

Regional Studies Association

THE GLOBAL FORUM FOR CITY
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REGIONS AND CITIES

The volume highlights ongoing changes in the political economy of small cities in relation to the field of culture and leisure. Culture and leisure are focal points both to local entrepreneurship and to planning by city governments, which means that these developments are subject to market dynamics as well as to political discourse and action. Public-private partnerships as well as conflicts of interest characterise the field, and a major issue related to the strategic development of culture and leisure is the balance between market and welfare.

This field is gaining importance in most cities today in planning, production and consumption, but to the extent that these changes have drawn academic attention it has focused on large, metropolitan areas and on creative clusters and flagship high culture projects. Smaller cities and their often substantively different cultural strategies have been largely ignored, thus leading to a huge gap in our knowledge on contemporary urban change. By bringing together a number of case studies as well as theoretical reflections on the cultural political economy of small cities, this volume contributes to an emerging small cities research agenda and to the development of policy-relevant expertise that is sensitive to place-specific cultural dynamics.

In taking this approach, the volume hopes to contribute to emerging research on culture and leisure economies by developing a differentiated spatial dimension to it, without which sustainable urban strategies cannot be developed. This book integrates perspectives of economic development with questions of governance and equity in relation to the fields of culture and leisure planning and development. This book should be of interest to students and researchers of Urban Studies and Planning, Regional Studies and Economics, as well as Sociology and Geography.

Anne Lorentzen is Professor of Geography at Aalborg University, Denmark.

Bas van Heur is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Maastricht University, the Netherlands.

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Contents

<i>Notes on contributors</i>	xi
1 Introduction: cultural political economy of small cities	1
ANNE LORENTZEN AND BAS VAN HEUR	
PART I	
Theory and methods	15
2 Small cities and the sociospatial specificity of economic development: a heuristic approach	17
BAS VAN HEUR	
3 On a road to nowhere: a comment on amenities and urban and regional development	31
HØGNI KALSØ HANSEN AND LARS WINTHER	
4 Finding creativity in a small city: how qualitative mapping methods can reveal new geographies of creativity	44
CHRIS BRENNAN-HORLEY	
PART II	
Culture as an economic growth strategy	63
5 Sustaining small cities through leisure, culture and the experience economy	65
ANNE LORENTZEN	

6	Clarifying creativity and culture in a small city on the Canadian periphery: challenges and opportunities in Greater Sudbury	80
	HEATHER M. HALL AND BETSY DONALD	
7	The role of arts and culture in economic regeneration: Gaelic in Glasgow	95
	DOUGLAS CHALMERS AND MIKE DANSON	
PART III		
	Actors, networks, creative alliances	111
8	Making a micropole: the experiensation of Vejle	113
	SØREN SMIDT-JENSEN	
9	Eclectic creativity: interdisciplinary creative alliances as informal cultural strategy	128
	ALISON BAIN AND DYLANN MCLEAN	
10	Europe's internal periphery: small towns in the context of reflexive polycentricity	142
	PAUL L. KNOX AND HEIKE MAYER	
PART IV		
	Culture, governance and social equity	159
11	Shifting strategies and contexts for culture in small city planning: interlinking quality of life, economic development, downtown vitality, and community sustainability	161
	NANCY DUXBURY	
12	Conflicting economic and cultural subjectivities: governing the future of a small and shrinking city	179
	NINA GRIBAT	
13	Landscapes of nostalgia: place marketing and nostalgia in the American small town	194
	JENNIFER MAPES	