate kin, such as siblings, grandparents, and aunts, are only as likely as friends to provide assistance.

Parent-child support is more marked in emergencies: 50% of parent-child ties have an emergency-assistance component, as compared with 26% of other intimate ties. Parents and children are more apt than other intimates to be called upon for help in emergencies, regardless of where they live (they tend to live at greater distances from respondents than other intimates) and how frequently they are in face-to-face contact (fig. 1). In addition to the direct effect, intimate parents and children are also more likely than other intimates to provide help, because they tend to have closer ties with the East Yorkers and to be in more frequent contact with them.

While parent-child intimates are also significantly more likely (34%) than all others (19%) except co-workers (37%) to help out with everyday affairs (Wellman 1977), there is no direct effect on kinship in this case (fig. 2). There are indirect effects, however, due to the stronger bonds and more frequent telephone contact that parent-child intimates have.

The kinship data partially support both the Saved and the Liberated models. Kinship remains a significant basis for providing help, both directly and because it encourages closer bonds and more frequent telephone contact. Yet the particularly helpful intimates are parents and children and not a large solidary network of extended kin relations.

Propinquity

Our earlier analyses (Wellman 1977) showed the availability of assistance to be not significantly associated with intimates' neighborhood residence, in contradistinction to the Lost and Saved arguments' emphases on local solidarities. Accordingly, the local residence variable has been omitted from the final path analyses.

Proximity appears to be more important on the job than in the neighborhood for the availability of help from intimates. Co-workers' frequent face-to-face contacts make them a significant source of everyday assistance for East Yorkers, despite the comparative weakness of their intimate bonds.

The residential distinction that does make a difference in the availability of help is that of living inside Metropolitan Toronto's boundaries; that is, being a local call or a short drive away. This has a slight direct positive effect on the availability of help and appreciably increases the fre-

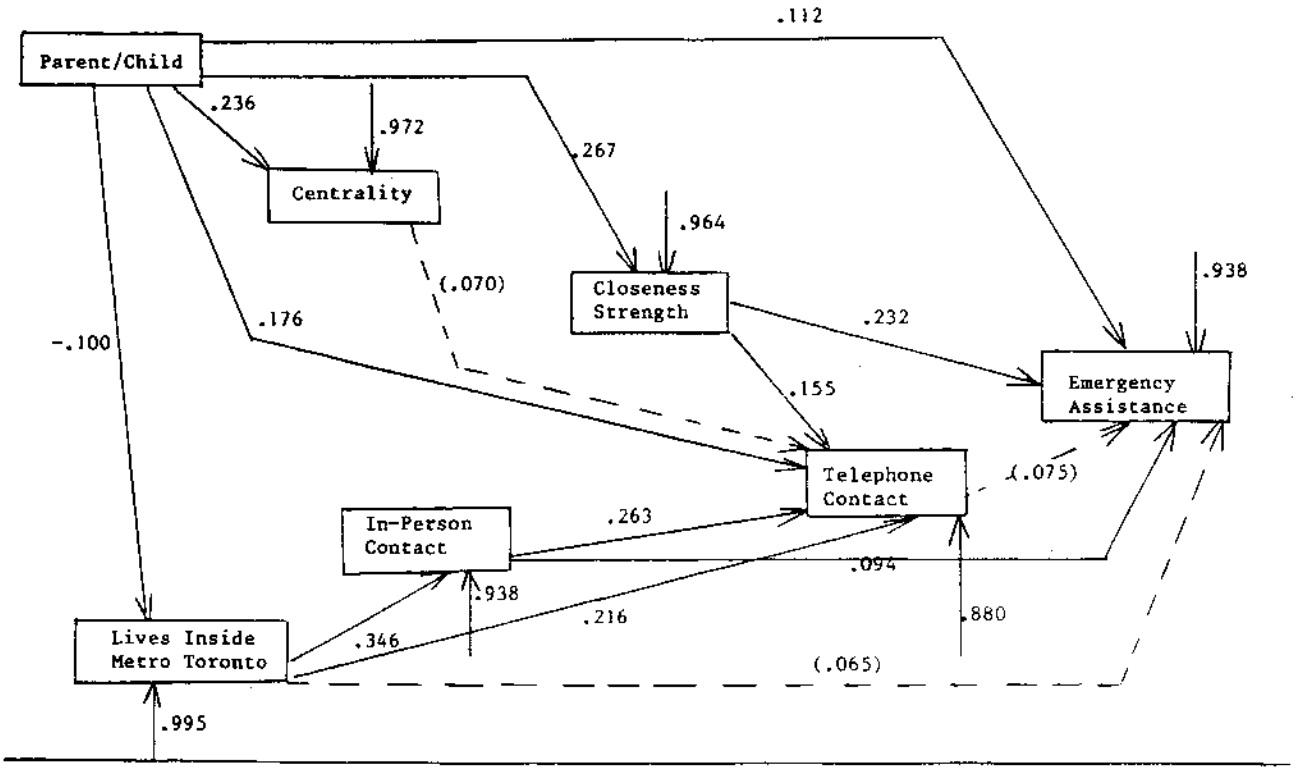

FIG. 1.—Path model: emergency assistance from intimates. Dashed lines with correlations in parentheses represent nonsignificant paths necessary to reproduce original correlation matrix to .05.

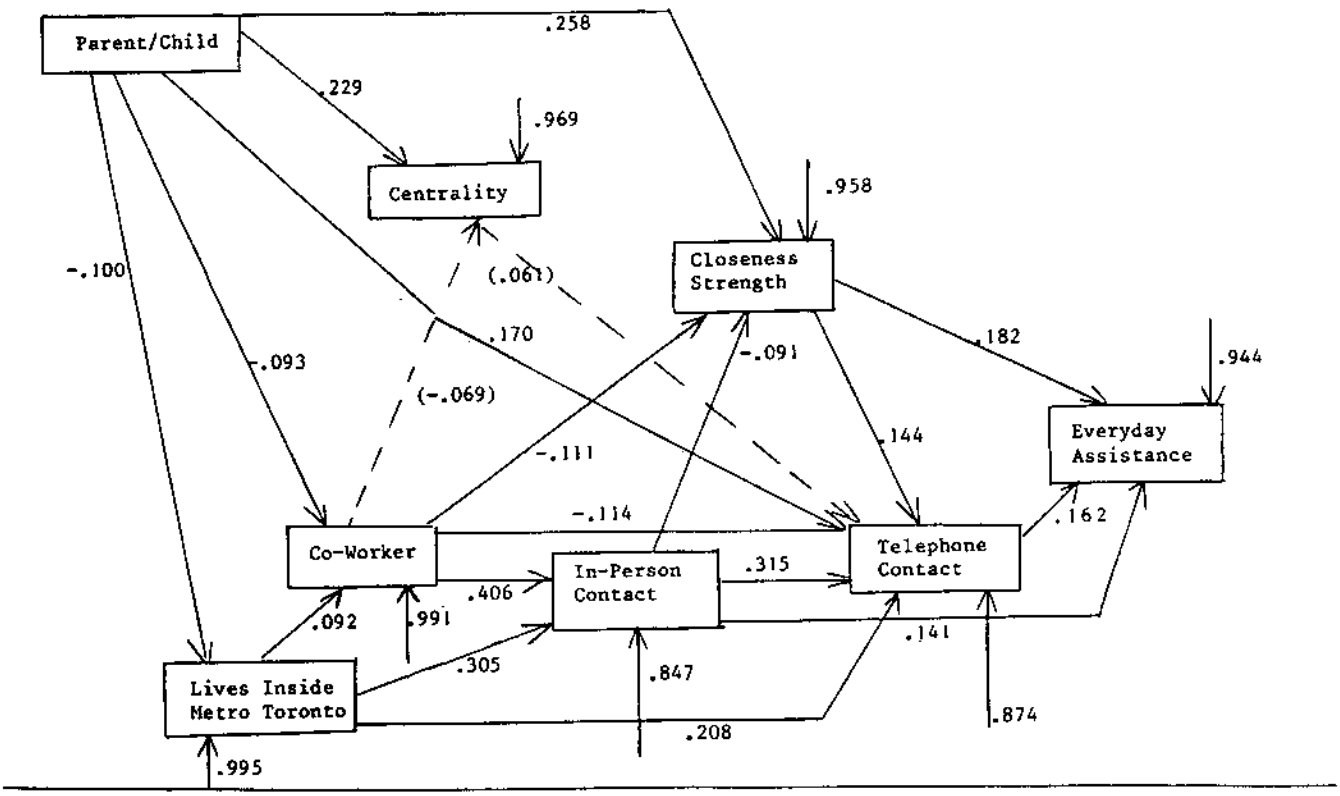

FIG. 2.—Path model: everyday assistance from intimates. Dashed lines with correlations in parentheses represent nonsignificant paths necessary to reproduce original correlation matrix to .05.

quency of contact between intimates. (There may be reverse effects operating as well, with intimates choosing to live in Metropolitan Toronto so that they may continue to be available to help their East York respondents.) The data support a somewhat revised version of the Liberated argument: to an appreciable extent, the spatial range of assistance relationships has not disappeared, but has expanded to encompass the entire metropolitan area.

Centrality and Density

One purely structural variable, an intimate's centrality in a respondent's network (measured as the number of intimate ties that an intimate has with any of the respondent's other intimates), slightly affects the frequency of telephone contact and, hence, the provision of assistance. In general, more structurally central intimates are more likely to provide help. Indeed, their ability to provide help may have made them central.

A structurally central person's potential ability to mobilize help is not related to the solidary nature of the network: no significant paths between the density of a respondent's network of intimates and the availability of assistance from an intimate have been found in our analyses. Hence density has been deleted from the final path models. The absence of significant density effects and the weak effects of centrality also argue that the helpfulness of parents and children is independent of the potential solidarity of their kinship networks. It is a component of dyadic parent-child relations. In sum, the centrality and density data support the Liberated argument better than the Saved argument.

Frequency of Contact

The more frequently intimates are in contact, especially in person, the more apt are they to provide assistance in their relationships.[16] Frequent contact is particularly associated with the more mundane provision of everyday assistance, when ready accessibility is more likely to be a mobilizing factor.

Closeness

The closer (stronger) the intimate relationship (as measured by the respondent's ordinal ranking of the intimates), the more the perceived

[16] For the path analyses, the original categorically recorded frequency-of-contact data were transformed into estimated-days-per-year equivalents. E.g., "about once a week" was transformed into "52." This transformation makes the simplifying assumption of equal time spent per contact.

availability of help becomes a salient defining component of that tie. Closeness is apparently the single most important defining characteristic of helpful intimate relationships; it is the strongest direct predictor in the path models.[17] For example, 56% of the first closest ranked intimates are relied on in emergencies by East Yorkers, while only 16% of the sixth closest intimates are. Closeness also has appreciable paths to the next most powerful predictors, the frequency of contact variables. Furthermore, all other significant variables predict to it, directly or indirectly.

The data indicate that the availability of help to East Yorkers from intimates is a process more fully in accord with the Liberated argument than with the Saved argument. The full path diagrams show two social processes, both more closely associated with the nature of two-person intimate bonds than with the structure of overall intimate networks. On the one hand, a comparatively strong "interactional" set of paths go from the spatially propinquitous facilitation of interaction (through living in the same metropolitan area or being a co-worker) to the frequency of interaction to the availability of assistance. On the other hand, another set of "familial" paths go from parent-child ties to the strength of closeness of intimate ties to the availability of assistance.

The availability of the parent-child tie for assistance is not associated with the tie being embedded in strong, supportive kinship relationships. Furthermore, structural variables, such as centrality and density, are poorly related to the availabiilty of assistance. The availability of assistance thus is more closely associated with the character of the two-person bond than it is with the potentially solidary character of the overall network.

Although the data document network effects on the availability of help from intimates, the amounts of explained variance in the path models are not large. I am reluctant to relinquish most of the unexplained variance to unspecified, residual "psychological factors." Some of the unexplained variance is probably due to the crude way in which the variables have been defined and measured. Furthermore, the way is surely open to the delineation of additional structural and categorical variables that can affect the interpersonal provision of scarce resources.

COMMUNITY IN EAST YORK: LOST, SAVED, OR LIBERATED?

Community Lost?—The prevalence of strong intimate ties in East York calls into question the basic contention of the Lost argument (see summary table 6). If kin and neighbors have been lost as intimates, they apparently

[17] We are concentrating here on predicting to the reported availability of help. But it is also quite likely that, reciprocally, being perceived as helpful may engender stronger perceptions of closeness among intimates.

TABLE 6

THE COMMUNITY QUESTION: LOST, SAVED, AND LIBERATED ARGUMENTS COMPARED WITH EAST YORK FINDINGS

Argument	Community Lost	Community Saved	Community Liberated	East York Findings (Main Tendencies)
Basis of intimacy:				
Availability	Rare	Abundant	Abundant	5+ intimates
Relational	Formal role	Kin, neighborhood	Friendship, work	Kin, friendship
Spatial	Local	Local	Metropolitan, national	Metropolitan
Mode of contact	In person	In person	In person, telephone	Telephone, in person
Communal structure:				
Density	Sparse	Dense	Sparse	Sparse
Reciprocity	No	Yes	Uneven	Uneven
Boundedness	Ramified	Tight	Ramified	Ramified
Basis of assistance:				
Prevalence	Minimal	Abundant	Moderate	Moderate
Relational source	Formal ties	Kin, neighborhood	Friendship, work	Parent/child, work
Residential basis	Local*	Local	Metropolitan, national	Metropolitan
Density	Dense*	Dense	Sparse	N.S.
Structural source	Secondary	Solidary group	Network ties	Network ties

* To the extent to which primary ties exist.

have been replaced by friends and co-workers. Yet East Yorkers report that they can count on only a minority of their intimates for help. Communal networks of mutually supportive intimate relationships do not appear. If highly supportive communities ever did exist for East Yorkers, intimate ties now occur only as much more differentiated networks. However, in these networks, many intimate ties contain support as an important strand in the relationship, and help from intimates is available to almost all East Yorkers.

Community Saved?—The data support some aspects of the Saved argument, albeit greatly affected by the contemporary context (see summary table 6). Parent-child ties play a special role in the overall intimate networks. They tend to be socially closer than other intimate ties, even at greater physical distances. Parents and children are more apt to provide help in mundane matters as well as in crises. Other intimate kin, however, can be counted on no more than can intimate friends. Clearly, the important kinship obligations that most intimate parents and children maintain operate as dyadic relationships, as the data also indicate that the density of the network is not a factor in the mobilization of assistance. There are few large solidary networks of helpful kin.

Residential propinquity still facilitates the provision of assistance, but

the local area is now metropolitan and not the neighborhood. This implies that it is the physical availability of aid—by automobile, public transit, and telephone—which is operative and not the activity of neighborhood solidarities. Kinship and metropolitan residence both act to encourage frequent contact. Those in contact more often are more likely to feel closer and to provide assistance when needed.

Neighborly relations are prevalent and, for many East Yorkers, important. Considered separately, they validate the opinion East Yorkers have of themselves as being heavily involved in local community interactions. Yet the data indicate that such neighborhood ties are usually just one component of a more diverse set of relationships and that they rarely comprise the more intense intimate relationships. It may be that in other populations, less mobile or less preoccupied with controlling internal resources, a larger proportion of the relationships will be tightly bound in solidary groups (see Wolf 1966; Wellman and Leighton 1979). Clearly, more work needs to be done on the dynamics of establishing, maintaining, using, transforming, and losing primary ties.

Community Liberated?—Our findings most fully support the Liberated argument that East Yorkers tend to organize their intimate relationships as differentiated networks and not as solidarities. There is much differentiation in the nature and use of intimate ties. There are links to a variety of people with different structural positions, often living in quite different residential areas (or interacting at work), and maintaining contact both by telephone and in person, at a wide range of time intervals.

The availability of assistance is affected by the quality of the relationships and not by the extent of structural solidarity. Not all intimate ties are used similarly, even those which are densely knit. Some intimates can be counted on to provide assistance in dealing with everyday matters; a good many more, but certainly not all, give assistance when emergencies arise. Other intimates interact with East Yorkers on different bases, such as kinship obligations, sociability, or job comradeship.

The many components of intimate relationships are not very neatly associated; the "role frame" of intimacy includes many complexly packaged bundles of relationships (see Nadel 1957). Some intimate friends are seen only socially; some provide help routinely. Some intimate kin can be counted on in any emergency; others cannot. Some intimate kin are seen daily; some intimate friends, yearly; and so on. This lack of neat coincidence among the qualitative aspects of the relationships makes for more differentiated linkages (see Mitchell 1969; Litwak and Szelenyi 1969; Gordon 1976). Different contingencies, social situations, and times of the day, week, or year bring East Yorkers into juxtaposition with a variety of connections.

The data analyzed here may help to resolve the discrepancy between the

Saved argument's extensive documentation of solidarities and the Liberated argument's portrayal of differentiated networks. The resolution may be a matter of analytic scope. If one focuses on kinship systems or neighborly relations, one is apt to find densely knit, tightly bounded networks. Looked at in fine-grain isolation, these networks appear as solidarities, which may well serve to give urbanites a sense of attachment in the social system. But if one broadens one's field of view to include all those with whom an urbanite is in touch, then the apparent solidarities may be seen as clusters in rather sparsely knit, loosely bounded networks.

COMMUNITY: SOLIDARITY OR NETWORK?

Intimate networks are just one of a number of often quite distinct personal networks. Frequently, weaker ties, such as neighboring and coworking, have limits on the claims that can be made on them. But they also tend to provide indirect access to a greater diversity of resources than do stronger, more socially homogeneous ties (Granovetter 1973).

All persons with whom one is directly connected are indirectly linked to each other through oneself. Each individual is a member of the unique personal networks of all of the people with whom he or she is linked, and membership in these networks serves to connect a number of social circles (see Craven and Wellman 1973). Thus, complex networks of chains and clusters are ultimately connected via a common network node. Social solidarity, analyzed from this perspective, may be the outgrowth of the coordination of activities through network processes rather than of the sharing of sentiments through common socialization.

While making for low communal solidarity, a variety of ties and uneven network density provide structural bases for dealing with contingencies. Densely knit network clusters can provide the basis for cooperative activities. Ramifying networks and asymmetrically reciprocated linkages can facilitate access to other social circles.

The concatenation of networks helps to organize social systems. Considered from the standpoint of the system rather than from that of the individual, it is the compounding of links and networks at many levels which allocates resources and juxtaposes alliances of similar interests. Not only individuals, but also clusters and collectivities, are linked through network ties (cf. Granovetter 1976; Rytina 1977; Laumann, Galaskiewicz, and Marsden 1978). A network of networks connects individuals, clusters, and collectivities in complex ways.

Despite all this connectivity, our data also suggest why so many urbanites believe in the Lost argument, even when they themselves are well connected. Rather than an unambiguous membership in a single, almost concrete, solidary community, East Yorkers' lives are now divided among

multiple networks. The sparseness of interconnections among those networks means that no one solidarity can readily make or enforce general claims on a member. While this may be somewhat liberating in providing structural room to maneuver, it may also create a disorientating loss of identity, as it is no longer as clear or simple to which group (among many) one belongs. Although urbanites have not lost their communal access to people and resources—and, indeed, may have increased their reach—for those who seek solidarity in tidy, simple hierarchical group structures, there may now be a lost sense of community.

Yet membership in spatially and socially ramified networks is a useful way for urbanites to have access to diverse and differentiated resources not available through solidary auspices. Their ties are not encapsulated in "decoupled" little worlds (White 1966) but are strands in the larger metropolitan web. The ties provide the basis for network members to utilize the connections with others that their alters have. This suggests that Liberated networks may be more than just a passive rearrangement of primary ties in response to the pressures of large-scale social system changes. Instead, they can well be active attempts by contemporary urbanites to gain access to and to control system resources, given differentiated social systemic divisions of labor.[18]

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[18] The discussion in this paper has been limited to the contemporary industrial bureaucratic situation, and no attempt has been made to address complex cross-cultural and longitudinal issues. Yet a developmental perspective that sees industrialization, bureaucratization, and urbanization as inevitably fostering communal transitions from Saved or Lost structures is quite questionable. It is entirely possible that Liberated networks exist in nonindustrial milieus under appropriate structural conditions of resource access and control. On the one hand, recent studies clearly indicate that differentiated long-distance ties are maintained in the Third World without the prevalence of telephones or private automobiles as long as the ties are structurally embedded in kinship systems or common local origins. A number of mechanisms are used to maintain contact, such as trips by buses and trucks, messages sent with covillagers or travelers, and hired letter writers and readers (e.g., Cohen 1969; Jacobson 1973; Howard 1974; Mayer and Mayer 1974; Ross and Weisner 1977; Weisner 1973). On the other hand, historians have been reporting nonsolidary aspects of many preindustrial Western European and North American communities, with status-group cleavages, appreciable spatial mobility, and complex households having heterogeneous external ties (e.g., Laslett 1971; Scott and Tilly 1975; Shorter 1975; Tilly 1975; Bender 1978).

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