



Cities and the Creative Class

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In his compelling follow-up to *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Richard Florida outlines how certain cities succeed in attracting members of the 'creative class' - the millions of people who work in information-age economic sectors and in industries driven by innovation and talent.

Cities and the Creative Class Details


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John says

to be honest i had trouble getting through the stats.

Ben Williams says

I really enjoyed the premise of the book. I had never thought of creativity as an economic driver, and Florida makes a decent case. However, I feel like it may be a chicken-and-the-egg sort of problem. Do creative people gentrifying neighborhoods create growth, or is the fact that creative people are gentrifying neighborhoods simply a sign of growth. Florida failed to convince me on his argument; I feel it is more of a signal of growth than a precursor.

Kevin Spicer says

good intro on post-industrialization. I thought it was kind of boring and repetitive overall, the three t's (technology, talent and tolerance) over and over and over again. He argues these t's drive economic growth in large cities. I like his emphasis on the importance of creating jobs that tap into the creativity in everybody. I don't like how he fails to see how his argument is culturally situated. That a certain kind of culture is a precursor for growth in a post-fordist economy, namely a tolerant one which values individual pursuits and meaning more than old fashion shared meaning (so 50's), thus tolerant, individualistic communities are better, or if not better at least deserving of government attention and support more than less tolerant, more socially bounded ones. Problematic in my mind.

Mike Horton says

I am a disciple of Florida's research, so my opinion is going to be slanted, unfortunately. I think he's brilliant and has uncovered a very fresh perspective on how cities and urban regions must reinvent themselves in order to attract businesses and, more importantly, attract and retain the talent that will fuel the success of the economy of those cities and regions. The idea of the Creative Class is fascinating, and the truth behind Florida's thinking is playing out across the geographic spectrum of the United States and globally.

I wish there had been more focus on the element of public transit and its significance to the Creative Class here, but that's the only fault in this text. Otherwise, this book serves as a very good primer to his other writings.

!Tæmbu?u says

KOBOBOOKS

Kangning Huang says

The author proposes a three T's model to explain why some cities thrive while others decline.

The three T's include: tolerance, talent, and technology. High tolerance allows a city to accept diverse talented people and various new technologies. As a consequence, the talented people will recombine existing technologies and further develop new ones. Eventually, talent and technology will become the strongest sources of economic growth, pushing up the incomes.

The idea that diverse people and technologies are keys to innovation is not new. But Richard Florida manages to emphasize another critical factor behind diversity--tolerance.

However, there is also a backward link between tolerance and talent. As more talented, creative, high income people moving into a city, the land prices sky-rockets, driving out the diverse low-income people, such as artists, musicians, small shoppers.

Refer to the chapter "self-destruction of diversity" in Jane Jacobs' book "Death and Life of Great American Cities".

Michael Lewyn says

The basic thesis of this book is that socially tolerant cities tend to have high levels of education and high-technology employment, which in turn leads to regional economic growth. To my unsophisticated eyes, he appears to have shown some correlation between social tolerance and a high-tech economy. But his analysis raised some questions:

*Is it possible to establish which way the causal chain runs? That is, does economic growth cause tolerance or vice versa? Florida writes that declining cities like Pittsburgh and Baltimore are not sufficiently "tolerant and open." But are these cities less tolerant because of economic stagnation or vice versa?

*Florida shows that there is at least some correlation between social tolerance (defined as a high number of gay couples and people in "bohemian" occupations such as writing and the arts) and an educated workforce, and that an educated workforce is correlated with economic growth. But (and maybe I'm just misreading his data here) I'm not sure that he has established the link between social tolerance and economic growth.

*Assuming that socially tolerant places have higher income growth, is the advantage of higher income growth wiped out by higher regional cost of living? In other words, if Hipsterville has 2 percent income growth per year and exploding housing costs while Stodgeland has 1 percent growth and small-town housing costs, is Hipsterville really better off?

Finally, there are some assertions Florida makes that aren't supported by data. He suggests, for example, that "environmental quality and natural amenities are important factors in a firm's choice of location." But his own table shows that more cities have low environmental quality and high levels of hi-tech employment than have high environmental quality and high hi-tech.

Perhaps Florida's most valuable service is peripheral to his main argument: he utterly demolishes the idea

that old-fashioned cultural amenities like professional sports, art museums, etc. contribute to high-talent, high-tech employment. The correlations are simply nonexistent.

Madeline says

obviously useful approach to post-industrial urban theory, but the whole time i could not help but think this guy was talking about the young, white, good-looking, intelligentsia. his definition of diversity is problematic as well.

CJ Romberger says

Recommended by Michelle Raines

Michael says

mr florida, back again, telling us smart people where we live
