Rethinking Economy for Regional Development: Ontology, Performativity, and Enabling Frameworks for Participatory Vision and Action

Ethan L. Miller, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Document Type
Open Access

Degree Program
Geography

Degree Type
Master of Science (M.S.)

Year Degree Awarded
2011

Month Degree Awarded
May

Keywords
economic ontology, performativity, regional economic development, livelihood, Gibson-Graham, ecology and economy, community economy, commons

Abstract
The stories we tell about “the economy” in discourses of regional economic development play an active role in shaping our economic realities. The construction of more equitable, democratic and ecologically-sound economies must involve an interrogation of our assumptions about what “the economy” is, how it works, and how these conceptions shape our senses of agency and possibility. I argue in this thesis that key texts in regional economic development present a concept of economy that renders the interrelationships between social, economic and ecological processes invisible or beyond ethical contestation, restricts the field of economic possibility, and generates a problematic sense of necessity in the pursuit of endless growth and competition. Effectively enacting different forms of economic relationship requires different economic ontologies. After exploring in some detail, through engagement with the work of Butler, Laclau and Mouffe and Latour, the proposition that “the economy” is socially-produced and that economic ontologies can be “performative,” I investigate the alternative economic ontologies of Karl Polanyi, Stephen Gudeman and J.K. Gibson-Graham. Offering a conceptualization of economy as a process of actively constructing livelihoods in which human and more-than-human participation are recognized and the ethical nature of this interdependence is placed at the forefront of economic negotiation and construction, I distill a provisional toolbox of economic questions, concepts and coordinates which might become sites of new learning, imagination and construction when placed in the hands of communities who seek a different kind of development.

First Advisor
Eve Vogel

Second Advisor
Katherine Gibson
Regional economic development is the competition between states for corporate investments based on tax deductions and subsidized land and labor. Government officials on the state development also know that the development of university research and creation of science and technology parks for high concentrations of innovative companies require not only funding to get established in a given region (Leven, 2013). For Asian clusters, primarily the Taiwan Hsinchu Science Park, research and production functions are closely related, a whole industry chain exists in the cluster for the production and This study will proceed with some initial thoughts on the importance of participation in the sharing economy, deriving an analytical framework. It will then discuss the sociodemographic characteristics of sharers and non-sharers. Next, current findings on the motives and attitudes driving participation will be analyzed, followed by a differentiation of sharing behaviors and outcomes. A framework for regional economic development. Enabling Indigenous prosperity. 3.3 CASE STUDIES. ENABLING PROSPERITY. A, vibrant economy is fundamental to the sustainability of any community. By providing jobs and investment returns – from both business and home ownership – a strong private sector economy helps give people the opportunities they need to create the life they deserve. And yet in Indigenous affairs, the focus on developing solutions to important social issues has seldom been complemented by a similar emphasis on how successful businesses are enabled in Indigenous communities. Introduction 12. 2 A framework for regional economic development 2.1 Factors in economic development 2.2 Summary, 14 15 16. The New Regionalism. Implications for Global Development and International Security. Bjorn Hettne Andras Inotai. UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU/WIDER) A research and training centre of the United Nations University. The Board of UNU/WIDER Said El-Naggar Pekka Korpinen Philip Ndegwa Sylvia Ostry Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo Masaru Yoshitomi. Ex Officio Heitor Gurgulino de Souza, Rector of UNU Mihaly Simai, Director of UNU/WIDER. UNU/WIDER was established in 1984 and started work in Helsinki in 1985. The principal purpose of the Institute is to help identify and meet