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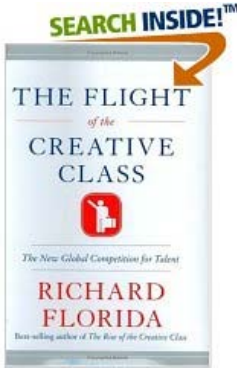
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by [Richard Florida](#) (Author) "In March of 2003, I had the opportunity to meet Peter Jackson, the Academy Award-winning director of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, at his..." [\(more\)](#)

Key Phrases: [United States](#), [New York](#), [Silicon Valley](#) [\(more...\)](#)

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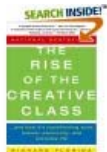
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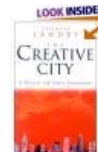
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## Editorial Reviews

### From Publishers Weekly

Following up on *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), Florida argues that if America continues to make it harder for some of the world's most talented students and workers to come here, they'll go to other countries eager to tap into their creative capabilities—as will American citizens fed up with what they view as an increasingly repressive environment. He argues that the loss of even a few geniuses can have tremendous impact, adding that the "overblown" economic threat posed by large nations such as China and India obscures all the little blows inflicted upon the U.S. by Canada, Scandinavia, New Zealand and other countries with more open political climates. Florida lays his case out well and devotes a significant portion of this polemical analysis to defending his earlier book's argument regarding "technology, talent, and tolerance" (i.e. that together, they generate economic clout, so the U.S. should be more progressive on gay rights and government spending). He does so because that book contains what he sees as the way out of the dilemma—a new American society that can "tap the full creative capabilities of every human being." Even when he drills down to less panoramic vistas, however, Florida remains an astute observer of what makes economic communities tick, and he's sure to generate just as much public debate on this new twist on brain drain. *25-city radio tour.*

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### From Booklist

Professor Florida makes an impassioned plea, using his first book, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), as a jump start, for the U.S. to retain its stature as an open and welcoming home for talent. And lest readers think that the author has overstated the hype, that engineers, scientists, and other innovators are not emigrating from America, he musters up an incredible quantity of quality statistics that would disable any contrarian, from the unaffordability of our cities to our insistence on outsourcing. Yet this brain drain is not attributable simply to verifiable factors; rather, it is in large part driven by our demise as an open, tolerant society. Look at the numbers of films now produced in Toronto, New Zealand, and Australia. Who now has the lead in developing new ideas in consumer electronics? Note the decreasing numbers of Nobel Prizes awarded to U.S. citizens. How do we solve the problem? He admits his four-pronged program is not an overnight panacea; it requires a profound societal shift. *Barbara Jacobs*

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[International Migration, Remittances, and Brain Drain \(World Bank Trade and Development Series\)](#) by Caglar Ozden on [page 257](#)

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☆☆☆☆ **A hopeful vision for the future**, July 27, 2005

By **P. Lozar "plozar"** (Santa Fe, NM USA) - [See all my reviews](#)  
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RF has written an excellent followup to his first book. His concept that the U.S. is suffering a "brain drain" has been discussed pretty thoroughly by other reviewers, so I won't rehash it, other than to say that I think he's right on the button. The title, in fact, reflects only part of the story: what I found most stimulating about the book is his suggestions for the future.

I think that his recommendations about education are excellent. He does NOT say that a college education is a necessary prerequisite for prosperity; rather, he points out that the present U.S. educational system doesn't foster (and indeed squelches) the creativity, flexibility, and initiative that students need to succeed in today's volatile economy. While training a nation of workplace drones and mindless consumers might have been expedient in the age of large factories, it's counterproductive today and represents an immense waste of human abilities, especially if we're losing the influx of immigrant talent and ambition that has fueled our economy up to now. (Current educational reforms, e.g., No Student Left Behind, are a step backwards in their focus on rote memorization and standardized tests; the aim appears to be to create easily measurable results to make a political point.)

It's noteworthy that RF doesn't take sides politically: while he bewails the political climate that has led to the "flight of the creative class," he also deplors the increased polarization of the major parties, which has more to do with Washington power politics than with voters' actual beliefs. (He's right about that: it's a pity that the "purple America" map from the 2004 election reproduced so poorly in the book, because it makes the important point that we're not nearly as divided a nation as we're made out to be.) He faults the Republicans for being wedded to old-money industries such as oil, but faults the Democrats equally for buying into the nineteenth-century business model by catering to unions. And both parties have failed equally in recognizing what truly

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☆☆☆☆ **Kinda Lightweight Social Science**

Florida was all the rage in the Ivory Tower a while back. I read this book when it first came out and immediately saw it for what it was; a lightweight treatise marketed... [Read more](#)

Published 2 months ago by madhatter

☆☆☆☆ **Still needs to take on the 900-pound gorilla**

"If America continues to make it harder for some of the world's most talented students and workers to come here, they'll go to other countries eager to tap into their creative... [Read more](#)

Published 9 months ago by Brian Wright

☆☆☆☆ **Don't Waste Your Time and Money**

While I appreciated and generally agreed with the thesis Richard Florida puts forward that creativity is important for society, there were many times when I found his writing... [Read more](#)


Published 19 months ago by Zecon

☆☆☆☆ **False Dichotomy between Creative and Technology Mindset**

Richard Florida's work has many culturally helpful things to say. A kid's review - well argued by the way - has pointed out that Florida's work has a right brain bias. [Read more](#)

drives the U.S. economy (hint to some previous reviewers: it's not just money).

As for the commonly expressed criticism that RF is glorifying an effete, self-centered "creative class" while ignoring the unwashed masses, do the math: these people prospered economically not because they inherited money, but because they WORKED FOR IT. Regional success stories such as Silicon Valley and Seattle were built, not by trust-fund babies (or, for that matter, on Enron-style accounting), but by people who committed themselves passionately to a project, took financial risks, and worked long hours. His suggestions in the later sections of the book have to do, not with keeping the "creative class" exclusive, but with improving both the work environment and the educational system so that the rest of society can draw upon their own creativity to achieve the same personal and financial success.


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56 of 68 people found the following review helpful:

★★★★★ **Read this book!**, April 22, 2005

By [jahaka "mike"](#) (usa) - [See all my reviews](#)

I've found the negative reviews to be perplexing- such vitriolic diatribes and very little critical thought evident- I wonder if the book was actually read by these reviewers. This is a really good book that deserves to be read and discussed. Florida doesn't pretend to have all of the answers. People with pulses and a modicum of creativity seem to understand the premises he puts forth. For those looking to blame someone, anyone, for the economic equity gap evident in this country, Florida is an easy target. Folks, don't kill the messenger, he may have something to teach you. The cultural insularity and puritanical values perpetuated in current public policy have long term consequences. Wake up!

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25 of 39 people found the following review helpful:

★★★★★ **Wish I'd written this book**, April 22, 2005


By [Donna](#) (Colorado, United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

This book sounds like the topics discussed in my house. I have been saddened to watch the America that I learned about as a child, the world's "greatest country", an icon of freedom and diversity, disintegrate before my eyes through my life.

I have been thinking about moving to another country for several years, and my determination to do so has only increased with time. This book has confirmed that I am not alone.

If we didn't have the wave of geniuses coming to America during WWII, this country would not be what it is today. And if we, as a nation, take a reactionary stance and let fear prevent us from moving forward into the future, we will loose whatever edge we have. As the review above says, "This brain drain is... in large part driven by our demise as an open, tolerant society." We cannot allow reactionary attitudes, bigotry, and sexism to rise from the dust and take over our country.

I don't have children, so I'll just move somewhere that is more comfortable to me. But those of you with kids should be seriously thinking about what kind of future you want to build for your children.

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Published 20 months ago by Lou Quacious

★★★★★ **Florida's work is based on a fundamentally flawed assumption**

Richard Florida divides people into two groups, those in the creative class such as artists, musicians, and engineers and those not in the creative class, mainly people not... [Read more](#)

Published 21 months ago

★★★★★ **Politically independent?**

I bought this book after seeing Mr Florida talk on CSPAN-2. He does have some interesting things to say about creativity, but... [Read more](#)

Published 23 months ago by Brian Williams

★★★★★ **Must read**

Even before finishing this book, I began recommending to all my friends at least to read it, even if they are not inclined to buy it. [Read more](#)

Published on January 12, 2006 by Lena

★★★★★ **reviews that made me think**

I know Florida and have worked with him a number of times, as I produce conventions where we may have hired him or our client has hired him. [Read more](#)

Published on December 25, 2005 by Rocklobster

★★★★★ **Book is similar to Flight Capital**

These three books: Creative Class, Flight Capital and World is Flat is talking about the same thing from different angle. [Read more](#)

Published on December 12, 2005 by Muhamad Carlos Patriawan

★★★★★ **Fascinating discussion of creativity's economic importance**

This book is an extension of Florida's "Creativity Thesis" from his earlier book (although this work certainly stands on its own). [Read more](#)

Published on November 26, 2005 by A. McDonald

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