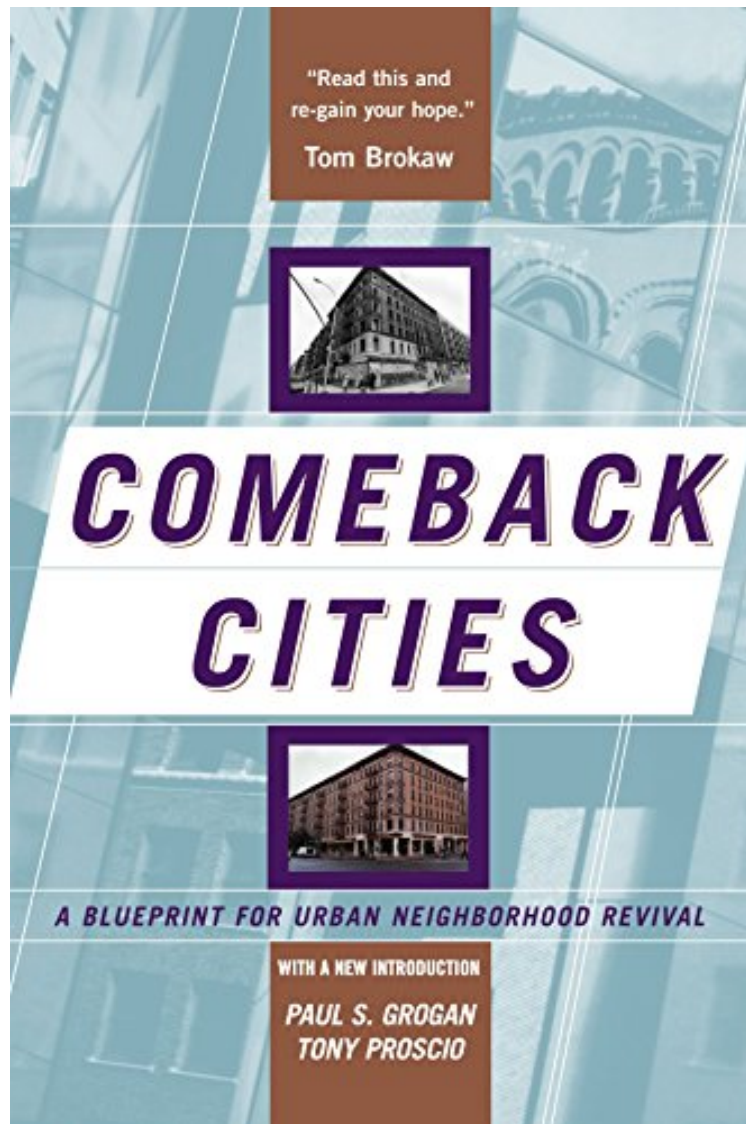


[Read ebook] Comeback Cities: A Blueprint For Urban Neighborhood Revival

Comeback Cities: A Blueprint For Urban Neighborhood Revival

Paul Grogan, Tony Proscio

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Paul Grogan, Tony Proscio : Comeback Cities: A Blueprint For Urban Neighborhood Revival before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Comeback Cities: A Blueprint For Urban Neighborhood Revival:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. They've come a long wayBy D. MorrissetteFor a book near 14 years old, it's still highly relevant to the continuous progression of urban centers. The section on collaborative policing alone couldn't be needed more, across the country. The section on recovery of declining neighborhoods is descriptive enough to create collaboratives in more cities.Some lingering thoughts:Pennywise: many fed and state policies are pennywise,

only addressing dire need and not preventative of devolving into dire circumstances. Ratios: no attempt to define adequate ratio of business facilities to residence ratios, leaving cities playing catchup, usually on lack of housing. Massive vertical skyscrapers, biggest impact on ratio, local livability and traffic. And crime, such as Chicago's empty nocturnal Loop. Mayors: Huge impact if 1) they aren't pass through political careerists and 2) they decide to own resolving all the city's systems and population issues. Urban cores are long plagued with mayoral blind eye disease and selective hearing. Mayors versus Fed: Tough, tough, tough, they have one tough job and don't know if they can overcome heaping damage from Washington economic policies of boom/bust. Urban sprawl: lack of affordable city center housing. Urban closet sized apartments on the rise. Urban density: more public greenways/greenery and effective swift timely public transportation and we'll gladly turn in our lawnmowers and driveways. Paris, 2 blocks to the nearest subway stop. Traffic: will continue to be a problem so long as city hall allows concentration of mainly commercial districts, exacerbated by highrise commercial. Additionally, more space is used up for commuter parking. Urban stability/survival: dependent on min wage labor, yet, no urban (livable) min wage. Why can't cities have min wage? Worst of the worst, multi-job'ed due to Walmart/etc. part-timing their employment and ultra low wage waiters/waitresses having their tips swiped by employers. Urban versus suburban schools: don't know if suburban is better, because suburban parents use tutors, and the schools get the credit for student achievements. Suburb dependencies on urban areas: no only do suburban areas zone out low and "workforce" housing but also, as a consequence of sparse large lot population, most industry/commerce. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. interesting but very dated By Michael Lewyn Parts of this book are still interesting; other parts less so. The chapter on the South Bronx is still of interest: the authors show how the Koch Administration rebuilt the South Bronx by subsidizing thousands of housing units where there had been burned-out buildings. The South Bronx saga shows that even a neighborhood with 40 percent poverty rates can be improved by the addition of new housing, especially where the owners and landlords are government-subsidized local activists rather than more rule-bound bureaucrats. On the other hand, some portions of the book seem outdated. For example, the article extols the "credit revolution" of expanded lending in lower-income neighborhoods- but I wonder how many of these investments contributed to the foreclosure crisis. The article also praises police focus on small crimes- but in recent years, such enforcement has become more controversial due to police use of excessive force. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. an altogether remarkable book--highly recommended By LAM Though it leaves the reader acutely aware of the problems still facing America's core urban areas, "Comeback Cities" nonetheless instills a wave of optimism in the reader about the revivifying effects that grassroots community development organizations, new techniques of community policing, and deregulation in welfare, public housing and public schools have had in some of the nation's formerly moribund cities. Grogan and Proscio take an anecdotal approach to their argument, which serves the book well. Where such an approach can sometimes mask a paucity of evidence, these authors have no such problem. Grogan and Proscio show that the phenomena they're discussing are just as visible in Cleveland and Boston as they are in San Francisco and Chicago. And each actual case they cite bolsters the book's argument: that bold, new approaches to age-old urban problems have recuscitated patients that most prognosticators long ago said were dead on the operating table. Whether one considers HUD's mid-1990s recasting of the role and form of public housing in Chicago's Cabrini Green, William Bratton's widespread application of the "broken windows" method of community policing in Boston and New York City, or Cleveland Mayor Michael White's and Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist's audacious efforts to make public schooling in their respective cities more accountable, Grogan and Proscio clearly illustrate the key changes that are uplifting cities. Another fantastic aspect of "Comeback Cities" is the multi-layered, nuanced approach the authors employ. Proscio and Grogan understand, and they make the reader understand, that community policing, community development corporations, economic deregulation, and public school accountability are all interrelated solutions to urban problems. Far too often, politicians and public policy commentators argue that such problems are individual and should be combatted individually and apart from the larger picture. Smartly, these authors show that such an approach is not only no longer possible, but that it may just have contributed to the deep-seated problems affecting cities in the first place. Finally, the prose of "Comeback Cities" deserves an effusive salute. Where many planning books can be arid and full of jargon, these authors are careful to boil down their arguments to their essential terms, while providing the appropriate and necessary background. "Comeback Cities" reads like the best journalism, and I must recommend it as one of the finest books I've read in months.

Comeback Cities shows how innovative, pragmatic tactics for ameliorating the nation's urban ills have produced results beyond anyone's expectations, reawakening America's toughest neighborhoods. In the past, big government and business working separately were unable to solve the inner city crisis. Today, a blend of public-private partnerships, grassroots nonprofit organizations, and a willingness to experiment characterize what is best among the new approaches to urban problem solving. Pragmatism, not dogma, has produced the charter-school movement and the police's new focus on quality of life issues. The new breed of big city mayors has welcomed business back into the city, stressed performance and results at city agencies, downplayed divisive racial politics, and cracked down on symptoms of social disorder. As a consequence, America's inner cities are becoming vital communities once again.

.com A pair of pictures on the opening pages of *Comeback Cities* captures this book's themes as well as any words can. The first shows President Jimmy Carter walking silently through the South Bronx: the shadows are long, there's a boarded-up building in the background, and Carter strolls through a littered field with his hands in his pockets, looking like a man who feels powerless. It evokes a sentiment authors Paul Grogan and Tony Proscio say they understand: "At least in our lifetimes, major cities have gone mostly downhill, burdened by industrial obsolescence, physical rot, riots, crime, poverty, and the serial failure of big federal rescue missions." The next picture, however, is a complete reversal. It shows President Bill Clinton visiting the same area 20 years later: there's a well-maintained residential building in the background, and a gesturing Clinton looks to be in the middle of a good conversation. "The American inner city is rebounding--not just here and there, not just cosmetically, but fundamentally," write Grogan and Proscio. The authors highlight four trends that explain the urban upswing affecting not just the South Bronx, but American cities in general: the growth of neighborhood nonprofit groups; the creation of new markets, including the willingness of retailers to move into old areas; falling crime rates; and "the unshackling of inner-city life from the giant bureaucracies that once dictated everything that happened there--in particular, the welfare system, public housing authorities, and public schools." This is no dewy-eyed account; Grogan and Proscio readily acknowledge statistics that suggest there's not much of a recovery at all, and they're careful to qualify many of their statements. But anybody who has seen New York City circa 1990 versus New York City at the new millennium knows the authors have a point when they write that "something is happening in formerly bleak neighborhoods all over the country, something unforeseen and, at least in recent decades, unprecedented." They've done a good job of explaining what that something is. Before reading *Comeback Cities*, it's impossible not to hope Grogan and Proscio's optimism is warranted; afterwards, it's possible to believe they're right. --John J. Miller
From Booklist
Despite statistics showing continued distressing trends, Grogan and Proscio note nationwide improvement in inner-city areas because of changes in the politics of poor urban neighborhoods. Statistics, which tend to lag trends, don't show rapid changes that are occurring in cities, aided to some extent by the national economic expansion. The authors cite the convergence of four positive trends: the maturing of grassroots revitalization movements; the rebirth of private markets, other than drug trafficking; the decline in crime rates; and the reform of public schools, public housing, and welfare. They closely examine the decline and slow recovery of the South Bronx, the nation's symbol of urban ills, and discuss progress in other cities, including Chicago, Milwaukee, Boston, and Los Angeles. Although improvement is steady, it is fairly fragile and could be reversed by negligence or wrong-headed policies. The improvement is also unlikely to achieve the much-touted goal of eliminating urban poverty. This is an encouraging book, glorious news for city lovers. Vanessa Bush
Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "[an] enlivening work on urban revitalization..." -- Lawrence Harmon, syndicated columnist for the Boston Globe "...a well told and hopeful story of grass-roots activity breathing new life into cities..." -- The American Prospect "...an optimistic book." -- The New York Times "...proclaims the work of grassroots organizations to revitalize urban neighbors. For that alone, this book is important and most welcome." -- Neighborhood Funder's Group "A brave glimpse beyond urban blight." -- Kirkus "[an] accessible and detailed chronicle of the nuts and bolts of urban revitalization..." -- BusinessWeek