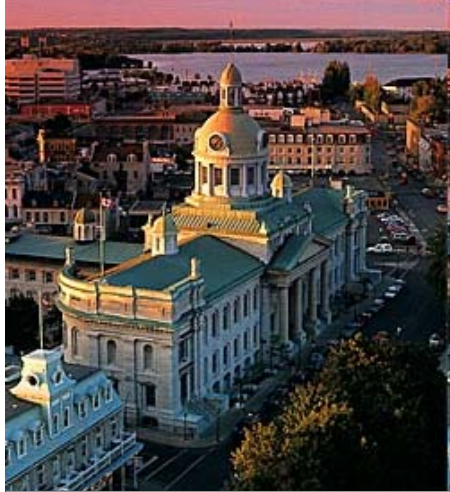


THE TALENT STRUGGLE OF THE SMALL WHITE CITY

*Betsy Donald, Jill L Grant,
Josh Lepawsky, Austin Hracs*

KINGSTON * HALIFAX * ST JOHN'S



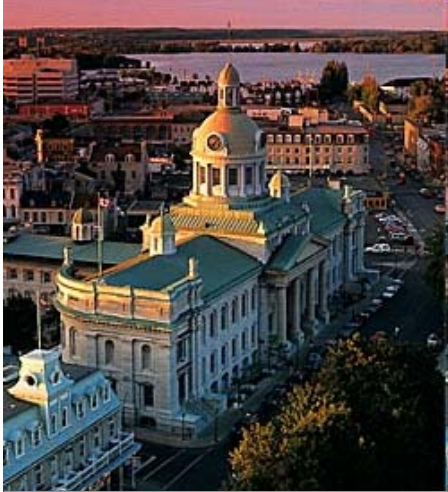
The Creative Class hypothesis in economic geography highlights the role of **diversity** in attracting talented and creative workers

Small and medium-sized cities in Canada generally score low on diversity (measured as a proxy for tolerance)

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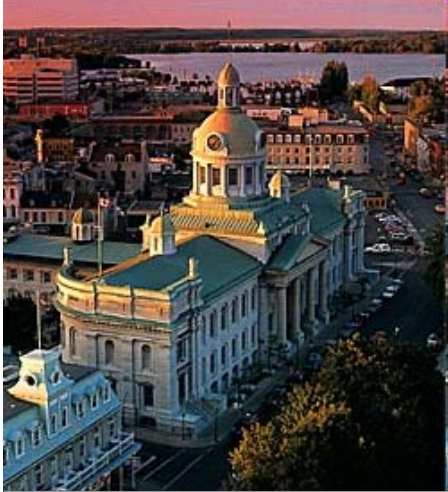


	Kingston	Halifax	St John's	Canada
Population census metropolitan area	152,350	369,455	179,270	31,612,890
Proportion visible minorities	7.3%	7.5%	1.9%	16.2%
Proportion foreign born	12.5%	7.4%	2.9%	19.8%
Average full time employ. income	\$51,267	\$48,092	\$48,392	\$51,221
% BA or higher	21.7%	24.0%	18.8%	18.1%
% in creative occupations	37.4%	38.0%	38.6%	33.2%
% in science tech occupations	6.0%	7.0%	8.0%	6.6%

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Human geography offers a relevant discussion about ***whiteness***

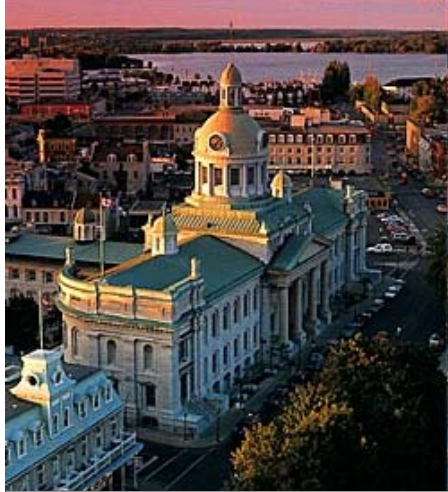
How do talented and creative workers in these small white cities respond to the lack of diversity?

Does lack of diversity affect attraction and retention?

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Case study: KINGSTON

Interviews with 54 'star' academics

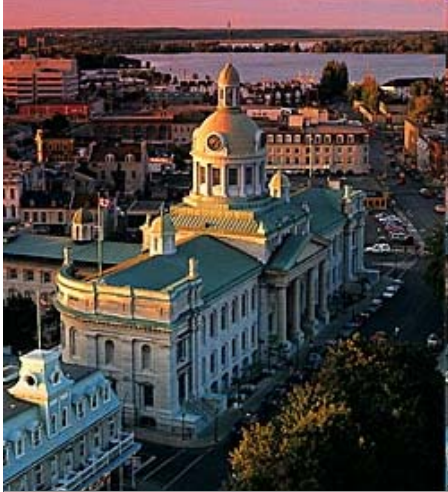
Social and spatial fragmentation;
impermeable social barriers

“Culture of whiteness”

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*“My partner and I used to joke in the 1980s that we could call this place **Caucasia**”. [Prof 3]*

“Kingston felt so white! I got so tired of it sometimes. “ [Prof 9]

“I think Kingston has a very profound culture of whiteness.” [Prof 20]

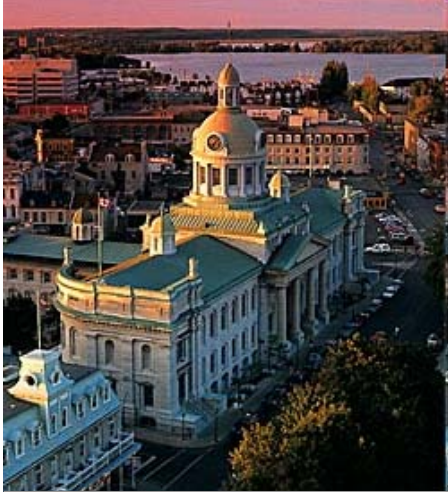
“What I get is a failure to recognize cultural difference, a resentment of the issue of race being brought up. It’s a highly white normative environment”. [Prof 28]

“So it feels like [there is] a level of cultural blandness... [there is] just a lack of diversity in general... diversity at all levels: political diversity, cultural diversity, lack of things to do.” [Prof 38]

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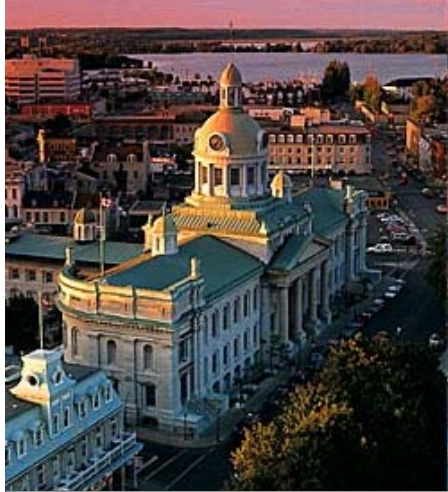
Case study: KINGSTON

Linked smallness with homogeneity and intolerance

Linked homogeneity with cultural blandness

Proximity to Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto offered easy cosmopolitan options

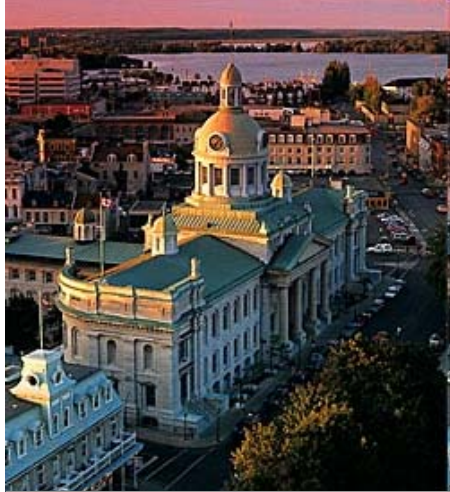
Queen's experience assists job mobility



Case study: HALIFAX

Interviews with 28 health research, music, and built environment consultant workers

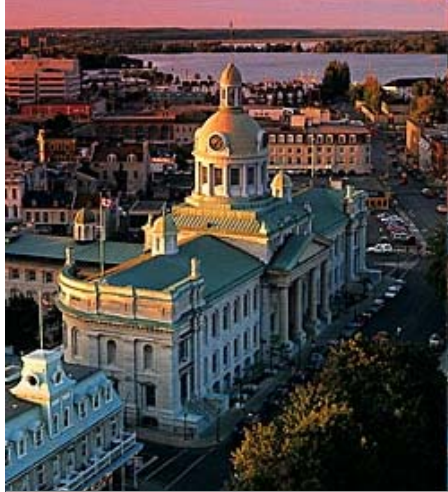
Personal social networks and wider community described as open and tolerant, but local authorities called conservative and discriminatory



Q: Can newcomers integrate easily? “If you’re Indian or Chinese or black, then no. If you’re Anglo-Saxon and you’ve got, maybe, a Scottish lilt to you, you’ll be loved by all.” [Consultant]

“I find this whole myth of the Celtic very frustrating. ... It is a rewriting of history. It is problematic seeing how it writes African-Nova Scotians out of the picture; it writes German-Nova Scotians out of the picture; it writes Aboriginal people out of the picture; and it largely writes Acadians out of the picture. “ [Musician]

“We have some work to do in terms of accepting people; even our own native people, the African Nova Scotians or the Mi’kmaq. ... We’re pretending to be very open and welcoming and friendly to newcomers, but we’re not even that way to our own. “ [Manager]

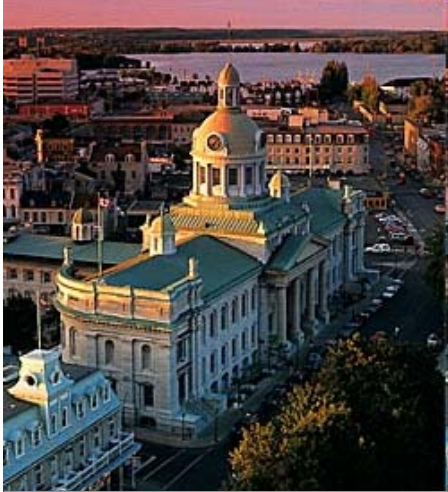


Case study: HALIFAX

Lingering racism and sexism from local authorities; fears of gentrification

Linked smallness and homogeneity with ready integration of many newcomers: social support

Dominant cultural construct provides a unifying function: party town, myth of the Celtic



Case study: ST JOHN'S

Interviews with 25 respondents in arts, health, higher education, and maritime

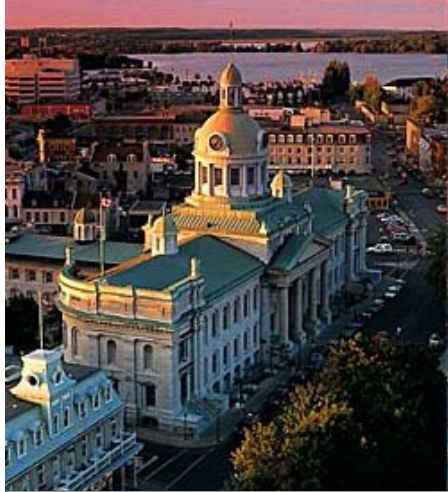
Small and remote city: little diversity except in university environment

Open and tolerant, but sometimes insular; separate social networks

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“You don't see a lot of like massive gay pride parades, or ... a lot of people doing Tai Chi in the park or anything. ... But I don't think that has much to do with the openness. I just think maybe it doesn't draw people like that.” [Musician]

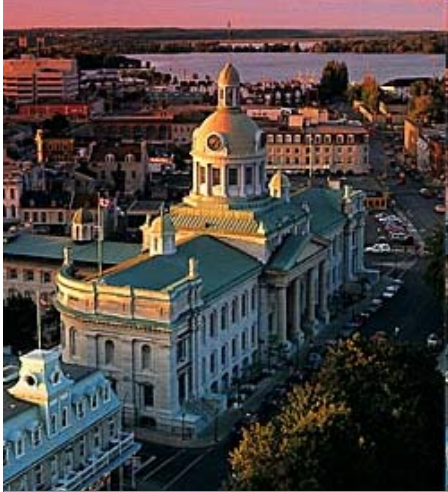
“I hate to say it – but it's a pretty, you know – what's the word I'd use for it – uni-dimensional society ... While there is some diversity, it's pretty white and it's pretty middle class and it's pretty secure.” [Public relations consultant]

“We're still very much an insular community... Although we're very friendly, we're also ... I don't want to say suspicious, but ... it's very important to find out how you're connected to Newfoundland, and I think that that can be a real barrier.” [Human resources manager]

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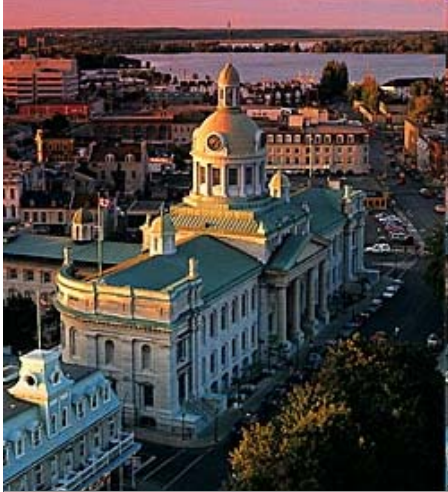
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Case study: ST JOHN'S

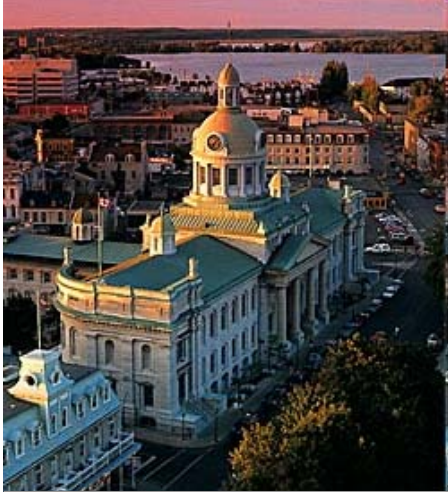
Local social networks are strong: newcomers form social networks with other newcomers

Regional cultural identity (in opposition to Halifax and Toronto) challenge for Canadians to integrate; easier for white immigrants



Smaller cities lack the diversity that creative class theories see as required: some still exhibit tolerance and openness, but conditions vary

Case study cities perform above expectations on employment growth (Shearmur 2009)



Talented and creative workers respond to the lack of diversity in different ways: local social dynamics

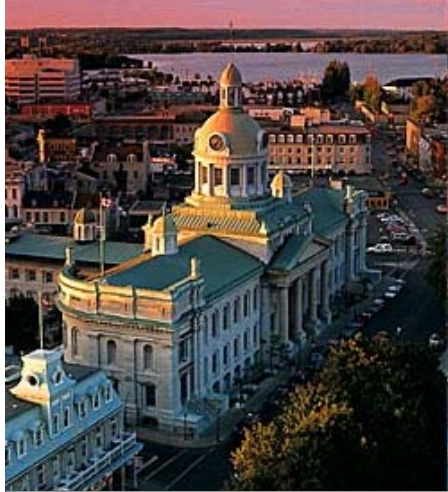
Academics in Kingston judged the local culture of whiteness harshly; impermeable power networks implicating the university affected retention

Respondents in Halifax and St John's saw communities as tolerant and open; concerns about racism, sexism and insularity were confined rather than generalized

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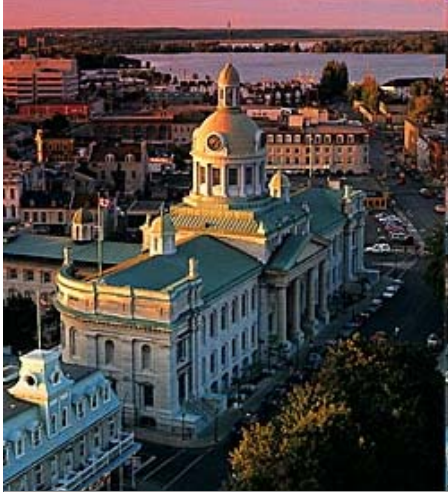
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Talented workers in Kingston can live in bigger cities and commute; can cash in their cachet and move

Talented workers in Halifax and St John's in remote regions; no bigger cities nearby; local cultural practices build social cohesion and affiliation to place; national cultural practices (stereotypes) undermine cachet of talent in the region

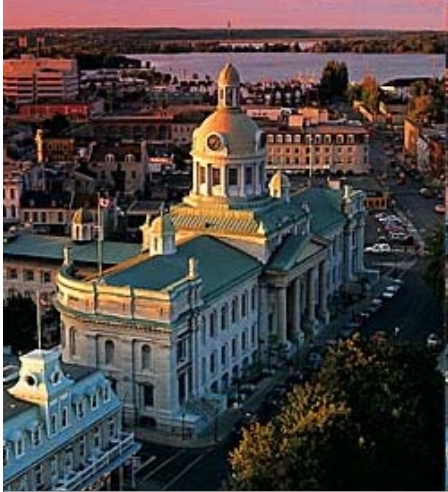


Smaller cities mostly attract migrants from within Canada; more remote regions have fewer immigrants

Kingston attracts talented workers on basis of university reputation; loses them on basis of social dynamics of place

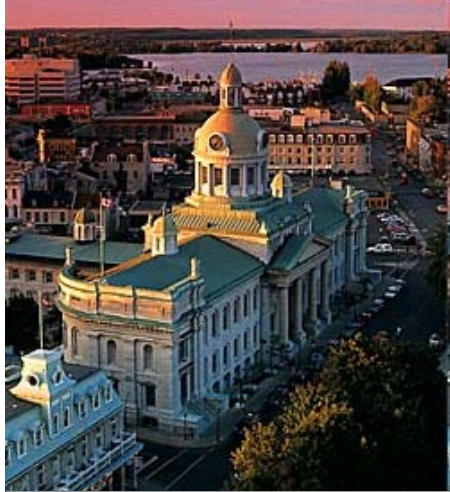
Halifax attracts talented workers for multiple reasons, but poor economic opportunities affect retention

St John's faces challenges to attract talented workers



Talented workers value diversity but reproduce a normative white, middle class position

- Critiques of limited diversity are articulated in terms of racial, gender, and cultural power relationships: the way that authorities manage difference matters
- Aspirations for diversity tend to reveal consumption preferences (e.g., “ethnic” food): the commitment to diversity proves somewhat shallow



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*****Comments and questions*****

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