Series Editor's Note

We all have personal networks comprised of our friends, family, acquaintances, colleagues, coworkers, and the like. Ever wondered how such personal networks affect who we are, how we feel, how we behave, how we are received, how productive we are? Of course you have! We all have. But how do we move beyond wondering to actively studying and understanding such personal networks as a research endeavor? The author network in this book, of Christopher McCarty, Miranda J. Lubbers, Raffaele Vacca, and José Luis Molina, have beautifully crafted an indispensable resource, *Conducting Personal Network Research: A Practical Guide.* They introduce the world of personal network modeling to us with an engaging and accessible voice.

This network of accomplished authors opens each chapter with a succinct and elucidating overview. These overviews provide an all-important view from the top of the mountain so that you don't get lost when you start hiking the trails of learning. They easily guide you through the seeming morass of details by starting you at the trailhead and gently leading you to the top of this all-important mountain of personal network research.

You'll find guide posts in the form of boxes that showcase many of the major published studies of personal network research. These engaging examples highlight principles and practices of personal network research. In other boxes, the authors lay out the important steps needed to traverse intersections on the trail. This author network, however, doesn't "tell" you what to do; instead, they elucidate the guiding principles needed to make informed decisions as you develop your personal network research. Additionally, the invaluable Appendix describes various software options available for conducting personal network research.

From the authors' wealth of experience, they offer insight for making informed design, measurement, visualization, and analysis decisions. On the way to the top of

this majestic mountain, you'll find nuggets of rich jewels in the form of captivating examples that shine light on the insights that can be gained only in the context of personal network research.

McCarty, Lubbers, Vacca, and Molina will become key nodes in your personal research network composition and structure. McCarty, for example, is the author of EgoNet, which is the first software program specifically created for analyzing personal networks. Moreover, their work is now a shining node, if you will, in the growing network of accessible and authoritative resources that is the Methodology in the Social Sciences series. I'm very pleased to bring this work into our collection. As always, enjoy!

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