# Social Networks and Health: Models, Methods, and Applications

*Thomas W. Valente*

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Relationships and the pattern of relationships have a large and varied influence on both individual and group action. The fundamental distinction of social network analysis research is that relationships are of paramount importance in explaining behavior. Because of this, social network analysis offers many exciting tools and techniques for research and practice in a wide variety of medical and public health situations including organizational improvements, understanding risk behaviors, coordinating coalitions, and the delivery of health care services.

This book provides an introduction to the major theories, methods, models, and findings of social network analysis research and application. In three sections, it presents a comprehensive overview of the topic; first in a survey of its historical and theoretical foundations, then in practical descriptions of the variety of methods currently in use, and finally in a discussion of its specific applications for behavior change in a public health context. Throughout, the text has been kept clear, concise, and comprehensible, with short mathematical formulas for some key indicators or concepts. Researchers and students alike will find it an invaluable resource for understanding and implementing social network analysis in their own practice.

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