

## BOOK REVIEWS

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FRACTURED CITIES by Brian D. Jacobs. London: Routledge, 1992.

This book describes how urban politics addressed social and economic change during and after the Reagan and Thatcher years. The book examines how a market economy has led to polarization and division within urban societies, and how local government, community leaders and business leadership have responded to the urban crisis.

The book opens with a brief account of the economic, social, political, ideological and environmental dimensions of the urban crisis. The author then explores the theoretical cum ideological responses of both the Right and the Left to the urban crisis. The Right's 'public choice' prescription was to 'free' the market by removing government regulation, promoting privatization and encouraging development of the private sector. The Left, on the other hand, pointed to new forms of state regulation and organization as a response to crisis.

The role of the state and its degree of autonomy are at the center of the political debate between the Right and the Left. The fundamental question is whether the state is relatively weak and reactive or proactive when confronted by the urban crisis. Jacobs' answer to the question is illuminating in that he avoids dogmatic approaches suggested by proponents of both the Right and the Left. He argues that despite the influence of market forces on policy making, governments at the national and local levels are not simply reactive. Governments, he contends, provide an 'operational environment' for communities and the private sector, thus facilitating their development.

Jacobs maintains that community leaders and business leadership, guided by rational considerations, were willing to cooperate with politicians and public officials, in order to maximize their economic and political resources. Incorporated into the political system, community leaders were able to acquire not only economic benefits but also legitimation and professional skills. The price of cooperation was considerable: sacrifice of strong ideological commitments, and sometimes loss of leadership and control.

The partnership between companies, community organizations and local politicians, Jacobs writes, provided the participants with new opportunities to further their interests. This partnership enabled the local government to achieve economic expansion and created job opportunities. The community organizations gained resources and became involved in urban development initiated by the cor-

porate private sector. The corporations were able to overcome social and bureaucratic apathy, to mobilize community support for urban development, and to obtain some public funds thanks to favorable financial conditions and public investment in infrastructure.

This book is a useful one for anyone wishing to find out about recent trends in urban politics. It is of major value in analysing the contemporary political culture in American and British cities, and raises many questions about the relationship between entrepreneurial capitalism, city politics and community organizations at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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HIGH TECH FANTASIES, SCIENCE PARKS IN SOCIETY, SCIENCE AND SPACE by Doreen Massey, Paul Quintas and David Wield. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

This book presents a critical appraisal of science parks, which have become prominent elements in current strategies of industrial development. Although focused on British science parks linked with universities or research institutions, the scope of the book's arguments is much broader. A previous seminal work by one of the authors (Massey 1984) evaluated the association of industry, society and space, emphasizing the relation of industrial geography to wider social, economic and political structures. The present book follows a similar path and assesses the connection between science, society and space.

The book presents a portrait which is all too familiar also to the non-British reader. The euphoria concerning science-based industry has subsided in recent years. It is well established that the idealized models of Silicon Valley and Route 128 can not be reproduced simply by a defined policy mix. Downturns in science-based industry have indicated that it does not guarantee economic growth. However, while much of the evidence presented in the book has already been noted elsewhere, the book does present a new and broader perspective on a well researched phenomenon, and provides an innovative, clear and well-developed argument.

The study begins with a conventional evaluation of science parks according to their stated objectives: promote the formation of new firms, facilitate links and technology transfer between host academic institutions and park firms, create employment opportunities, and replace a 'sunset' existing local economy by 'sunrise' industries that enjoy a 'leading technological edge'. The results of the evaluation are mixed, although the authors tend somewhat to emphasize the empty part of the glass. This is done by comparing reality in the science parks with an utopian model, which does appear in promotional material but could hardly be expected to fully materialize.