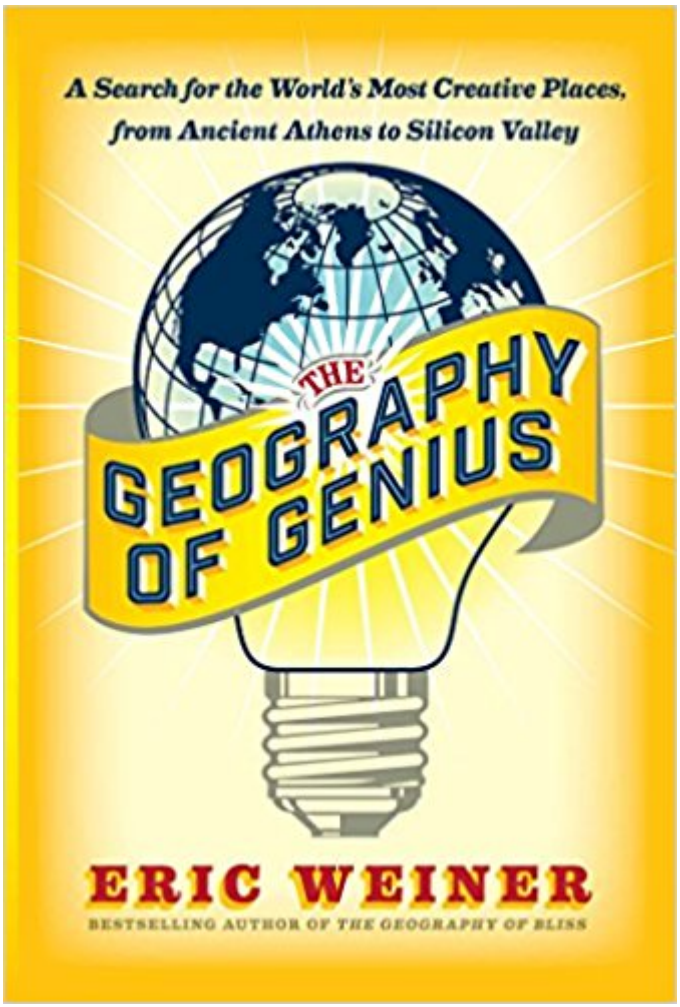
Ebook Directory
the best source of ebook

The book was found

The Geography Of Genius: A Search For The World's Most Creative Places From Ancient Athens To Silicon Valley



PDF
Adobe
DOWNLOAD EBOOK

Synopsis

Ã¢â ¬Å“An intellectual odyssey, a travelerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s diary, and a comic novel all rolled into one. Smart, original, and utterly delightful.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Daniel Gilbert, Harvard professor and bestselling author of Stumbling on Happiness Ã¢â ¬Å“A charming mix of history and wisdom cloaked as a rollicking travelogue.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Walter Isaacson, bestselling author of Steve Jobs Travel the world with Eric Weiner, the New York Times bestselling author of The Geography of Bliss, as he journeys from Athens to Silicon ValleyÃ¢â ¬â •and throughout history, tooÃ¢â ¬â •to show how creative genius flourishes in specific places at specific times.In The Geography of Genius, acclaimed travel writer Weiner sets out to examine the connection between our surroundings and our most innovative ideas. He explores the history of places, like Vienna of 1900, Renaissance Florence, ancient Athens, Song Dynasty Hangzhou, and Silicon Valley, to show how certain urban settings are conducive to ingenuity. And, with his trademark insightful humor, he walks the same paths as the geniuses who flourished in these settings to see if the spirit of what inspired figures like Socrates, Michelangelo, and Leonardo remains. In these places, Weiner asks, Ã¢â ¬Å“What was in the air, and can we bottle it?Ã¢â ¬Â• This link can be traced back through history: DarwinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s theory of evolution gelled while he was riding in a carriage. Freud did his best thinking at this favorite coffee house. Beethoven, like many geniuses, preferred long walks in the woods. Sharp and provocative, The Geography of Genius redefines the argument about how genius came to be. His reevaluation of the importance of culture in nurturing creativity is an informed romp through history that will surely jumpstart a national conversation.

Book Information

Hardcover: 368 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster (January 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1451691653

ISBN-13: 978-1451691658

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 137 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #127,394 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #64 inÃ Â Books > History > Historical Study & Educational Resources > Historical Geography #196 inÃ Â Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Creativity & Genius #314 inÃ Â Books > Politics &

Customer Reviews

An Best Book of January 2016: Eric WeinerÃ¢ ¬â„¢s first book, The Geography of Bliss, found him in search of the happiest places on Earth. Now, in The Geography of Genius, he looks for creative hotbeds where geniuses from Socrates to Steve Jobs thrived, and asks why. Moreover, why do these hotbeds eventually fizzle? The bookÃ¢ ¬â •an irreverent and surprisingly entertaining blend of historical biography, travel essay, and sociological studyÃ¢ ¬â •centers around this quote by Plato: Ã¢ ¬Å“What is honored in a country will be cultivated there,Ã¢ ¬Â• be it intellectual discourse, art, music, literature, or life-altering gadgets like the iPhone. In the process of determining the conditions by which golden ages of genius happened when and where they did, Weiner also uncovers intriguing anecdotes that serve to illuminate and humanize god-like Ã¢ ¬Å“charactersÃ¢ ¬Â• like Michelangelo, Beethoven, and Freud. He likewise stumbles upon answers to compelling questions like, why does genius seem like such a boyÃ¢ ¬â„¢s club? I am one of those people who dog-ear pages that contain things I find particularly interesting, and few pages of this book remained intact. There are enough fascinating and fun factoids in The Geography of Genius to keep you supplied at cocktail parties and around water coolers for years. But aside from that, it documents a moving quest that wasnÃ¢ ¬â„¢t undertaken just to satisfy a journalistÃ¢ ¬â„¢s curiosity. Weiner is a father and while itÃ¢ ¬â„¢s supposedly Ã¢ ¬Å“too late for him,Ã¢ ¬Â• his young daughter can still reap the lessons he learned from his travels, from defining genius, and apply them to her life. I would argue it isnÃ¢ ¬â„¢t too late for any of us. Ã¢ ¬â œErin Kodicek

"A witty, entertaining romp. WeinerÃ¢ ¬â„¢s vivid descriptions of modern-day life in each locale make the spots feel like must-visit destinations.Ã¢ ¬Â• Ã¢ ¬â • The New York Times Book ReviewÃ¢ ¬Å“There are some writers whose company is worth keeping, whatever the subjectÃ¢ ¬Â| And Mr. Weiner is blessed with this gift. He is a prober and questioner, a big-hearted humanist who will always take a colorful, contradictory reality over some unfounded certainty.Ã¢ ¬Â• Ã¢ ¬â • Wall Street Journal"A global odyssey that seeks to discover why geniuses gather in certain places during certain eras and why these hot spots burn out, often after a half-century of grand achievements. Weiner is a superb travel guide: funny, knowledgeable, self-deprecating and always up for sharing a bottle of wine." Ã¢ ¬â • Washington Post"The Geography of Genius is witty, informative, and compulsively readable. Whether youÃ¢ ¬â„¢re

getting genius tips from Freud in Vienna or hearing the secrets of high-tech powerhouses in Silicon Valley, youÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll emerge smarter after reading this delightful travelogue of ingenuity." Ã¢â ¬â • Daniel H. Pink, bestselling author of To Sell Is Human and Drive"ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s rare to read a book that makes you laugh and learn, but Eric Weiner has done it again. This witty, wise explorer offers fascinating insights on how culture has inspired creativity across the agesÃ¢â ¬â •ripe for chats at water coolers and cocktail partiesÃ¢â ¬â •and offers a practical map for how we can all become a bit more inventive." Ã¢â ¬â • Adam Grant, Wharton professor and bestselling author of Give and Take and Originals"Eric Weiner has single-handedly invented a new nonfiction genre in which a brilliant and hilarious writer leaves his home and family to circle the globe in search of the answer to a timeless question. The Geography of Genius is an intellectual odyssey, a travelerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s diary, and a comic novel all rolled into one. Smart, original, and utterly delightful, this is WeinerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s best book yet." Ã¢â ¬â • Daniel Gilbert, Harvard professor and bestselling author of Stumbling on Happiness Ã¢â ¬Å“An entertaining and thought-provoking book, a combination of history and travelogueÃ¢â ¬Â¦ Part of the book's charm stems from the pure joy of experiencing these places alongside a narrator like WeinerÃ¢â ¬Â¦ His wry wit shines through as he drinks sublime tea in China and contemplates a coffin collar in an Edinburgh museum; as he interviews figures such as Jack Ma, a Hangzhou native who founded multibillion dollar company Alibaba; and as he wanders the Ringstrasse of Vienna and the strip malls of Silicon Valley, pondering the conditions that lead to genius.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â • Christian Science Monitor"Why do certain places produce a spontaneous eruption of creativity? What made Athens and Florence and Silicon Valley? This witty and fun book has an insight in every paragraph. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a charming mix of history and wisdom cloaked as a rollicking travelogue filled with colorful characters." Ã¢â ¬â • Walter Isaacson, bestselling author of The Innovators and Steve Jobs"Weiner is an affable tour guide and a lively, witty writer in the style of Bill Bryson; the connections he makes between places of genius are sharp and sometime unexpected." Ã¢â ¬â • BooklistÃ¢â ¬Å“Informative and dryly witty, Weiner's odyssey is both an insightful examination of genius and a call to readers to explore their own untapped creative resources.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â • Shelf Awareness (starred review)Ã¢â ¬Å“Fun and thought provoking.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â • Miami Herald"Weiner illustrates the power that culture and location can lend to creative efforts. Using a series of well-crafted travel essays the author propels readers across the globeÃ¢â ¬Â¦ A welcome read for lovers of geography, history of geography, historical travel, travelogues, and the history of science." Ã¢â ¬â • Library Journal (starred review)Ã¢â ¬Å“Well read, thoughtful and above all curious, Weiner invites the reader to explore a satisfying take on a meaningful topic while also enjoying daily pleasures in cities around the

world.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â • BookPage.com"In the genial style of Bill Bryson, Weiner scouts the world looking for places that have spawned geniuses." Ã¢â ¬â • Kirkus Reviews

There’s a school of thought that runs something like this: the average US citizen isn’t very bright, has a limited attention span, and has an appetite only for the superficial. So if you want to write a book about something you feel to be important, you have to sugar the pill - with lots and lots of sugar and make sure it’s a very small pill indeed.Hence the style "American-Folksy." In this genre the author leads the reader gently along by means of first-person narrative, tons of anecdote, and just the gentlest hint of new information here and there. The lexicon is undemanding and the pace is calculated to be just brisk enough to prevent the onset of catatonia while being leisurely enough not to require any strenuous intellectual activity on the part of the reader. It’s basically DisneyWords.This is a well-tried genre used across a wide variety of subjects. In Search of Excellence and The Omnivore’s Dilemma both use the same style despite their contexts being very different. And Weiner uses American-Folksy here for precisely the same reasons and to precisely the same effect. The purpose of American-Folksy is to take something that could have made a somewhat interesting 6-page monograph and stretch it out into a book-length peregrination.The problem with American-Folksy, however is that it’s not just a question of stretching things out and diluting ideas into easy-to-digest micro-fragments. The core problem is that when you meander around a topic rather than condense it down to its essentials you can very easily overlook the logical flaws inherent in your treatment and the gaps in your arguments. And that’s precisely the problem with this book. It tries to identify a particular set of conditions that may give rise to an unusual density of "geniuses" at a particular moment in time. In other words, it tries to use the same concept as Jared Diamond’s seminal Guns Germs and Steel: what’s the "secret sauce" that results in a particular outcome?Unfortunately "genius" is a slippery concept. Weiner is never quite sure whether he means creativity or something else. He’s also uncertain about whether "genius" is objective or subjective. And when it comes to the accretion of "helpful facts and ideas" he ranges so widely that his central thesis appears to collapse into nothing more than an assortment of anecdotes. He cites studies that purport to prove what the experimenters were hoping to find (which, we know, are usually not worth the paper they are written on) and in which the "findings" are wonderfully undefined: as in "the test subjects were more creative." How was this "creativity" measured? Was it a properly designed double-blind study? Well, we do at least have a proper bibliography so if we’re sufficiently interested we can review the research ourselves but it’s difficult to have much confidence in what’s presented.This is not mere nit-picking. The objection is at the heart of empiricism. If you

can’t define it you can’t measure it, and if you can’t measure it you can’t make meaningful statements about it. Most people are content with vague notions that blur at the edges because they rarely stop to think about what they truly are attempting to convey. We habitually use language with tremendous imprecision, so that "I’m starving" actually means "I’ve never actually been truly hungry in my life but I haven’t eaten for ninety minutes and I always eat a cheeseburger and fries around this time of day." For quotidian discourse this kind of lazy speech is acceptable (after all, who in the USA has every been truly hungry?) but it’s not acceptable in a book purporting to investigate a serious phenomenon and draw conclusions about it. Nor is the assumption that correlation is causation. For every "contributory factor" Weiner purports to identify it’s easy to think of several instances in which genius did not emerge. In Search Of Excellence suffered from precisely the same problem: cherry pick a few outcomes, work backwards to identify common features, and voila: you have the desired recipe. Except that there are lots of other examples where the same recipe doesn’t produce the same outcome. Every newbie statistician learns this lesson; it’s a shame that this wasn’t among the many anecdotes Weiner picked up in the course of his peripatesis.Another problem comes from the fact that for all the name-dropping, Weiner doesn’t actually know very much about the subjects he ranges across. When discussing Einstein, for example, he makes the legitimate point that had the great man been born in another era he wouldn’t have developed his Special Theory of Relativity. But Weiner seems to think this would have been because (a) there wouldn’t have been the physicists around to appreciate it, and (b) the young Einstein would have chosen a different contemporary field of study where there were more obvious opportunities. What Weiner doesn’t note, however (doubtless because he doesn’t know much about physics) is that without the prior contributions of Maxwell and Lorentz the Special Theory could not have been developed, just as without Lyell it is unlikely that Darwin would have been able to develop his theory of Evolution. These (and several other examples) demonstrate that it is highly unwise to write a book speculating about the "causes" of genius when you don’t have a grasp of the fundamentals. It’s easy to be superficial; quite another matter really to get to grips with the material. Weiner, like so many people of our age, is content to confuse surface with depth.The final flaw in Weiner’s somewhat sketchy thesis comes in the last chapter when he breathlessly alights in Silicon Valley. Whereas the "genius" examples Weiner selected from the vast skein of history contributed new ideas and new perspectives to humanity, Weiner’s Valley examples contribute merely utility. Utility is a good thing, but if the provision of utility were a qualifier for the epithet "genius" then surely Weiner should have heaped upon our plate in earlier chapters examples from the Industrial Revolution? Surely the development of the railway, the development of steel cutlery, the development of internal

plumbing and central heating and powered elevators and suchlike should have been included in his round-the-world-in-eighty-anecdotes book? Weiner seems to accept that the utility of a smartphone or a social media website is akin to the intellectual breakthroughs he has charted earlier. Yet a moment’s reflection shows this to be nonsense. I may personally value toilet paper more than I value the works of Jacques Derrida but that doesn’t make the guy who invented the machine to make toilet paper a "genius." This is particularly germane because today’s Silicon Valley is largely caught up in trivia. Few are working on the complex underpinnings of our information age. The great leaps forward (in processor and memory devices, in data storage, in data transmission and networking) have been taken for granted and now the focus is on superficial objectives such as creating apps that enable people to select the right wine pairing with their choice of main course. While perhaps marginally useful they are not game-changing. Facebook and Twitter may be used by people occasionally for more than just posting pictures of cats but in essence they are merely outlets for virtual graffiti. And in contrast to other locations cited earlier in the book (the central thesis of which is that at a particular moment in time a particular place becomes the incubator for many different forms of genius) Silicon Valley has spawned no cultural efflorescence. For all the thousands of geeks tapping away at keyboards trying to invent the Next Big App there has been no outpouring of art. These young wannabes are content to listen to stale formulaic pop, read each other’s Tweets, and the closest to high culture they ever reach is Friday night standup improv. At least Manchester’s dark satanic mills inspired Blake.By failing to grasp the difference between the useful and the revolutionary, and by signally failing ever to define (even vaguely) what he might mean by "genius" Weiner ultimately reveals that the cards he’s been attempting to play are nothing more than a random assortment. It’s the ultimate in bathos.Perhaps if Weiner had attempted to distill his thesis into a handful of pages he’d have been forced to see its intellectual inadequacies and then, perhaps, he might have been motivated to address them. The result would have been an interesting thesis. As it is, The Geography of Genius reads rather as if someone had given a precocious High School student a year-long travel grant. It’s an interesting vacation report but little more. If you are looking for an "airport book" but don’t care for the tedium of thrillers-by-numbers or the latest ghost-written tell-all of some ephemeral celebrity, this book will offer a little more substance to while away a few hours. But it could, in principle at least, have offered a great deal more.

First of all, this book does strike one as being a bit of a travelogue, rather than the historic analysis that the title presumes it to be, but I hung on through the opening chapters and began to find more

correlations and soft conclusions as the observations and comparisons mounted. Plus, I basically agree with WeinerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s contention that (a society) gets the geniuses that it demands and deserves. To someone who hasnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t read the book that may sound like a flimsy statement, but I feel it holds a core truth worthy of deeper appreciation and application.This book could be of tremendous importance to anyone working to develop a community culture in the arts, sciences, technology, ecology, vinology, industry, etc.

Travelling through time and space, with the aid of some knowledgeable guides, Eric Weiner takes the reader on a tour of humanityÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s hot spots over the last two and a half millennia. He begins with Athens in the Golden age and ends with, what else, Palo Alto in the Silicon age. Interspersed with lively metaphors and well-suited aphorisms, it reads without interruption and organizes a number of thoughtful studies on the topics of what cultivates creativity. This reviewer takes a bit of an exception to the fixation on Freud, who admittedly was a creator of new and surprising ideas, but ones that may have been found wanting in terms of validation. Otherwise, the places, including Vienna in 1900, and people, and the connections among them provide insights worth having and questions worth asking.Diverse, disorderly, and discerning, to quote the author, his tour entertains, informs, and invariably engages the reader, even if there are some not necessarily inappropriate ups and downs in the ebb and flow in the journey. For anyone interested in cultivating young creators or in developing environments that promote adult creativity, which includes almost all parents, teachers and entrepreneurs, this book offers something different and worthwhile. The fast food consumers of business books should be forewarned, however, this is not a book filled with bullet point answers to satisfy oneÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s curiosity, but rather, a multi-course meal with a variety of offerings meant to enrich oneÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s appreciation of a subject that is tantalizing, relevant, and complex.

Greatly enjoyed this book by Eric Weiner. I love travelogues accompanied with insightful observations. Eric Weiner has carved his own niche. He is one of my favorite travel writers along with Bill Bryson and Paul Theroux.I started with the audio book version. Then with my interest piqued, I ordered the print version. I enjoyed reading parts of the book again after having listened to the audio version in Eric Weiner’s own voice. The two formats complemented well and greatly enhanced my enjoyment of this book.If not for the Eric Weiner’s rendering in the audio version, I would have missed the very poetic name of "Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi" if only I was reading it in the print version. Likewise, some of the humor in the text came to life only when I heard it from Eric

Weiner.

Excellent book, chock full of information and written in an engaging and also relaxing style. The author was a journalist for NPR for many years, and writes beautifully. He goes and visits each of the sites around the world that had or has a creative environment encouraging genius, and so it's part travelogue and at the same time full of facts and philosophical pearls of wisdom. Very enjoyable to read, and you learn a good deal while doing so. I highly recommend the book.

Download to continue reading...

The Geography of Genius: A Search for the World's Most Creative Places from Ancient Athens to Silicon Valley The Geography of Genius: A Search for the World's Most Creative Places from Ancient Athens to Silicon Valley (Thorndike Press Large Print Popular and Narrative Nonfiction Identifiers) Athens: The best Athens Travel Guide: The Best Travel Tips About Where to Go and What to See in Athens (Athens tour guide, Athens travel ... Travel to Greece, Travel to Athens) The Geography of Genius: Lessons from the World's Most Creative Places Athens 25 Secrets - The Locals Travel Guide For Your Trip to Athens 2017 (Greece): Skip the tourist traps and explore like a local : Where to Go, Eat & Party in Athens 2017 Fearless Genius: The Digital Revolution in Silicon Valley 1985-2000 Valley Speak: Deciphering the Jargon of Silicon Valley Carl Linnaeus: Genius of Classification (Genius Scientists and Their Genius Ideas) The Launch Pad: Inside Y Combinator, Silicon Valley's Most Exclusive School for Startups The Graphic Designer's Digital Toolkit: A Project-Based Introduction to Adobe Photoshop Creative Cloud, Illustrator Creative Cloud & InDesign Creative Cloud (Stay Current with Adobe Creative Cloud) West Highland Way, 4th: British Walking Guide: planning, places to stay, places to eat; includes 53 large-scale walking maps (British Walking Guide ... William: Planning, Places to Stay, Places) Athens in 3 Days - A 72 Hours Perfect Plan with the Best Things to Do in Athens (Travel Guide 2017): 3 Days Itinerary,Where to Stay,What to See,Food Guide,How to Get to the Greek Islands&10 Day-Trips Frommer's Athens Past & Present (Frommer's Athens Past & Present) Streetwise Athens Map - Laminated City Center Street Map of Athens, Greece - Folding pocket size travel map with metro map National Geographic Traveler: Athens and the Island (National Geographic Traveler Athens & the Island) Top 20 Things to See and Do in Athens - Top 20 Athens Travel Guide (Europe Travel Series Book 8) Athens Travel Guide: The Top 10 Highlights in Athens (Globetrotter Guide Books) Athens Sights 2011: a travel guide to the top 30 attractions in Athens, Greece (Mobi Sights) Athens PopOut Map: pop-up city street map of Athens city center - folded pocket size travel map with transit map included (PopOut Maps) The Upstarts: How Uber, Airbnb, and the Killer Companies of the New Silicon Valley

Are Changing the World

Contact Us

DMCA

Privacy

FAQ & Help