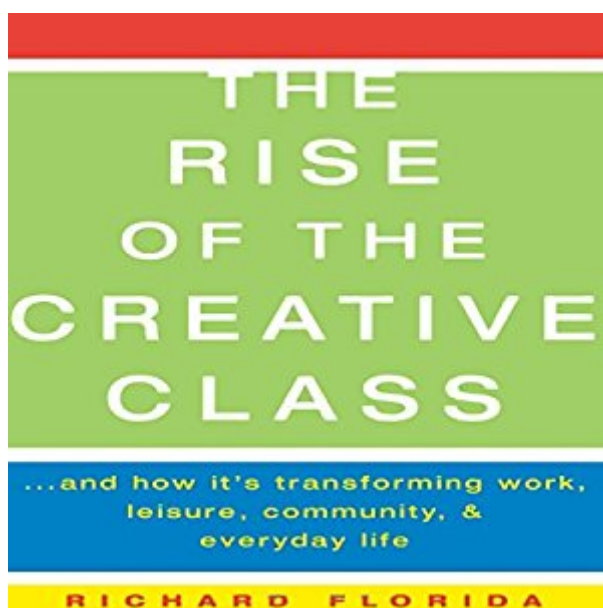


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The Rise Of The Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community And Everyday Life



Synopsis

The national best seller that defines a new economic class and shows how it is key to the future of our cities. The Rise of the Creative Class gives us a provocative new way to think about why we live as we do today - and where we might be headed. Weaving storytelling with masses of new and updated research, Richard Florida traces the fundamental theme that runs through a host of seemingly unrelated changes in American society: the growing role of creativity in our economy. Just as William Whyte's 1956 classic *The Organization Man* showed how the organizational ethos of that age permeated every aspect of life, Florida describes a society in which the creative ethos is increasingly dominant. Millions of us are beginning to work and live much as creative types like artists and scientists always have—with the result that our values and tastes, our personal relationships, our choices of where to live, and even our sense and use of time are changing. Leading the shift are the nearly 38 million Americans in many diverse fields who create for a living—the Creative Class. *The Rise of the Creative Class* chronicles the ongoing sea of change in people's choices and attitudes, and shows not only what's happening but also how it stems from a fundamental economic change. The Creative Class now comprises more than 30 percent of the entire workforce. Their choices have already had a huge economic impact. In the future they will determine how the workplace is organized, what companies will prosper or go bankrupt, and even which cities will thrive or wither.

Book Information

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#528 in Books > Business & Money > Biography & History > Economic History

Customer Reviews

I was interested in this book because I see the new economy forming and was interested in his take

on what that might look like. I got some of that in this book, but I also got a lot of back-patting by the author. I found the author was a good writer, but was also pretty full of himself. He seemed to think that he was really great not because he belongs to the creative class but because the creative class seems to belong to him. Anyway, I found the book full of a lot of statistics that he used to prove his theory correct. Except where it didn't fit... He seems to think that the entire creative class is a bunch of hippies who live to work and listen to cool music and live in tight neighborhood where they can either sit in coffee shops and collaborate or sit in bars and collaborate. In any case, clearly, the entire class does not meet those standards. As a result, I found he gives a lot of mixed messages that leave one neither hungry nor full. The end has some good points, but they are mostly obvious and he doesn't explain how these things are to come about except for the class as a whole to rise up and make it happen. Finally, I get the idea that he thinks the creative class is something new (even though he acknowledges that creative people have always existed. He vilifies Ford and the assembly line - forgetting that Ford created the assembly line - it was a creative act that launched a new era in manufacturing. Now we are in a new age moving to an information and knowledge economy. But, we are not there yet. It may take decades before this fully happens. Yet he does not speak of a transition - just one day we are industrial age and the next we are thinkers.... I expected more from this book and, sadly, I didn't get it.

The book is a unique attempt to explain regional economic development on the basis of unconventional measures such as the % of gays in the population, the % of foreign-born residents in the population and the % of the population engaged in creative occupations. The surprising part is that all of these factors mentioned above seem to explain regional economic development very well and much better than other more conventional measures such as the social capital in the community. Thus on the basis of his findings and research, the author makes the point that for cities to grow, they should be looking not just at what their business climate is but also at what their people climate is: do people from varied backgrounds feel comfortable in settling down in the community and calling it their home? Furthermore, the statistics presented conclude that while several regions in the Northeast and the West coast have been doing good on these measures, there are large stretches in the Midwest and the South that are being left out and he mentions that they have the risk of being relegated to the pages of history if they do not take corrective action in that regard. I personally did not agree with all of what was said in the book and also felt that the book reflects some of the euphoria about creativity that followed in the wake of the stock market boom (such a book would have been unlikely in more sane times of 2005) but nevertheless am not

able to refute the statistical evidence that the author presents. Also by having spoken to people of my generation, I realize that some of the ways in which the author states people making decisions about where to move are indeed true and I can attest people saying that it is more "cool" and "hip" to be in Seattle or SF rather than being in Detroit or Gary. All in all, a very different book for me because the explanations which the author offers in the context of varying regional development are different from anything I have read or heard in the past. Recommended read for those interested in the question of regional economic development and what communities must do to stimulate the same.

This book was recommended to me by an acquaintance a few weeks ago...I'm glad they mentioned it. *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (Paperback) by Richard Florida is an informative book that covers A LOT of ground and has A LOT of data...but not as much "information" as I would have expected. Let me explain. The premise of this book is that society today is that a new Creative Class exists and is driving the way we live today. Florida uses this creative class to explain why societal changes and patterns of living as well as why some cities are more attractive than others (e.g., Silicon Valley vs Oklahoma City). The question behind much of the research for the book is: How do we decide where to live and work? What really matters to us in making this kind of life decision? How has this changed - and why? This is an interesting question...and one that Florida tries to answer throughout the book by using statistics, quotes from other authors and a good deal of words. The first 3/4's of the book is dedicated to describing the Creative Class, how they live and work and why they are different from their 'parents'. There is a ton of data and a lot of time is spent by Florida quoting research, arguing against other theorists and using statistics to "make his case" that the Creative Class is the most important class of our time. During this portion of the book, Florida makes the argument that there is a strong correlation between those cities/regions that are more tolerant and the number of creative class works that live and work in the area. One interesting section of the book describes the changing work environment that is making it possible for people to set their own schedules, work from home and be much less constrained by the old '8 to 5' mentality that has been a part of American business for so long. The last quarter of the book describes how cities and regions have developed themselves into a magnet for the creative class. Florida states that in order for a city (or region) to become a 'creative class' magnet, they must have the "3T's of Economic Development"...Technology, Talent and Tolerance. A brief description of each follows. * Technology - a city/region must have the technological infrastructure in place to fuel a creative and

entrepreneurial culture. * Talent - A city/region must have a talented and highly educated workforce
* Tolerance - A city/region must have a high tolerance level and not try to force people to 'fit in'

The topic of the book was interesting to me but the delivery was somewhat confusing and poorly constructed. Many times I got lost in the middle of a paragraph and had to start over...this from a guy who reads many many books a year on various topics. I'm used to reading dry material...but this was worse than most. Chapters 6 through 9 are probably the most interesting and descriptive of the book. These chapters describe the reasons behind why people in my generation (and those younger than me) are looking for more than 'just a job' and why many people are tiring of the '8 to 5' experience. With that said, I would still recommend this book to those folks interested in the topic of economic development, regional development, city planning or just a general review of social science literature. If you pick up this book, take my advice and skim it rather than read every word...there is a lot of "stuff" that isn't relevant to the overall message of the book.

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