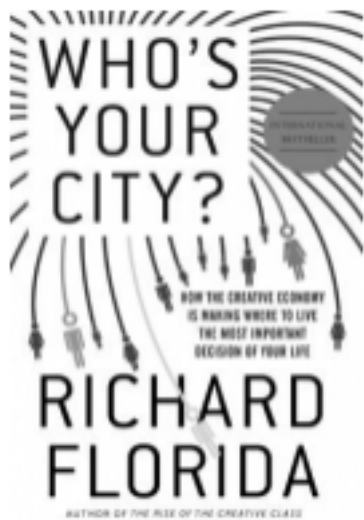


Who's Your City? (and the Impact on Church Planting)



Of all of the books I've read by Richard Florida this has by far been the most compelling. The others were great disseminators of facts, charts, and other statistics but this seemed a bit more focused on the application of it all. I believe that the implications of where Florida is going with this book is pretty staggering especially if his message would ever to become more mainstream. Whether you're a city lover, have a keen interest in our economy, or an arm-chair social scientist seeking to understand global trends then this book will give you much to ponder.

Overall the book confronts the notion that place or geography is dead. With such books on the market like *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman, which he argues that because of globalization it has a flattening effect that diminishes geography, Florida's work stands in stark contrast. As a matter of fact, *Who's Your City* argues for quite the opposite of Friedman's work on various levels. According to Florida the three most crucial questions adults face in life are; (1) What are you going to do? (job, career), (2) With who? (spouse, partner), and (3) Where? (geography, place) Accordingly these are the three biggest decisions that will affect your life more than almost anything else. Wow, that is a lot to soak in. "Finding a place that best fits us isn't easy – as nothing that's truly important in life is – but it can be done." (291)

Building off his prior research and books Florida shows how geography does indeed matter as the creative class tends to cluster around one another. High-tech firms exist in proximity with one another which strengthens their draw in the same way a McDonalds has no problem being directly across the street from a Burger King. Where are these creative types clustering? Again, based upon the 3 T's, it is where other Talent collects, where technology companies are in abundance or at least there's opportunities available, and in cities and regions that are very open and tolerant not only to differing sexual orientations but to diverse ethnic groups as well. "Like people, places have varying abilities to welcome and absorb newcomers – particularly those who are different from its current residents." (301)

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Again, in contrast to Friedman's book *Who's Your City* reveals to the reader that world is spikey and not flat. Based upon economic output, the number of scientist or patents per capita, the world is best looked at through the lens of mega-regions. For example, instead of looking at Seattle as a single city it is best understood in the larger context in the mega-region, called Cascadia, which starts in Vancouver BC, encompasses Seattle, and goes all of the way down to Portland.

Place is still important. As a matter of fact, it is very important and one the biggest life decisions we face that will literally affect and influence generations of our children and grandchildren. Deciding where to plant a church is crucial and not one to be taken lightly. There's nothing wrong with being intuitive as well as methodical in your decision of where to start a new church. Not just by picking a region that's a fit, but the part of city as well knowing that each city and each part of the city houses its own personality. Where you plant a church is a big decision!