



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

By Richard Florida

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Many writers have commented on the massive social changes of the past few decades, but most of them have treated these shifts as something imposed on us, by technology or the marketplace. This is wrong, says Richard Florida: we've chosen to alter our values, work, and lifestyle, and for good economic reasons. Why have we done this? Florida finds the answer in the rise of a new social class. Like other classes, its basis is economic. Just as the feudal aristocracy derived its identity and values from its hereditary control of land and people, and the bourgeoisie derived its identity and values from its role as merchants of goods, the Creative Class derives its identity and values from its role as purveyors of creativity. When we see ourselves as "creative," our self-image affects the choices we make in every area of our lives. Based on a massive body of research, The Rise of the Creative Class chronicles the ongoing sea-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 nearly forty million Americans, or more than 25% of all employed people. The choices these people make have already had a huge economic impact, and 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.

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Editorial Review

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Florida, an academic whose field is regional economic development, explains the rise of a new social class that he labels the creative class. Members include scientists, engineers, architects, educators, writers, artists, and entertainers. He defines this class as those whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology, and new creative content. In general this group shares common characteristics, such as creativity, individuality, diversity, and merit. The author estimates that this group has 38 million members, constitutes more than 30 percent of the U.S. workforce, and profoundly influences work and lifestyle issues. The purpose of this book is to examine how and why we value creativity more highly than ever and cultivate it more intensely. He concludes that it is time for the creative class to grow up--boomers and Xers, liberals and conservatives, urbanites and suburbanites--and evolve from an amorphous group of self-directed while high-achieving individuals into a responsible, more cohesive group interested in the common good. *Mary Whaley*

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Review

"The 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*

"What growing numbers of people seek in their work is basically this: They want to be creative." -- *Optimize Magazine*

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

About the Author

Richard Florida is H. John Heinz III Professor of Regional Economic Development, Heinz School of Public Policy and Management, Carnegie Mellon University. A columnist for Information Week (circ. 400,000), he gives fifty to one hundred invited lectures a year, to mostly business audiences. He lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

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