



# **The New Localism: How Cities Can Thrive in the Age of Populism**

*Bruce Katz, Jeremy Nowak*

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***The New Localism* provides a roadmap for change that starts in the communities where most people live and work.**

In their new book, *The New Localism*, urban experts Bruce Katz and Jeremy Nowak reveal where the real power to create change lies and how it can be used to address our most serious social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Power is shifting in the world: downward from national governments and states to cities and metropolitan communities; horizontally from the public sector to networks of public, private and civic actors; and globally along circuits of capital, trade, and innovation.

This new locus of power—this new localism—is emerging by necessity to solve the grand challenges characteristic of modern societies: economic competitiveness, social inclusion and opportunity; a renewed public life; the challenge of diversity; and the imperative of environmental sustainability. Where rising populism on the right and the left exploits the grievances of those left behind in the global economy, new localism has developed as a mechanism to address them head on.

New localism is not a replacement for the vital roles federal governments play; it is the ideal complement to an effective federal government, and, currently, an urgently needed remedy for national dysfunction.

In *The New Localism*, Katz and Nowak tell the stories of the cities that are on the vanguard of problem solving. Pittsburgh is catalyzing inclusive growth by inventing and deploying new industries and technologies. Indianapolis is governing its city and metropolis through a network of public, private and civic leaders. Copenhagen is using publicly owned assets like their waterfront to spur large scale redevelopment and finance infrastructure from land sales.

Out of these stories emerge new norms of growth, governance, and finance and a path toward a more prosperous, sustainable, and inclusive society. Katz and Nowak imagine a world in which urban institutions finance the future through smart investments in innovation, infrastructure and children and urban intermediaries take solutions created in one city and adapt and tailor them to other cities with speed and precision.

As Katz and Nowak show us in *The New Localism*, “Power now belongs to the problem solvers.”

## The New Localism: How Cities Can Thrive in the Age of Populism Details

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# **From Reader Review The New Localism: How Cities Can Thrive in the Age of Populism for online ebook**

## **Bill says**

I largely agree with the premise and arguments in this book. And while the examples used were helpful, the book largely read like a long white paper.

The authors argue that cities are not merely creatures of state government in a zero-sum game of political power. "New Localism" views cities as sources of exponential power that can harness unconventional tools focused on problem-solving to become centers of innovation. The authors emphasize utilization of public, private, and philanthropic resources to reshape local economies through unique leaders (which the authors argue is lacking in state, or even federal, politics).

Cities are, by their nature of being closer to the repercussions of their decisions, more pragmatic than state or local governments. The big question that remains is whether state and federal governments will allow their cities to harness their innovative potential. The large-scale effort of state legislatures to preempt ordinances passed by their more liberal local leaders is an argument against this. Because at the end of the day, legally speaking, cities \_are\_ merely creatures of state governments. In the sense that local leaders will need to be creative to avoid these legal pitfalls, especially in finance and dealing with state leaders, the authors are correct.

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## **Sandy Irwin says**

The case studies were the most interesting part of this book. As a government employee in a small town, I was hoping to be inspired. But the content and research is more applicable to larger, urban cities.

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## **Katharine Rudzitis says**

Some good ideas and enjoyed the case studies, but tough to get through.

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## **Jessica says**

DNF I skimmed this title. It is interesting. Discusses local government or lack there of and how is affected cities like Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, & Copenhagen in positive ways. I really just wanted to read about Indy, where I've lived as an adult but grew up in the suburbs of Detroit and Flint MI. To read it the book well would take more concentration than I'm willing to devote currently.

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## **Peter says**

While catchphrase “new localism” is not a total success here, this highly readable book is an excellent overview of local developments that incorporate partnerships with local entities like foundations and new types of governance that spur investment and growth. Good case studies on Initial successes of Pittsburgh, Indianapolis and Several other cities.

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### **Kim Honor says**

Interesting, quick read - captured recent history and strategies of community economic development. Wish there were more discussion about the role that race and equity has and needs to play as communities engage in a localist strategy.

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### **Mallory Johnson says**

Well researched with solid examples of how cities will play increasingly important roles in improving the lives of Americans. The New Localism is not particularly well-written though and is often redundant.

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### **Catherine Dodd says**

While this book offered some examples of cities subscribing to what the author calls “New Localism” I was hoping for it to be more about case studies. Instead it is written almost like a text. That is fine, but just not what I was hoping for.

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### **C. Patrick G. Erker says**

In today's America, it's easy to be pessimistic about the state of affairs. Trust in core institutions, and especially in the executive and legislative branches of our federal government, is at frighteningly low levels. Partisanship and new media have created a cacophony of gridlock and shouting. Income inequality gets worse and worse.

Into the void step pragmatic city leaders, who tend to be more focused on solving concrete, day-to-day problems for their constituents, and are generally much more immune to the plague of partisanship.

Katz - who I was lucky to meet at a work event where he spoke to us about his work - shares insights from three examples of city leaders who have delivered results for their constituents.

The examples cities - Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, and Copenhagen - all have been blessed with differing assets. Yet in each case, a coalition of private, public, and other leaders came together to pursue a shared vision and align resources, all in the service of the city's various competitive advantages.

I grew up in St Louis, which the authors mention in passing for its Cortex innovation district, and which has not been able to coalesce around a shared set of priorities in the way Indy or Pittsburgh have. Part of that is due to geography: St Louis' central corridor is simply too big. Part of it is race: St Louis continues to grapple

with deep issues on race, more so than many of its fellow cities. And part of it is the city-county divide and proliferation of municipalities: without a single government speaking for the region, it is much harder to build the coalitions necessary. (I think part of St Louis' issue too is that we tend to lose some of our most talented people to other cities, where they start, grow, etc., successful ventures.)

City planners in places like St Louis and elsewhere should read this book. (So should mayors!)

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### **Andrew Dunn says**

This book should be required reading for everyone in local government, philanthropy or politics.

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### **Scott says**

Aggressively dull to read, and the teased connection relating New Localism to the new populist movement is completely unaddressed. A cheap, awful grab of a claim to put on the book to turn heads.

The arguments made here, of which I mostly agree, could have been summed up in a few paragraphs - not several hundred pages. This book is not necessary, and written as drearily as it is, does the concepts discussed within a disservice.

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### **David says**

The author's writing style strikes me as being overly complex. Is he trying to impress me with his vocabulary or help convey a topic to the layman? If you are an average Joe and you're just interested in broadening your knowledge on the topic in case you ever find yourself at a city council meeting, this book is going to bore you. The only time I was fully awake was when he was actually talking about a specific city (like Pittsburgh or Copenhagen), which was actually interesting; however, the bulk of the book felt like a trip through a thesaurus with no really summary. I say "felt like" because the author did try to explain things and give a take-away, but it just "felt like" it was lacking. Perhaps if I were a city planner or city council member I would get a different vibe from the book, but I'm an average Joe and just thought the book was OK and was glad to finally reach the last page.

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### **Robyn says**

Both of these authors make the case that three cities solved problems using the model of localism. This is the idea of creating change by working horizontally, not top down from centralized government institutions. This means more creative solutions as cities find ways to connect ideas across public and private platforms, across the US and across the globe. No longer a command-and-control effort (as they argue), better futures, the really resilient cities in the future, will be those who work across unexpected institutions. Sub national institutions and individuals. This is the way to overcome the limits of legacy liabilities and the way to find

funding for innovative ideas. Chattanooga, Copenhagen, are both examples. This is decentralized power. Look at local specialities and competitive advantages. Not policy making, but risk taking as startups do. Practice and task led, representative and participative politics, nonpartisan, combining urban and global, strengthening global supply chains. Solutions, are “concrete, imaginative, and tested on the ground and adapted to different cities.” As Taleb, author of The Black Swan said, “History does not crawl, it jumps.”

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## **Luke Mercer says**

Very repetitive and boring

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