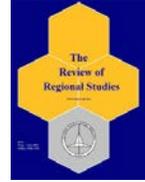




# The Review of Regional Studies

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### *Book Review Editors:*

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**Benjamin Powell, ed. 2015. *The Economics of Immigration: Market-Based Approaches, Social Science, and Public Policy*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK and New York, NY, USA. ISBN: 9780190258788, 272 pp., \$105.00 (hardcover).**

Reviewed by *Cathy Yang Liu*, Georgia State University

Immigration is one of the most hotly debated policy issues in the U.S. and around the world. The various controversies around the immigration debate are partly attributable to the lack of concrete evidence to inform sound policy making. In general, immigration policies are centered on two main areas: how to control immigration to the U.S. and how to deal with immigrants who are already in the U.S. There are undoubtedly many dimensions to these areas which fall into different policy domains and add to the complexity of this issue. The edited volume by Benjamin Powell of Texas Tech University provides a comprehensive and interesting collection of both the current knowledge on the facts of economic and fiscal effects of immigration, as well as dynamic policy debate of different views on immigration issues. The materials are presented in such a manner that it is readable to both academics of various disciplines as well as the general public.

Followed by the editor's introduction, the first half of the book contains four chapters that summarize several aspects of the immigration phenomenon in the U.S. Chapter 2 examines the economic effects of international labor mobility from the perspective of both in-migration and emigration. Given international human migration theories, existing evidence suggests that the perceived negative effects immigrants exert on native-born workers' wages and employment, if any, are both small and temporary. Such effects also vary by geography, skill level, and time period. At the same time, international migration improves the welfare of sending countries through human capital formation, remittances, and trade. In addition, immigrants play a role in institutional reform, environment, entrepreneurship, and urban renewal in the host society.

Chapter 3 focuses on the fiscal impact of immigration at the federal, state, and local levels. Beginning with the basic static accounting models, it introduces three dynamic methods for estimating future tax revenues and government spending because of immigration: macroeconomic models, generational accounting, and net transfer models. It concludes that while it is a difficult task to predict fiscal impact into the future, numerous studies reveal very small positive net fiscal

impact of immigration on government budgets. While such predictions rely on different future scenarios and policy changes, the author asserts “regardless of those details and nuances, there is no strong fiscal case for or against sustained large-scale immigration” given the small effect (p.64).

Chapter 4 shifted the discussion to the civic and cultural assimilation of immigrants and its change over time. While the concept of assimilation dates back decades, it is still a valuable benchmark to measure immigrants’ adaptation to a host society today. The author aggregates four measures for the cultural assimilation indicator: the ability to speak English, their marital status, whether they are married to a native-born spouse, and the number of children in their household. The index of civic assimilation consists of past or present military service and citizenship. The findings, contrary to expectation, are that recent waves of immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries do not necessarily pose a threat to U.S. institutions and that immigrants’ rate of civic and cultural assimilation are faster than before.

Chapter 5 provides a very detailed international comparison of the employment migration statistics and working visa rules in 23 OECD countries. It compares the U.S. migration policies with other countries’ regarding both the high-skilled and low-skilled immigrants and assesses whether such policies achieve their intended goals of alleviating labor shortage. The authors argue that working visa policies with quotas and stringent requirements attached can potentially drive up illegal immigration and offer some remedies to improve the situation.

The second half of the book contains several chapters that make different proposals for immigration policy reform. In Chapter 6 the author recommends a market-based, rather than rules-based approach to immigration that is pro-growth and mutually beneficial. In this proposal, a legal immigration quota will be determined by an auction system rather than bureaucratic rules and would thus be more efficient, fair, and better to recruit talent. Illegal immigrants can also be incorporated into this auction system.

Alternatively, the author in Chapter 7 is rather pessimistic of “multiculturalism” and suggested cutting the current legal immigration level by half to better assimilate current immigrants into the American society. While the author acknowledges the economic benefits of high-skilled immigrants, he is willing to strike a “grand bargain” that reduces immigration flow to make up for legalizing undocumented immigrants who are already in the country.

To the contrary, the authors in Chapter 8 make the radical proposal for completely open borders. Through estimating the effect of open borders on global production, poverty, inequality, budget, crime, and politics, they make the case of moral consilience from multiple angles. Finally, in the editor’s conclusion, Powell reviews several immigration scholars’ viewpoints that are either critical or supportive of increased immigration and offers his own judgments. Given the evidence assembled in the volume, gradual increases in the level of immigration will not harm the American institution or economic prosperity. However, the exact mechanisms through which to determine the optimal quota on immigration with different skill levels and migration channels need further careful analysis.

In sum, this volume provides a concise and timely contribution to our understanding of immigration in the U.S., its impacts in various domains, as well as possible policy scenarios. This information is of great interest and importance as we enter into a new administration with looming opportunities for immigration reform. Further research can also build upon the existing findings summarized in this book and offer details and nuances on the roles immigrants play in specific geographic locations as well as policy areas.

**Julie Cidell and David Prytherch, eds. 2015. *Transport, Mobility, and the Production of Urban Space*. Routledge: Routledge, Abingdon, and New York. ISBN: 9781138891340, 303 pp., \$148.00 (hardcover).**

Reviewed by *Corey Young*, Washington & Jefferson College

A departure from most standard urban economics and transportation engineering texts, this book examines the design and functionality of transportation systems in terms of economic, social, political, and cultural significance. The editors and contributing authors advance the notion that transportation is much more than a process of traveling from one point to another; instead, it is an experience made up of complex parts that has an effect on the health and well-being of people and places. The book is 15 chapters in length and is organized into four parts.

Part I examines the relationship between physical spaces and the people and goods that move between them. In the three chapters that make up the section, authors David Prytherch, Bascom Guffin, and Gregg Culver highlight the ways in which seemingly mundane elements of our transportation systems, such as speed limits and lane widths, have tremendous impacts on an individual's daily activity and overall mobility. The authors point out that because of this impact, the design and implementation of transportation projects is highly important and can in some ways be construed as a type of "choreography" of human movement.

Given this importance, the authors contend that transportation system users and designers must take a holistic approach when examining form and function. Culver points this out in his discussion of a reconstruction project in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In that study, Culver takes on the concept of "levels of service," a tool commonly used by transportation engineers to evaluate the quality of transportation services. According to Culver, the construction of the "levels of service" tool is value-laden and tends to favor the movement of automobiles over people. The subjectivity of supposedly objective tools and measures leads the reader to question the accuracy and effectiveness of some of the heuristics that have been employed by transportation professionals since the dawn of the Progressive Era. Culver's work, along with the pieces written by Guffin and Prytherch, provides an alternative conceptualization of transportation, one that relies not on objective measures and technocratic solutions but instead on the fundamental relationship between design and human behaviors.

In Parts II and III, the authors discuss the symbolic meanings of transportation projects and the politics of deciding how and where places connect. Author Anru Lee posits that "mobility stories are essentially local stories" and, thus, they have political, economic, and social meaning. The pieces included in Parts II and III invite the reader to think of railroad lines, bus routes, and vehicular travel not in terms of passengers served and vehicle miles traveled but instead as threats and promises to communities and their ways of life.

In her study of a railroad acquisition in the Chicago area, author Julie Cidell found that suburban opposition to the railroad was related to residents' fear that the train would destroy their tranquil, suburban environment. In this case, the railroad was much more than just a track, it represented industry, untidiness, and chaos. Because of this, the railroad was viewed as an existential threat to many residents' preferred way of life. Similarly, in the piece written by Jason Henderson, the reader learns about some of the nuanced opposition to a private bus service offered by Google in the San Francisco area. Henderson explains that while the service effectively reduced private car travel and, thus, helped reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it was opposed by many

because of the implicit reallocation of public space (the streets) for private use. In that case, the preference for the street as a public good proved to be more significant than other overarching goals, such as carbon emissions reductions. As revealed in Parts II and III, transportation systems are often attached to hidden or unspoken meanings and can arouse intense emotions for users and decision-makers.

Part IV builds on the concept of mobility stories as local stories by examining some of the most important characters in the mobility narrative, governmental decision-makers. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the discussion in Part IV is that governmental bodies often treat transportation systems not only as products of the tastes, preferences, and desires of those who use them, but also as strategies for future growth and development. The use of transportation as a development strategy can be observed at the local, state, regional, and national levels. The chapter by Sophie L. Van Neste on transportation in the Netherlands and the chapter by Bianca Freire-Medeiros and Leonardo Name on the lift in Brazil show that the adoption of transportation as a strategy for development is not limited to the U.S.; governmental entities around the world employ transportation systems as a strategy to reach ‘modernity.’

The book ends with a chapter discussing future research needs at the so-called “urban-transportation-geography nexus.” The editors posit that moving forward, urban environments should be viewed not only in terms of place, but also in terms of transport and mobility, as any other approach would be too narrow in its focus. Overall, the text advances research in the fields of engineering, geography, planning, and policy by moving past standard discussions of accommodating the movement of people and goods to discussions about how and why people and goods move in certain ways.

This book is appropriate for senior researchers in regional and urban economics, geography, urban planning, and engineering. The examples from the U.S. and abroad are very helpful in illustrating the arguments advanced by the authors and provide a sound foundation for the theoretical discussions.

**Quentin Stevens, ed. 2016. *Creative Milieux: How Urban Design Nurtures Creative Clusters*. Routledge: Routledge, Abingdon, and New York. ISBN: 9781138891340, 153 pp., \$160.00 (hardcover).**

Reviewed by *Corey Young*, Washington & Jefferson College

Since Richard Florida’s early discussions of the “creative class,” much work has been done to understand how and why creative classes move to the locales they do. This text strives to advance that discussion by examining the relationship between physical space and the social interactions sought out by creative types. Over the course of seven chapters, the reader is exposed to a variety of methodologies that are used to examine creative clusters around the world.

In Chapter 1, Quentin Stevens, the editor of the book, provides a brief introduction to the work of the contributing authors by evaluating the state of research in the field. He notes that while many authors have examined the locational choices of “creative industries,” few have explored the spatial conditions that support creative types, namely the building types and qualities of offices, plazas, and cafes. Stevens acknowledges that while the work of the contributing authors is informative, it is in no way exhaustive; there is still much work in the field to be done. Furthermore, he points out that this stream of research can be complicated, as there are many different interpretations of central aspects of the topic, namely what exactly a “creative industry” is.

In Chapter 2, authors Murray McKenzie and Thomas Hutton explore the significance of historic or “heritage” structures in creative communities. Through their case study of Victory Square in Vancouver, British Columbia, the authors contend that historic structures have a draw for creative industries, even when outside of the Central Business District or other, similar neighborhoods. The authors contend that at least part of the draw might be the opportunity presented by the space itself. That is, the opportunity for the creative industry to reimage or revalorize an otherwise obsolete or dilapidated space. Their contention squares nicely with previous findings showing that individuals choose their locations based on a space’s ability to “unleash” an individual’s creativity.

Using a multidimensional approach that employed interviews and photographic surveys, authors of Chapter 3 Pedro Costa and Ricardo Lopes examine the relationship between urban design and creative dynamics in cultural districts of Lisbon, Barcelona, and Sao Paulo. In their work, the researchers develop three broad dimensions for analyzing public spaces: the material space, including natural and built conditions; the life of the space, the way the space is experienced by residents, workers, tourists, etc.; and the symbolic dimension, the way the space is perceived and represented. Costa and Lopes conclude that the design, use, and symbolism all contribute to a locale’s attractiveness for creative industries.

In Chapter 4, Stephen Wood and Kim Dovey examine how and why creative clusters might be linked to urban morphologies, or the material or formal structure of places. Drawing on the seminal works in the field, the authors argue that creative clusters are linked to physical spaces because architecture and the built environment serve as means of expression. To better understand that link, and more specifically which aspects of the built environment attract creative clusters, the authors conducted a study of lot sizes, building ages, building heights, and public/private interfaces in Australian cities. The authors concluded that creative clusters seek and require a mix of morphologies. That is, the spillovers that make creative clusters successful require old/new, large/small, and public/private buildings and lots. The diversity in urban morphologies promote social interaction, information sharing, and other essential functions.

Through case studies of fashion districts in Bangkok, Singapore, and Tokyo, author Davisi Boontharm examines the requalification of existing spaces by the fashion industry in Chapter 5. Boontharm concludes that the firms active in the Bangkok, Singapore, and Tokyo fashion industries are not merely tenants of physical spaces, but active creators and designers of the spaces they occupy. Interestingly, Boontharm draws parallels between “vintage” fashion trends and the preference of fashion firms, particularly in Tokyo, to occupy “vintage” spaces. Through her work, the reader gains an understanding of how spaces can unleash creativity, a notion advanced in earlier chapters.

In Chapter 6, S. Bahar Durmaz examines the film industry in London and Istanbul to understand the specific factors that attract and retain creative types in a certain locale. Using interviews, observations, and cognitive and cluster mapping, Durmaz finds that the feeling of “inspiration” that is important for creative types does not come from the physical spaces they occupy, but instead from the interactions that are fostered by the physical space. Therefore, according to Durmaz, intimate, walkable, and accessible environments that promote socialization and communication tend to be most attractive to creative individuals.

Like Durmaz, author Juliana Martins finds that creative industries seek out and thrive in places that offer the opportunity for social interaction. Through interviews with workers in digital

industries in Shoreditch, London, Martins finds that the communication and collaboration that satisfy creative workers occurs in formal office settings as well as ancillary spaces. In many ways, creative individuals require a menu of options for work and collaboration, from the office meeting room to the local pub or café. Her work highlights the importance of not only private spaces, but also public and quasi-public spaces for the attraction and retention of creative individuals.

The book serves as an excellent introduction to professionals in urban and regional economics and public policy who would like to learn more about the relationship between locational decision-making and physical space. Unlike other works that address the economic and policy aspects of amenities bundles in locational decision-making, this text provides a succinct overview of the built/physical aspects of those bundles. In many ways, the text is an extension of the work of Florida and other, similar researchers who have defined the “creative class” by examining the ways in which that class interacts, engages, and benefits from the built environments they occupy.

**Richard Shearmur, Christophe Carrincazeaux, and David Doloreux, eds. 2016. *Handbook on the Geographies of Innovation*. Edward Elgar Publishing Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA. ISBN: 9781784710767, 512 pp., \$290.00 (hardcover).**

Reviewed by *Margaret Bock*, West Virginia University

The geographies of innovation literature have their origins in the 1980s. Over the past three decades, the world and the way that individuals act in the world has drastically changed with the advent of new technologies such as the internet and mobile communication. Therefore, the views about the impacts of location and other geographical features on innovative processes should arguably change as well or, at the very least, be updated to consider this new level of connectedness across the globe. Following this line of thought, the goal of this handbook is to compile recent contributions to the innovation literature that take the above-mentioned modern realities into account. The different chapters have been written by many figures in this field which include economists, geographers, innovation studies specialists, political scientists, urban planners, and sociologists. The editors have split the 27-chapter collection into seven parts, with each part highlighting different segments and perspectives of the current geographies of innovation literature. Each part is thoughtfully compiled to give the reader an accurate sense of the state of the literature. From theory to policy, the different parts serve as a useful guide to give a comprehensive and informative look into this realm of study.

The core ideas of this handbook are presented in a very approachable way, and the introductory chapter of this handbook serves as an overview of the topics to be discussed. The main goal of this literature is to examine the impacts of spatial and other geographical factors that play a role in the development and spread of innovative practices or technologies throughout the world and the eventual outcome of growth and development of regional economies. To the benefit of the reader, this introduction presents some of the major problems and questions that exist in the geographies of innovation literature, including the lack of focus across studies on what exactly constitutes an innovative agent and a lack of communication between different fields of study to the issues surrounding this literature. The remainder of the handbook includes contributions from various authors of different specialties and approaches to address and discuss some of these problems.

Part I focuses on the theoretical approaches to the geography of innovation, including chapters championing the traditional methods and those that question these methods and call for new approaches. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, there was a strong consensus in the literature concerning the importance of the relative closeness and location on the distribution and development of innovative technologies; however, as the world entered a newly-connected arrangement with the advent of the internet and mobile phones, contributors to this literature began to question the importance of the physical closeness explanation for the spread of innovative technologies. The chapters of this part outline this disconnect between older and newer researchers and discuss the benefits and detriments of this divide.

Part II introduces ideas of local spatial networks and knowledge relatedness across different regional and sectoral divisions and how these connections contribute to innovative developments. Chapters included in this part also illustrate the many starting points any study in this field could take on; for example, Franz Tödting and Michaela Trippel note in their chapter that the flow and transfer of knowledge depends on what kind of knowledge (whether it be codified knowledge or symbolic knowledge) one is analyzing. Part III focuses on the role of cities and large regional clusters on innovation and knowledge sharing; the chapters in this section are all unique in their approaches to this broad area of innovation studies, adding to a rich presentation of ideas. Part IV introduces some “nontraditional” approaches and ideas about knowledge sharing and innovation that any new or seasoned reader of this literature will find thought-provoking, including qualms with cluster theory and the strict core-periphery division of innovative areas.

Part V, one of my favorite parts of the handbook, discusses the importance of innovation policy in both a global and regional sense, as well as suggestions for different types of innovation policies. Neil Bradford and Allison Bramwell’s chapter proposes a combined analytical framework of “scale, governance, and agency” for studying the effectiveness of regional economic policies. Chun Yang’s chapter examines the specific case of Shenzhen, China and how the consideration of region specific dynamics plays a major role in the effectiveness of state innovation policies. Part VI can be thought of as an extension to Parts II and III, introducing the importance of global interconnectedness to innovation with specific attention brought to thoughts such as global digital networks and migration. The final section, Part VII, introduces works that examine some of the more local consequences (both positive and negative) that have arisen in a more globally innovative world, an area that the editors note has been rarely examined in innovation studies.

In summary, this handbook addresses a broad range of ideas in this very specific line of literature, and it is evident throughout all parts of the handbook that the authors, despite their differing specialties and backgrounds, all have important contributions to the understanding of the geographies of innovation. All the chapters presented in this handbook serve a purpose, whether to confirm previous lines of thought, introduce new methods to study innovation, or to summarize what has been said and what still needs to be said in the innovation literature. There is an appropriate balance of theory, empirical studies, and policy suggestions that makes this handbook a very accessible addition to the shelves of any experienced or aspiring scholars of the field. Despite an absence of viewpoints originating from a non-Western perspective, the authors compiled in this handbook thoroughly discuss the current state of the literature, and pose ideas that are sure to spark debate and research for years to come.

Overall, the editors of this handbook have composed an excellent collection of works that discuss many areas of the spatial and innovation literatures. Even those not familiar with the literature will be brought up to speed on the new ideas that are currently shaping this area of study,

with thoughtful contributions coming from the theoretical, policy-making, and empirical perspectives. The compilation of these 27 chapters serves to modernize the line of thinking when it comes to innovation studies, opening the door for new debates and future scholars interested in the relationship between innovation, economics, geography, and spatial factors that influence economic growth and development.