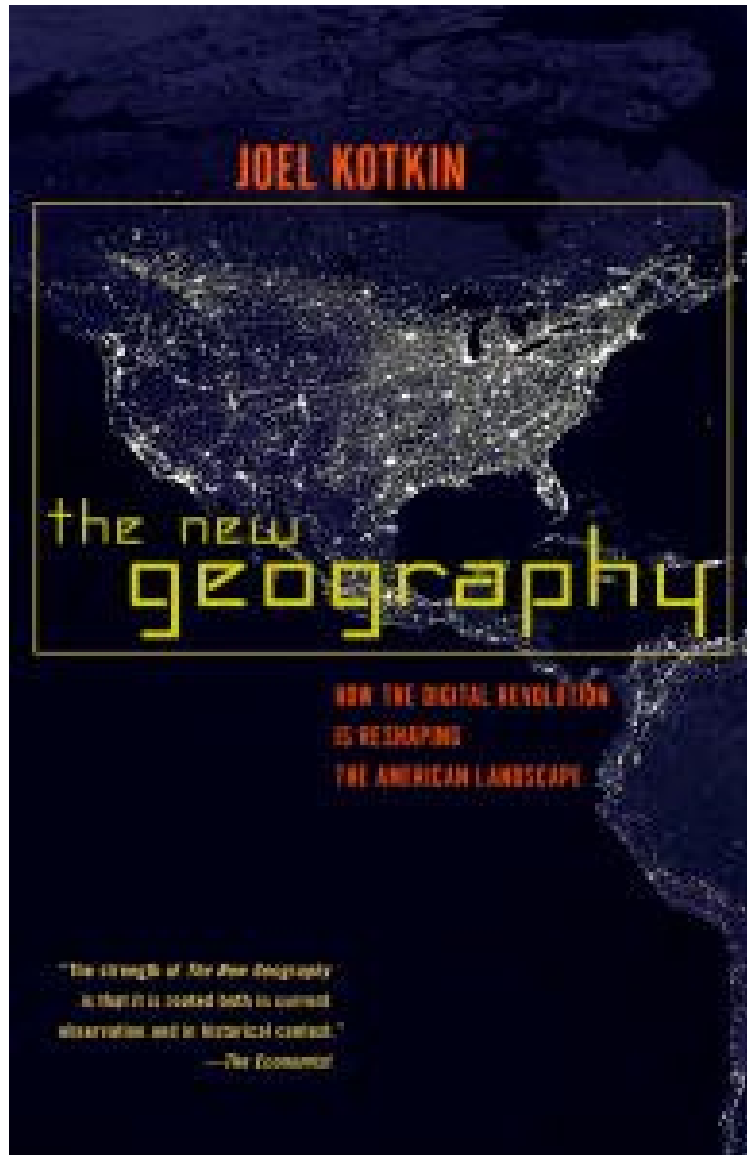


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The New Geography: How the Digital Revolution Is Reshaping the American Landscape

Joel Kotkin

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Joel Kotkin : The New Geography: How the Digital Revolution Is Reshaping the American Landscape before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The New Geography: How the Digital Revolution Is Reshaping the American Landscape:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. UninterestingBy Williamthe writer did not hold my interest. The book was not as good as I had anticipated it would be.12 of 14 people found the following review helpful. The new

economy + new urbanism = new geography

By Customer

You've heard it said that location is everything. City planning, urban geography, explanations of agricultural patterns, and the theory of industrial location all owe their existence to German geographers who were the pioneers of location theory; men such as von Thunen, Weber and Christaller. Edward Ullman introduced the concept of central-place theory to the US before WWII. The idea then has a long history of explaining the way things are. All that will come to an end if it's up to Joel Kotkin. He sees the new economy with its emphasis on communication and technology as permanently separating us from our dependence on place. This isn't revolutionary, or even a new idea. The belief that technology is more important than any physical space or location has long been the mantra of the netheads of the new economy. What else are we doing but proving the reality of this when we submit and read reviews at , and participate in a community that only exists in cyberspace?

Where THE NEW GEOGRAPHY truly breaks new ground is in the argument that the information economy has two "faces". These involve different processes and business that are beneficial to the "self-contained high-end suburbs" or "nerdistans" but also, and very importantly, other elements have "taken on a decidedly more urban cast." It's a fairly good book that will be enjoyable to those with interests in geography, urbanism, and technology; it's therefore broad enough but unfortunately not deep enough to really satisfy all.

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Could sprawl be dying?

By George H. Garfield

A thoughtful analysis of technology's impact on society with some ideas that are worth acting upon. While the premise of this book is not new, Kotkin's thoughtful analysis of how technology has and is changing our geography puts this book securely in the "must read" category. Kotkin's premise is that technology is changing America's landscape as much or more than did the Industrial Revolution. While, in some respects, technology has de-personalized our society (and there are many tangible examples; the malling and sprawling of America with "category killer" retail and soulless master planned communities), it has also emerged as a great unifier causing people to seek more connection, not less. Moreover, technology has enabled more choices, particularly on where one chooses to live and work. Consequently, the notion of "place" is more important than in the past and consumers of place are more demanding and sophisticated. What all this means is that we are seeing a very positive evolution back to "Renaissance" type cities (populated by artisans, small business and niche players enabled with technology) where place and commerce are wed. Conversely, we are also experiencing the segregation of the "haves" of technology and subsequent wealth from the "have-nots". Further segregation, Kotkin argues, will erode the very positives that are emerging. Kotkin takes pains to organize his argument and does so by citing both historical markers (i.e.-Fall of Rome, the Dark Ages and The Enlightenment/Renaissance) with geographical categories that describe our emerging urban landscape (ie-Valhallas, Nerdistans, Urban Cores and Midopolis). My one complaint is that Kotkin didn't give enough airtime to the issues around how the segregation of the classes will potentially erode the more positive impacts of technology. This subject emerges only toward the end of the book with poignant comparisons to the Fall of Rome. While some of the rosy "Internet Era" optimism (copyright 2000) is evident here, the gist of the message remains completely valid. This is an excellent book. This "New Geography" is worth thinking about and acting upon. Kotkin's last two lines are illustrative; "As people and advanced industries hunt the globe for locations, they will not necessarily seek out those places that are the biggest, the cheapest, or the most well favored by location. Instead they will seek out a new kind of geography, one that appeals to their sense of values and their hearts, and it is there that the successful communities of the digital age will be found." Do you live in one of these communities or not? Bravo!

In the blink of an eye, vast economic forces have created new types of communities and reinvented old ones. In The New Geography, acclaimed forecaster Joel Kotkin decodes the changes, and provides the first clear road map for where Americans will live and work in the decades to come, and why. He examines the new role of cities in America and takes us into the new American neighborhood. The New Geography is a brilliant and indispensable guidebook to a fundamentally new landscape. From the Hardcover edition.

.com There's a belief that the rise of technology will make cities obsolete, as more people live where they choose and telecommute to work. The advent of portable cell phones, easy air travel, and hotel time-sharing encourages a sense of "placelessness"--and that bodes ill for urban clusters. But Joel Kotkin thinks this conventional wisdom is unwise: "The importance of geography is not dwindling to nothing in the digital era; in fact, quite the opposite. In reality, place--geography--matters now more than ever before," he writes. Cities will no longer be industrial or corporate centers, but rather magnets for intelligence and talent in a way they haven't been for quite some time. The paradigm is an old one: Like the postindustrial metropolis, the preindustrial city, existing before the era dominated by mass production of goods and services, flourished by capitalizing on functions--such as cross-cultural trades, the arts, and specialized craft-based production--that could not be adequately performed by the far more numerically superior hinterland. In this sense, the future city may have more in common with Venice during the Renaissance than Detroit during the Henry Ford era. Kotkin does not believe all cities will thrive in this environment. He's particularly down on what he calls the "midopolis"--suburbs built mainly in the 1950s and 1960s to service the old-city model. They are now afflicted by crumbling infrastructures, rising crime rates, and declining schools. He cites Long Island and the San Fernando Valley

as examples. New forms of city--Kotkin calls them "nerdistans"--are already rising in their place. They are self-contained suburbs that have few of the problems associated with urban cores, and they attract companies and workers tuned into the technological revolution. He names Austin, Texas, and Raleigh, North Carolina, as prototypes. Kotkin is a veteran business journalist who writes for *The New York Times* and other publications. He's written several other books, including *Tribes*, but *The New Geography* is his best yet: a smart combination of the reportage one expects from a top-drawer magazine article and the thoughtfulness one expects from a book. It may come to be remembered as a classic, an information-age groundbreaker with the influence of Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. --John J. Miller
From *Publishers Weekly*
A prolific journalist and technology author (*Tribes*, etc.), Kotkin predicts how the Internet revolution will affect the cities, suburbs and towns where people work. In a study that will appeal mainly to those interested in urban planning and business prognostications. Many commentators have noted that as the information industry grows, physical factors such as location and access to raw materials become less important. But Kotkin declares, "if people, companies, or industries can truly live anywhere... where to locate becomes increasingly contingent on the peculiar attributes of any given location." Cities big and small must have aesthetic appeal and a pleasant quality of life to attract the high concentrations of human skill that mark strength in the new economy, he says. Though one need only consider the condition of, say, Detroit to see that many cities can no longer succeed as broad industrial centers, Kotkin points out that downtowns can restyle themselves as crucial niches for arts, entertainment and health care. He outlines the inevitable rise of "nerdistans" (among the jargon he coins), lifestyle-driven developments around those cities that have managed to attract knowledge workers in the new economy. Outside the city, he warns, struggling suburbs can't replace "the centrality of the marketplace" simply by building cultural centers. The book has the air of a compilation, with Kotkin's intriguing reportage (for publications like *The New York Times* and *Inc.*) and wide-ranging observations shoehorned into a calculatedly provocative thesis about a "new" geography. Author tour. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.
From *Booklist*
Kotkin speculates about the future, as he previously did in *Tribes* (1993). Here, he explores the impact of the new digital economy on where and how we live. He suggests that technology will permit new types of communities: in particular, "Nerdistans" (high-end, self-contained suburbs focused on office parks) for the techie troops and "Valhallas" (wealthy rural settlements) for Silicon Valley entrepreneurs. Perhaps the most interesting element of Kotkin's argument is his insistence that the digital revolution will be very good for some but not all cities. Readers who care about the urban landscape will want to check out his vision of the future. Mary Carroll
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