

DC: A Suburb of New York City

March 4, 2009

by Will Smith

Richard Florida, renowned urban theorist and author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, has made a splash with this month's cover story in *The Atlantic* entitled *How the Crash Will Reshape America*. In the piece, Florida analyzes the changes, by geographic region, that he believes will come as a result of the current recession. Specifically, he predicts that certain cities and urban regions in the US will suffer a "body blow" from which they may never fully recover, while others will emerge stronger and more strategically relevant than before.



In a 45-minute NPR interview, he makes two comments about the DC area in particular. The first is complimentary:

"...Greater Washington, DC ... I still think is a boomland. In fact in our ratings and rankings, it comes up as a great place for singles, a great place for families — and I'm not just talking about the city. Maryland and northern Virginia and the whole environment there." (Minute 21:15 in the audio)

His second comment is more provocative:

"Part of Washington DC's resurgence is not just that it's a government town and has AOL high-tech. DC in a very real way has become a suburb of New York. And a lot of the media and broadcast — NPR functions that are there, XM Radio, many of the documentary film producers, many of the writers for *The New York Times* — have actually relocated [to DC] because of the affordability and connectivity." (Minute 16:00 in the audio)

DC a suburb of New York?! Only if your definition of suburb extends 200 miles beyond a city's borders.

In all seriousness, clearly Florida does not mean suburb in the conventional sense. And his point is an interesting one: technology enables some of New York's elite to call DC home.

We're curious, do you know anyone who "commutes" between DC and New York? Or for that matter, do you know anyone who commutes between DC and any other city outside the immediate metropolitan area? Please let us know in the comments.