



We Built a Village Cohousing and the Commons

By Diane Rothbard Margolis
Foreword by David Bollier

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***We Built a Village* describes the development of one of the first cohousing communities in the United States, offering a social understanding of its commons.**

Cohousing, a form of communal living that clusters around shared common space, began about a half century ago in Denmark. *We Built a Village* describes the process of planning and building of an early cohousing community in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the way the people involved simultaneously built their homes and their social structure. As both a memoir and a sociological analysis that probes the differences between commons and markets, it is unique among books about cohousing. When this group of people began in the late 1990s to construct their cohousing community, they set in motion a counterpoint between the physical spaces and the social configurations that would guide their lives together, even up to creative responses to the recent pandemic.

Author

Diane Rothbard Margolis is a founding member of Cambridge Cohousing where she has lived for more than twenty years. She is a former member of the Coho/US Board of Directors and co-founder and Director Emeritus of the Cohousing Research Network. She was a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study 1980–1981. She has published many research articles, and her books include *The Fabric of Self*, which won Honorable Mention at the First Annual Book Award of the Eastern Sociological Society. She is Professor Emerita of Sociology at the University of Connecticut.

Sales points

Background: Cohousing is a form of communal living that clusters around shared common space. It began about a half century ago in Denmark and has become quite popular in the United States. There are about 150 cohousing communities in the US now, and likely an equal number in the planning. The book is a personal account of the behind the scenes process of creating one of the first cohousing communities in the U.S. in Cambridge Massachusetts. Author Diane Margolis was one of the leaders of that planning and development process, and she happens to be a sociologist.

We Built a Village: Cohousing and the Commons describes how people simultaneously built their homes and their social structure. As both a memoir and a sociological analysis it gives us a deeper understanding of social commons and is unique among books about cohousing. A concluding chapter describes the community's unique to creative responses to the recent pandemic.

- First book to address cohousing from a sociologist's perspective
- First cohousing book to focus on "the commons"
- Foreword by David Bollier, an author, activist, blogger and consultant on the commons as a new paradigm of economics, politics, and culture
- Book will launch at the national conference of the Cohousing Association of the United States, CoHoUS, Madison Wisconsin, August 25–28, 2022
- CoHousing US runs monthly online programs and semi-annual regional conferences

Recent articles about cohousing:

- ["Does Co-Housing Provide a Path to Happiness for Modern Parents?"](#) *New York Times* 10/22/2021
- ["The Cohousing Community that Saved Me from Parenting Isolation"](#) *Romper*, 11/9/2021
- ["Finding Community Through Cohousing"](#) *9News*, Denver 10/12/2021
- ["Where Home Blends with Community"](#) *New York Times*, 9/2/2021
- ["These Families Wanted a Village, So They Built Their Own"](#) *Bloomberg City Lab*, 6/23/2021
- ["These architects believe communal living is the way of the future"](#) *CNN Style*, 5/27/2021

Academic Use: Courses on place-based social relations in cities (Architecture & Planning, Social Sciences), Community-scale economics, courses on the commons

Where to order

<https://nyupress.org/9781613321782/we-built-a-village/>