

## **Scenes: Disney Heaven, Bohemia and Other New Urban Dynamics**

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### **ABSTRACT**

We elaborate a new framework starting from themes like post-industrial society and the rise of consumption. These cumulatively weaken the impact of jobs and material concerns, and heighten consumption, lifestyle, and amenity issues, especially for people making migration decisions. Persons moving cross-nationally, nationally, and within a metro area are increasingly driven by these new factors, which drive society and the economy more generally. This is not to deny the older factors, but it contextualizes them, suggesting how people vary in their decision criteria; the propositions suggests where and why the new explanatory factors are more important. Following related work on the New Political Culture, we expect the newer factors to be stronger with younger, more affluent, more highly educated persons, who travel more, use the internet more, work in jobs with smaller firms where knowledge and social skills are more salient, Protestants more than Catholics etc.

Our theory of scenes is more than 1. neighborhood 2. physical structures 3. persons labeled by race, class, gender, education, etc. We include these but stress 4. the specific combinations of these and activities (like attending a concert) which join them. These four components are in turn defined by 5. the values people pursue in a scene. General values are legitimacy, defining a right or wrong way to live; theatricality, a way of seeing and being seen by others; and authenticity, as a meaningful sense of identity. We add sub-dimensions, like egalitarianism, traditionalism, exhibitionism, localism, ethnicity, transgression, corporateness, and more. All the dimensions combine in specific ideal-types of scenes like Disney Heaven, Beaudelaire's River Styx, and Bobo's Paradise.

The original data for the study come from assembling apparently the most extensive zip code based data set for the US to date with a focus on consumption and amenities. Some 800 core items – types of restaurants, museums, tattoo parlors, barbershops, churches and civic groups – have been assembled from the Census, electronic Yellow Pages, the Internal Revenue Service, state arts associations, and web pages. Each amenity item has

been coded in terms of the degree to which it represents 12 scenes (like Disney Heaven) and 15 analytical dimensions of scenes (like authenticity). We are analyzing how strongly these amenities explain migration by different age groups (young and old, etc.) as well as levels and changes in income and rent, to test the propositions in our framework. We combine multiple methods: bits of oral history of Chicago (from a book on this), ethnography and participant observation, especially in Bronzeville, plus regression, GIS, and HLM analyses of neighborhood and scene effects.

**Key Words:** urban development, consumption, entertainment, scene