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Backwoods Utopias

The Sectarian Origins and the Owenite Phase
of Communitarian Socialism in America,
1663-1829

Arthur Bestor

Backwoods Utopias

Arthur Eugene Bestor (Jr.)



Backwoods Utopias:

Backwoods Utopias Arthur Bestor, 2018-07-09 The new society that the world awaited might yet be born in the humble guise of a backwoods village This was the belief shared by the many groups which moved into the American frontier to create experimental communities communities which they hoped would be models for revolutionary changes in religion politics economics and education in American society For as James Madison wrote the American Republic was useful in proving things before held impossible The communitarian ideal had its roots in the radical Protestant sects of the Reformation Arthur Bestor shows the connection between the holy commonwealths of the colonial period and the nonsectarian experiments of the nineteenth century He examines in particular detail Robert Owen's ideals and problems in creating New Harmony Two essays have been added to this volume for the second edition In these Patent Office Models of the Good Society and The Transit of Communitarian Socialism to America Bestor discusses the effects of the frontier and of the migration of European ideas and people on these communities He holds that the communitarians could believe in the possibility of nonviolent revolution through imitation of a small perfect society only as long as they saw American institutions as flexible By the end of the nineteenth century as American society became less plastic belief in the power of successful models weakened

Backwoods Utopias Arthur Eugene Bestor (Jr.), 1950

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America's

Communal Utopias Donald E. Pitzer, 2010-01-20 From the Shakers to the Branch Davidians America's communal utopians have captured the popular imagination Seventeen original essays here demonstrate the relevance of such groups to the mainstream of American social religious and economic life The contributors examine the beliefs and practices of the most prominent utopian communities founded before 1965 including the long overlooked Catholic monastic communities and Jewish agricultural colonies Also featured are the Ephrata Baptists Moravians Shakers Harmonists Hutterites Inspirationists of Amana Mormons Owenites Fourierists Icarians Janssonists Theosophists Cyrus Teed's Koreshans and Father Divine's Peace Mission Based on a new conceptual framework known as developmental communalism the book examines these utopian movements throughout the course of their development before during and after their communal period Each chapter includes a brief chronology giving basic information about the group discussed An appendix presents the most complete list of American utopian communities ever published The contributors are Jonathan G Andelson Karl J R Arndt Pearl W Bartelt Priscilla J Brewer Donald F Durnbaugh Lawrence Foster Carl J Guarneri Robert V Hine Gertrude E Huntington James E Landing Dean L May Lawrence J McCrank J Gordon Melton Donald E Pitzer Robert P Sutton Jon Wagner and Robert S

Weisbrot **Backwoods Utopias. The Sectarian and Owenite Phases of Communitarian Socialism in America, 1663-1829.** By Arthur Eugene Bestor American Historical Association, Arthur Eugene BESTOR, 1950 *The Utopian Alternative* Carl J. Guarneri, 2018-07-05 The utopian socialism of Charles Fourier spread throughout Europe in the mid nineteenth century but it was in the United States that it generated the most intense excitement In this rich and engaging narrative Carl J Guarneri traces the American Fourierist movement from its roots in the religious social and economic upheavals of the 1830s through its bold communal experiments of the 1840s to its lingering twilight after the Civil War

Paradise Now Chris Jennings, 2017-08-22 For readers of Jill Lepore Joseph J Ellis and Tony Horwitz comes a lively thought provoking intellectual history of the golden age of American utopianism and the bold revolutionary and eccentric visions for the future put forward by five of history s most influential utopian movements In the wake of the Enlightenment and the onset of industrialism a generation of dreamers took it upon themselves to confront the messiness and injustice of a rapidly changing world To our eyes the utopian communities that took root in America in the nineteenth century may seem ambitious to the point of delusion but they attracted members willing to dedicate their lives to creating a new social order and to asking the bold question What should the future look like In *Paradise Now* Chris Jennings tells the story of five interrelated utopian movements revealing their relevance both to their time and to our own Here is Mother Ann Lee the prophet of the Shakers who grew up in newly industrialized Manchester England and would come to build a quiet but fierce religious tradition on the opposite side of the Atlantic Even as the society she founded spread across the United States the Welsh industrialist Robert Owen came to the Indiana frontier to build an egalitarian rationalist utopia he called the New Moral World A decade later followers of the French visionary Charles Fourier blanketed America with colonies devoted to inaugurating a new millennium of pleasure and fraternity Meanwhile the French radical tienne Cabet sailed to Texas with hopes of establishing a communist paradise dedicated to ideals that would be echoed in the next century And in New York s Oneida Community a brilliant Vermonter named John Humphrey Noyes set about creating a new society in which the human spirit could finally be perfected in the image of God Over time these movements fell apart and the national mood that had inspired them was drowned out by the dream of westward expansion and the waking nightmare of the Civil War Their most galvanizing ideas however lived on and their audacity has influenced countless political movements since Their stories remain an inspiration for everyone who seeks to build a better world for all who ask What should the future look like Praise for *Paradise Now* Uncommonly smart and beautifully written a triumph of scholarship and narration five stand alone community studies and a coherent often spellbinding history of the United States during its tumultuous first half century Although never less than evenhanded and sometimes deliciously wry Jennings writes with obvious affection for his subjects To read *Paradise Now* is to be dazzled humbled and occasionally flabbergasted by the amount of energy and talent sacrificed at utopia s altar The New York Times Book Review Writing an impartial respectful account of these philanthropies and follies

is no small task but Mr Jennings largely pulls it off with insight and aplomb Indulgently sympathetic to the utopian impulse in general he tells a good story His explanations of the various reformist credos are patient thought provoking and entertaining The Wall Street Journal As a tour guide Jennings is thoughtful engaging and witty in the right doses He makes the subject his own with fresh eyes and a crisp narrative rich with detail In the end Jennings writes the communards disregard for the world as it exists sealed their fate But in revisiting their stories he makes a compelling case that our present day deficit of imagination could be similarly fated San Francisco Chronicle

Communal Utopias and the American Experience

Robert P. Sutton, 2004-02-28 This important study begins with America's first secular utopia at New Harmony in 1824 and traces successive utopian experiments in the United States through the following centuries For the first time readers will come to realize that American communalism is not a disjointed erratic almost ephemeral part of our past but has been an on going essential part of American history We have a communal utopian motif that sets the history of the United States apart from any other nation The utopian communal story is just one other dimension of the Puritan concept that America was a city upon a hill a beacon light to all the world where the perfect society could be built and could flourish After discussing New Harmony and other Owenite communities the author examines nine Fourierist utopias that were built before the Civil War Next he analyzes the five Icarian colonies that collectively were the longest lived non religious communal experiments in American history Then discussion moves to the seven Gilded Age socialist cooperatives followed by the utopian communities created during President Franklin D Roosevelt's New Deal Finally Sutton turns to the hippie colonies and intentional communities of the last half of the 20th century

A Conservative History of the American Left Daniel J. Flynn, 2008-04-29

From Communes to the Clintons Why does Hillary Clinton crusade for government provided health care for every American for the redistribution of wealth and for child rearing to become a collective obligation Why does Al Gore say that it's okay to over represent the dangers of global warming in order to sell Americans on his draconian solutions Why does Michael Moore call religion a device to manipulate gullible Americans Where did these radical ideas come from And how did they enter the mainstream discourse In this groundbreaking and compelling new book Daniel J Flynn uncovers the surprising origins of today's Left The first work of its kind A Conservative History of the American Left tells the story of this remarkably resilient extreme movement one that came to America's shores with the earliest settlers Flynn reveals a history that leftists themselves ignore whitewash or obscure Partly the Left's amnesia is convenient Who wouldn't want to forget an ugly history that includes eugenics racism violence and sheer quackery Partly it is self aggrandizing Bold schemes sound much more innovative when you refuse to acknowledge that they have been tried and have failed many times before And partly it is unavoidable The Left is so preoccupied with its triumphal future that it doesn't pause to learn from its past mistakes So it goes that would be revolutionaries have repeatedly failed to recognize the one troubling obstacle to their grandiose visions reality In unfolding this history Flynn presents a page turning narrative filled with colorful fascinating characters

progressives and populists radicals and reformers socialists and SDSers and leftists of every other stripe There is the rags to riches Welsh industrialist who brought his utopian vision to America one in which private property religion and marriage represented the most monstrous evils and gained audiences with the likes of Thomas Jefferson John Adams and James Madison There is the wife swapping Bible thumper who nominated Jesus Christ for president There is the playboy adventurer whose worshipful accounts of Soviet Russia lured many American liberals to Communism There is the daughter of privilege turned violent antiwar activist who lost her life to a bomb she had intended to use against American soldiers There are fanatics and free spirits perverts and puritans entrepreneurs and altruists and many more beyond A Conservative History of the American Left is a gripping chronicle of the radical visionaries who have relentlessly pursued their lofty ambitions to remake society Ultimately Flynn shows the destructiveness that comes from this undying pursuit of dreams that are utterly unattainable New Harmony Then and Now Donald E. Pitzer,2011-11-03 In words and images this book surveys the history and contemporary everyday life in New Harmony Indiana **Utopias** Australian Academy of the Humanities. Symposium,Eugene Kamenka,1987 Australian scholars address the concept of utopia from philosophical scientific political and architectural perspectives

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