

THE RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS

*And How It's Transforming
Work, Leisure, Community
and Everyday Life*

RICHARD FLORIDA



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"Extraordinary."

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"One of the top ten business books of the year."

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"Florida's book leaves the reader not just with some interesting ideas but with a new perspective for understanding our culture. . . . Well worth reading if you're seeking a greater understanding of the sociological and economic changes taking place in our culture today."

—*The Boston Globe*

"Artists and musicians have always been the waiters and waitresses at the banquet of life. . . . With his new book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Richard Florida invited us all to have a seat at the table."

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"[Florida] argues that the cities that appeal to the creative vanguard will prosper in an economy driven by inventiveness."

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"*The Rise of the Creative Class* has created quite a stir and for all the right reasons. . . . Well worth reading."

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"[Florida's] thesis has become the focus of debate among both trend watchers and planners in cities . . . that are seeking to revive—or create from scratch—downtowns ravaged by decades of suburban sprawl."

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—John Seely Brown, co-author of *The Social Life of Information*

"A revolutionary idea."

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"[Florida's] insight, backed by solid data, validates that the creative community is not only a force to be reckoned with but essential to the global economy."

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"*The Rise of the Creative Class* is an insightful portrait of the values and lifestyles that will drive the 21st century economy, its technologies and social structures. To understand how scientists, artists, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and other self-motivated, creative people are challenging the traditional structures of the 20th century society, read this book. It will convince you that success in the future is not about technology, government, management or even power; it is all about people and their dynamic and emergent patterns of relationships."

—Lewis M. Branscomb, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

"Florida makes an important point."

—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

"Few people provide greater clarity on the importance of place in the knowledge-driven economy than Richard Florida. *The Rise of the Creative Class* provides critical insights in how we can build 21st century cities and regions around the emerging economy."

—Robert D. Yaro, President, Regional Plan Association, New York

"[Florida's] creative-capital theory turned out—at least after preliminary testing—to provide the best explanation for Austin's high-tech transformation."

—*The New York Times*

"A smart and interesting book that takes a well-known cultural phenomenon—the critical massing of technology and creative workers of talent in certain cities—and mixes in some new elements about why they cohere. . . . What makes Florida's argument particularly provocative is that it makes an economic case for tolerance, civil rights and a broadly defined cultural experience (including vibrant nightlife), while scoffing at the American corporate model as a dinosaur on the road to extinction. . . . [*The Rise of the Creative Class*] certainly merits the hype it's getting."

—AlterNet

"*The Rise of the Creative Class*. . . should be must reading for everyone. . . particularly elected officials, senior business executives and economic development specialists."

—*Gulf Coast Business Review*

"Cuts to the core of what mindsets and skills are necessary to professionally and socially make one's way in the 21st century."

—*O'Dwyer's PR Daily*

"Florida's work is thorough, compelling and worth reading."

—*The Citizen's Weekly Reading*

"Even if you don't agree with some or even most of what the author contends, you'll still find it thought-provoking, stimulating, and well worth having read. . . . A vibrant and fast-paced romp that touches on economics, sociology, and psychology but is centered on some severely stress-tested data around which the author has fashioned a theory positing that personal creativity is the dominant force in today's economy and society. . . . A new view of business reality."

—*Information Week*

"Ought to be read by every city planner and economic developer who wants to thrive in the new century. . . . It tells us a lot about ourselves, where we've been and where we are going."

—*Shreveport Times*

"Florida's book. . . raises a lot of interesting questions."

—*Slate*

"In *The Rise of the Creative Class* the author presents a compelling argument that there is a clear connection between the economic health of a city and the appeal of that city to creative individuals. He also explains that a city's appeal to the Creative Class may—to use just one example—be enhanced less by a new spectator sports stadium than by creation of urban bicycle trails."

—*Tulsa World*

"Florida's work is thorough, compelling and worth reading."

—*The Citizen Weekly*

"Florida is the first to track the impact of the creative class on American socioeconomic geography."

—*Doctor's Review*

"Sometimes a book comes along at just the right time and hits a 'nerve'. . . . *The Rise of the Creative Class* has created quite a stir and for all the right reasons. . . . This is a book well worth reading. . . . Three cheers for Richard Florida."

—*The Alliance for Regional Stewardship Newsletter*

"[*The Rise of the Creative Class*] is about the 'new' new economy—as opposed to the 'old' new economy, the one that skulked out of town at dusk when the dot-coms imploded—and how cities can make sure it doesn't skip their zip codes."

—*Chicago Tribune*

"Florida is attracting the kind of positive press usually seen with rock stars and movie actors. It's no surprise his ideas have found a following. . . . It's Florida's book that nudges governments along the path that may get them to pay more attention to the needs of its citizens as a way to spur economic growth instead of coming at it from the industry's end. And that would be a positive change in many places."

—*Creative Loafing* (Atlanta)

"Florida's research gives new insight into what will allow cities to prosper in the 21st century."
—*San Francisco Examiner*

"In essence, Florida's advice is what savvy consultants might tell a brand trying to boost market share. Attract lots of young people, project an image of authenticity, and generate buzz. It works for Twitter, Facebook, networks, soft drinks and cars. Why not cities?"
—*Adweek*

"One book I have just read has already been added to [my] 'must keep' list. It is Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class*. . . Florida's work on the geography of innovation and creativity. . . has important lessons for the ways cities and regions think about economic development strategies and investment attraction. . . [and it] enlarges our thinking about human capital and the changing nature of labor markets. . . Florida provides a new and important addition to our understanding of emerging labor market structures, which is why the book is a must-read."
—*Business Review Week*

"So much for the glorification of the anonymous suburban cubicle."
—*Financial Times*

"Excellent news. . . Doubtless, the creative class is rising. . . It is no longer the creed of scruffy outsiders but of the moneyed mainstream."
—*The Independent (London)*

"Readable and accessible. . . The book succeeds in making the reader reflect on the reasons some cities achieve prosperity."
—*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

"Revelatory."
—*The San Diego Union Tribune*

"*The Rise of the Creative Class* reads like a users manual for companies seeking to motivate knowledge workers and prosper in today's high-tech world."
—Jim Goodnight, founder and CEO, SAIC

"Richard Florida's groundbreaking book has led to important discussions among leaders across the country about creativity and the role of the arts in community development. This ongoing communication has enlightened some and fortified others, leading to critical policy change at the local level. *The Rise of the Creative Class* provides great insight into the design of livable communities and how creativity relates to economic growth. Through this book and the conversations that surround it, we can clearly see that investing in the cultural development of our nation's cities and neighborhoods helps them establish unique identities and allows them to not only survive, but flourish."
—Robert L. Lynch, President & CEO, Americans for the Arts

"Richard Florida 'gets it.' He understands the role creativity is playing in the shifting economic landscape. He sees around the corner when it comes to how young, imaginative workers are shaping the way cities and regions will be forced to do business in the future if they want to be players in the economy. This century won't lend itself to the paradigms of just a few years ago. It's time to be creative and imaginatively embrace a new economic culture that focuses on technology, talent and tolerance. Yeah, Florida 'gets it,' but the good news is he then gives it to us."

—Kirk Watson, former mayor, Austin, Texas

"Richard Florida is a visionary. He has rationalized the past and explained our future. Great work!"

—Al B. Ratner, Forrest City Development

THE RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS

And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life

RICHARD FLORIDA



A Member of the Perseus Books Group
New York

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TO LOUIS AND ELEANOR FLORIDA

*who provided the inspiration for this book
and the larger intellectual journey it reflects.
They taught me much more about the
importance of human creativity and community
than they might have imagined.*

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PREFACE TO THE PAPERBACK EDITION

We live in a time of great promise. We have evolved economic and social systems that tap human creativity and make use of it as never before. This in turn creates an unparalleled opportunity to raise our living standards, build a more humane and sustainable economy, and make our lives more complete. But there is no guarantee that this promise will come to fruition—it can just as easily go unfulfilled. Right now in the United States, that's exactly what's happening. The transformation we have given rise to stands incomplete. The great dilemma of our time is that having generated such incredible creative potential, we lack the broader social and economic system to fully harness it and put it to use. No one is going to do this for us. It's up to us—all of us—to complete the transformation to a society that taps and rewards our full creative potential.

Human creativity is the ultimate economic resource. The ability to come up with new ideas and better ways of doing things is ultimately what raises productivity and thus living standards. The great transition from the agricultural to the industrial age was of course based upon natural resources and physical labor power, and ultimately gave rise to giant factory complexes in places like Detroit and Pittsburgh. The transformation now in progress is potentially bigger and more powerful. For the previous shift substituted one set of physical inputs (land and human labor) for another (raw materials and physical labor) while the current one is based fundamentally on human intelligence, knowledge, and creativity.

The numbers of people doing creative work has increased vastly over the past century and especially over the past two decades. This book charts the growth in people who are paid principally to do creative work for a living. These are the scientists, engineers, artists, musicians, designers and knowledge-based professionals, whom collectively I call the "Creative Class." In 1900, fewer than 1 percent of American workers were doing creative work—most worked on farms or in factories. When my father came home from World War II to take up work in a factory in Newark, New Jersey, fewer than 15 percent of Americans worked in the creative sector. By 1980, the figure was still less than 20 percent. But by the turn of the new century, the Creative Class included nearly a third of the workforce. This is true not just in the United States. The ranks of the Creative Class have reached 20 to 30 percent of the workforces across the advanced European countries, according to research I have conducted with Carnegie Mellon doctoral student Irene Tinagli. And the economic impact of the creative sector is huge. My colleague, Kevin Stolarick, and I divided the U.S. economy into its three great sectors—the manufacturing, service and creative sectors—and looked at the wages and salaries that accrue to each. The wealth generated by the creative sector is astounding: It accounts for nearly half all wage and salary income in the United States, \$1.7 trillion dollars, as much as the manufacturing and service sectors combined.

Still, we have not even begun to tap into our creative potential. Human creativity is a virtually limitless resource. Every human being is creative in some way. Each of us has creative potential that we love to exercise and that can be turned to valuable ends. Furthermore, creativity is the great leveler. It cannot be handed down, and it cannot be "owned" in the traditional sense. It defies gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and outward appearance. We cannot know in advance who the next Steve Jobs, Jimi Hendrix, Gertrude Stein, Paul Allen, Billie Holiday or Andy Warhol will be or when

they will come from. Yet our society continues to encourage the creative talents of a minority, while neglects the creative capacities of many more.

Great economic shifts like the one we are going through with them bring massive tensions and disruptions. The shift from an agricultural to a capitalist industrial economy generated incredible disruption and social turmoil—huge flows of people from farm to the factory, from the rural hinterlands to great urban centers and brought social problems ranging from workplace injury and crime, congestion and disease. We are going through a similar period today. Our workplaces are changing. Stress is rising as creativity and mental labor have become the force of production. My preliminary research with the psychiatrists Roberto Figueroa and Kenneth Thompson shows that stress of all sorts from mood and anxiety disorder to substance abuse is considerably higher in the creative centers of the U.S. economy like San Francisco, Austin and Seattle than in other city-regions. People are more mobile. We are postponing marriage. Our family structures are morphing. The kinds of communities we need to support us are changing, as we replace a small number of strong-tie relationships with a much greater number of weak-tie relationships. These transformations are wrenching, and they will continue for the foreseeable future. The broad social impacts of the creative age are just beginning to be felt.

The real challenge of our time is to compete the system we have given rise to—to build the broader creative society that can harness the creative energy we have unleashed and mitigate the turmoil and disruption that it generates. That's a very tall order. New kinds of social institutions and policies will be needed to complete the system and make it work well. We can't know what these will look like in advance. It will take a long time to figure this out. Adapting to the industrial age took long decades, with lots of give and take, lots of experiments that didn't work. But finally after the New Deal and World War II era, we built a broader industrial society able to support and harness the tremendous productive capacity of the great industrial engine that had emerged decades earlier. And as we completed that "system," we embarked on a golden age of rising productivity and living standards. The challenge before us today is even greater. And already, in America and around the world, danger signs loom.

One is rising inequality. This has been tied to many factors. I had a strong hunch while writing *The Rise of the Creative Class* that inequality in our society was being exacerbated by the rise of the creative economy. Kevin Stolarick and I developed an Inequality Index that essentially compares the wages of creative sector workers to those in the manufacturing and service sectors (see Table 1). We found that inequality is highest in the creative epicenters of the U.S. economy.

What's more, this inequality has insidious dimensions. Not only do creative workers earn much more, on average, than the large numbers of people who do low-end service work or rote manufacturing; they also get to do more enjoyable work and they contribute more by *adding creative value* (that's why they are paid highly). The stark reality is that the rise of creative work also brings with it a great deal of work in the service sector. Those of us who work long days and nights at the computer rely on those office cleaners, delivery people and many others in the service economy. But there is no reason why all of this work has to be rote work and no reason why it shouldn't pay much better than it does. The service economy is the support infrastructure of the creative age.

Some of this work can be improved and made more creative. Certainly, a lot of it—like work at the hair salon, in construction or landscaping or in the spa—is already creative work. We need to recognize and reward it as such. Sometimes I think the reason so many people are fixated on the loss of good paying manufacturing jobs is because those jobs are essentially "men's work." But today, as this book will show, legions of young people prefer to take jobs in the hair salon. These kinds of jobs are growing at a rapid pace, while manufacturing work is being eliminated or shifted overseas. I cannot help but think that the reason we fail to consider employment in hair salons or day spas as good

jobs is because those jobs have typically been thought of as "women's work."

Table 1: The Inequality Index

<i>Wage Inequality</i>	
<i>Rank</i>	<i>Region</i>
Regions with the Highest Levels of Inequality	
1	Raleigh-Durham NC
2	San Francisco
3	Washington-Baltimore
4	Austin
5	Houston
6	New York
7	West Palm Beach
8	San Diego
9	Los Angeles
10	Boston
Regions with the Lowest Levels of Inequality	
39	Milwaukee
40	Portland OR
41	St. Louis
42	Memphis
43	Salt Lake City
44	Oklahoma City
45	Buffalo
46	Louisville
47	Indianapolis
48	Grand Rapids
49	Las Vegas

NOTE: Compiled by Kevin Stolarick for metropolitan regions over 1 million population.

As many of these jobs in the service economy as possible—in this support infrastructure of the creative age—have to be made to pay better. Just as we increased the pay and improved the working conditions in once hellish steel mills and auto assembly plants, so too must we improve the pay and more fully tap the creative talents of the legions of people who work in hair salons and other service economy positions. While there is no magic bullet here, sooner or later some place will figure out how to more fully tap the creative talents of much broader segments of its people—and it will get a huge competitive edge as a result. Think for a moment about the tremendous competitive edge Japanese manufacturers achieved by tapping the knowledge of shop-floor workers. Employing the creative talents of people whose jobs presently ask for none will dwarf this by comparison. Relegating vast numbers of people to do rote work is a dreadful waste of human capabilities. For the creative age, it is both morally and economically inefficient. The real need is to bring more people into creative work—to create more markets and opportunities to tap the creative capabilities of far greater numbers of people.

My theory of economic growth has generated considerable controversy. Social conservatives have gone apoplectic over my finding that places with high concentrations of gays and bohemians tend to have higher rates of innovation and economic growth. On talk shows and in articles, I have been accused of being biased because I'm gay (I am not) and of advocating the end of Judeo-Christian civilization (I don't). I am a student of economic growth. I deal in hard data and empirical research. But often when I talk about the correlations I'm finding between cultural factors and economic health, people start shouting moralisms at me.

Conservative critics have accused me of opposing "family values." They contend that economic growth today is occurring in traditional suburban areas with traditional family values, while urban centers with high numbers of, in the words of one commentator, "singles, young people, homosexuals, sophisticos and trendoids," are in trouble. What's insidious here is the implication that you can be family-friendly or gay-and-bohemian-friendly, but not both. This is divisive thinking and it's also inaccurate. Many popular lists of America's most family- or child-friendly cities turn out to be loaded with cities that also score high as homes for gays and artists. As this book shows, the top five child-friendly major regions on one such list were Portland (Oregon), Seattle, Minneapolis, New York and San Francisco. All but one of the top five ranked well above average on our Gay Index (the relative concentration of gays). All five were in the top seven on our Bohemian Index (the relative concentration of artists, writers, musicians and other artistic professionals).

I'm not suggesting that gays and bohemians literally cause regions to grow. Rather, their presence in large numbers is an indicator of an underlying culture that's open-minded and diverse—and thus conducive to creativity. My interviews and focus groups all over this country have confirmed this. I've had straight people, especially straight single women, tell me they *look* for cities with lots of gay people when they are hunting for a place to live and work. The presence of gays signals an exciting place, where people can fit in and be themselves, and in the eyes of many single woman, it's also a sign that a city or neighborhood is relatively safe.

The most successful regions welcome all kinds of people. And they offer a range of living choices, from nice suburbs with single-family housing to hip urban districts for the unattached. They have to. Only 23.5 percent of Americans now live in the standard nuclear family with two parents and children at home. Like it or not, more young people are delaying marriage and childbirth. Many are separating or divorcing. Many live in some sort of alternative arrangement. Appealing only to traditional families and excluding or denigrating everyone else may be good propaganda for the culture wars, but as a development strategy, it's a disaster. Any region or politician that tries it will surely turn away a lot of talented people.

A number of critics, from across the political spectrum, have challenged my views on the importance of cultural diversity by bringing up the example of Silicon Valley: isn't it largely a suburban monoculture? This book argues that Silicon Valley can only be understood in relation to the entire San Francisco Bay Area. This is a highly diverse area with great research universities and freewheeling, adventurous culture—a place where early hippie-entrepreneurs like Jobs and Wozniak were not only accepted but financed by venture capitalists. Today, gays and urban singles commute from San Francisco to work in Silicon Valley, while family-oriented professionals live in the Valley or other suburbs and work in downtown San Francisco. What gives the Bay Area its advantage is that it has something for everyone.

Aha, critics ask, but haven't places like the Bay Area, Austin and Seattle been suffering lately? It's true that the economic downturn hit some creative centers hard. But these regions are still strong and deep in fundamental creative industries and creative talent. Much has been made of the fact that some major growth centers of the 1990s are now losing some population. But the simple fact that numbers of people are leaving misses a larger point. Using IRS data to compare who's moving out and who's moving in, Robert Cushing of the University of Texas found that these regions are losing lower income people but gaining high-income people—who are quite likely to be skilled creative workers. They thus continue to gain competitive advantage even while losing population.

Some have written off *The Rise of the Creative Class* as just another homage to the go-go 1990s, the so-called New Economy and the Internet age. Yet this book—which came out well after the bubble burst—repeatedly points out the silliness and excesses of that period: the fetish that was made of technology and virtual worlds, the notion that this stuff could make anyone rich quick and solve a

our problems. I tried to focus on the long-running and still evolving changes in our economy and society. Nor do I buy the idea that now that the party's over, it's back to business as usual. In my travels around the country I do not find people strapping on suits and ties and going back to Organization Man-style work. People are still striving to be themselves, to find meaningful work, and to live in communities that let them validate their identities and live as complete people.

Other critics suggest that this book doesn't really have anything to say about economic growth because it falls victim to a classic chicken-and-egg problem. Jobs and growth don't come to a region, they say, from the clustering of talented people in environments that nurture and please them. The jobs, they argue, must come first. Once a region has them, then the people, amenities, lifestyle, and tolerance all follow. That's a nice simple argument but it's not true. A 2002 survey of 4,000 recent college graduates, reported in *The Wall Street Journal*, found that three-quarters of them identified location as more important than the availability of a job when selecting a place to live. All of these things matter—and they are all interdependent.

This book argues that place is the key economic and social organizing unit of our time. It is places that solve the chicken-and-egg problem, matching people to jobs; jobs to people. Places provide the "thick" and fluid labor markets that help match people to jobs. Places support the "mating markets" that enable people to find life partners. Places provide the ecosystems that harness human creativity and turn it into economic value.

Traditional models that say that economic growth comes from companies, or jobs, or technology are thus incomplete. I agree wholeheartedly that technology is important. But other factors come into play. Technology—measured by innovation and high-tech industry concentration—figures into my model as one of the "3 Ts" needed for growth. Talent is the second T—not "human capital" as usually measured (by numbers of people holding higher education credentials) but creative capital, which is talent measured functionally, by the numbers of people actually in creative occupations. The third T is tolerance. Places that are open and tolerant have an edge in attracting different kinds of people and generating new ideas.

Economic growth is a complex process. For most of human history, wealth came from a place's endowment of natural resources, like fertile soil or raw materials. But today, the key resource, creative people, is highly mobile. The key dimension of economic competitiveness is the ability to attract, cultivate and mobilize this resource. My research tries to uncover the underlying conditions—the ecosystem characteristics—that enable certain places to attract and mobilize them more than others. Tolerance and openness—or what I like to call "low entry barriers for people"—are a critical element. To capture this, I have worked with Kevin Stolarick to build a broader all-around measure of tolerance.

Our new Tolerance Index is based on four measures: the Gay Index, the Bohemian Index, the Melting Pot Index (the concentration of foreign-born people), and a measure of racial integration used to capture how integrated rather than separated a community is throughout its internal geography. Places that score high on this Tolerance Index (see Table 2)—places where gay immigrants and bohemians all feel at home and where racial groups tend to live mixed together, not in distinct enclaves—are *very* likely to have a culture of tolerance.

The research here is ongoing and much more needs to be done. For now, our measures should be looked at as leading indicators of creative ecosystems—habitats open to new people and ideas, where people network easily and offbeat ideas are not stifled but are turned into new projects, companies and growth. Regions and nations that have such ecosystems are likely to do the best job of tapping the diverse creative talents of the most people, and thus gain competitive advantage.

With a new Tolerance Index in hand, Stolarick and I went on to develop a new and improved version of the overall Creativity Index, which is based on three component scores—one for

technology, one for talent and one for tolerance. In building the new Creativity Index, we also updated our Creative Class figures (the talent measure) and improved one of the sub-measures for technology in the Innovation Index (see Appendix B).

The winners and losers in the Creative Age are shown in Table 3, which lists the top 10 and bottom 10 finishers on the new Creativity Index among U.S. regions with populations over one million. (Complete rankings for all regions are in Appendix B). Austin, Texas, has now jumped ahead of San Francisco to take first place. Seattle, Boston and Raleigh-Durham round out the top five. Portland, Sacramento and Denver score higher than before. Again, research is ongoing and I don't want to imply that scores and rankings, mine or anyone else's, are hard-and-fast determinants. Please view the Creativity Index as a broad-gauge indicator of a region's ability to harness creative energy for long-run economic growth. All my measures are best used as tools to focus strategic effort. For instance, regions might see how they score on each of the 3 Ts and turn attention to areas in which they are weak.

Table 2: The New Tolerance Index

<i>Tolerance Index Rank¹</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Melting Pot Index Rank¹</i>	<i>Gay Index Rank¹</i>	<i>Boho Index Rank¹</i>	<i>Integration Index Rank²</i>
Regions with the Highest Levels of Tolerance					
1	Seattle	18	4	6	5
2	Portland OR	19	10	13	1
3	Boston	14	5	9	8
4	Minneapolis	27	25	10	4
5	Providence	16	19	15	7
6	San Francisco	3	1	3	39
7	Austin	15	3	7	29
8	Denver	20	13	11	17
9	Orlando	17	14	8	27
10	Los Angeles	2	11	1	44
Regions with the Lowest Levels of Tolerance					
39	Greensboro	31	37	43	30
39	New Orleans	37	6	46	45
41	Milwaukee	35	41	21	35
42	Cincinnati	49	46	24	9
43	Cleveland	40	43	29	33
44	Louisville	47	36	48	11
45	Pittsburgh	48	48	38	3
46	Norfolk	42	42	41	25
47	Buffalo	43	49	40	19
48	Memphis	45	27	49	46
49	St. Louis	46	44	42	32

NOTE: Compiled by Kevin Stolarick for metropolitan regions over 1 million population.

¹Out of 49 regions with over 1 million population.

²Out of 276 regions.

Figuring out how to make national and regional economies grow and compete is the practical aspect of my work. Fomenting creative activity is obviously crucial, and U.S. regions that have done best thus far do not accomplish it just by building stadiums, recruiting factories or retail chains, or starting business incubators. The creative process flourishes in places that provide the broad ecosystem which nurtures and supports creativity and channels it into innovation, new firm formation and ultimately economic growth and rising living standards.

Table 3: The New Creativity Index

<i>Creativity Index Rank</i> ¹	<i>Region</i>	<i>Technology Rank</i> ¹	<i>Talent Rank</i> ¹	<i>Tolerance Rank</i> ¹	<i>Overall Creativity Index Rank</i> ²
Regions with the Highest Creativity Index Scores					
1	Austin	1	3	7	1
2	San Francisco	3	5	6	2
3	Seattle	6	6	1	3
4	Boston	12	4	3	5
5	Raleigh-Durham	2	2	20	6
6	Portland OR	4	19	2	7
7	Minneapolis	16	9	4	10
8	Washington-Baltimore	15	1	16	11
9	Sacramento	5	11	17	13
10	Denver	22	8	8	14
Regions with the Lowest Creativity Index Scores					
39	Detroit	48	22	37	113
39	Norfolk	37	30	46	113
41	Cleveland	40	32	43	118
42	Milwaukee	43	40	41	124
43	Grand Rapids	33	48	32	131
44	Memphis	27	43	48	132
45	Jacksonville	49	39	33	143
46	Greensboro	41	46	39	145
47	New Orleans	47	35	39	147
48	Buffalo	41	37	47	150
49	Louisville	45	47	44	171

NOTE: Compiled by Kevin Stolarick for metropolitan regions over 1 million population.

¹Out of 49 regions with over 1 million population.

²Out of 276 regions.

Perhaps the most gratifying thing for me is how many regions and their civic leaders have been receptive to the ideas in the book. In many places, in the U.S. and elsewhere, government officials, nonprofit people and business leaders concerned with building more vibrant and prosperous communities are taking up these ideas. They frequently ask me to suggest solutions to local problems. As the book shows, there are no magic bullets. Growing a creative ecosystem is an organic process. Each place has unique assets to do this. There is no one-size-fits-all strategy. Each place has to use the ideas and theories developed in this book to create the best "fit" for itself. While certain initiatives may help to encourage the flourishing of a creative ecosystem and others will certainly squelch it, the development of such environments cannot be planned from above. The key thing to understand is that the solution lies in the hands of each region—in the knowledge, intelligence and creative capabilities of its people. And I have come to better understand something the great urbanist Jane Jacobs likes to say, the key is to "squelch the squelchers"—the controlling leaders, micromanagers, and broad structures of social control and vertical power—that quash and derail that energy.

What's sometimes disheartening is that some community leaders seem to conclude the key lies in attracting Creative Class workers, and therefore the Creative Class simply needs to be lured like sports franchise from another city with bike trails, music scenes and other amenities. One reviewer of the book, unfairly but correctly, sneered that you can't rebuild a local economy around street guitarists with long hair and ripped t-shirts. Building broad creative ecosystems that mobilize the creative talents of many is a complex, multifaceted activity. We are only beginning to understand how to do it. It will take a long time and many local experiments.

But strides are being made, and for perhaps the first time, people are focusing on

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