

Urban Utopia: the Connection Between Form and Function

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The problem of utopian urban projects is paradoxical - urban utopians often ignore social factors. Utopians emphasize the form and functions of the building, the complex of buildings, but bypass the side of those for whom the project is created, although they plan "cities for people". As a result, we risk getting empty, lifeless cities, something that Jane Jacobs warned us about half a century ago. Urban utopians sometimes impose an obligation to change the contradictions of human nature on the urban planning plan. They believe that a person is plastic in nature and will change in a positive way if placed in suitable conditions.

In this case, the design of an urban utopia begins with a town planning plan, and not with social forecasting. Utopian thinking, being within the framework of this experimentation, plays an important role in the urban planning system. Not to mention the fact that urbanism is one of the key characteristics of a classical utopia. Urban utopianism acts as a "rebellious mentality" aimed at solving existing social and urban problems. The construct "consciousness-theory-product" helps us understand that urban utopianism encompasses the speculative and practical products of utopian consciousness. Thus, urban utopia is a vector of thought that directs city planners to create projects for ideal cities, while actions to create them are urban utopianism.

The connection of form and function in the creation of the city was noticed by the ancient city planners. Thanks to this function, cities appeared in the form of a circle, a star, a strictly drawn rectangle and even a flying plane. This function is the creation of a harmonious society in the space of an ideal city.

Keywords: Urban utopianism, Utopia, Urban planning, City form, Function of town planning plan.

New Harmonies: From Utopian Socialism to Individual Romance in *Seth Way* (1917) by
Caroline Dale Snedeker/Owen

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Today largely forgotten, Robert Owen's great-granddaughter, Caroline Dale Snedeker (née Owen; 1871–1956) was a moderately successful author of historical romances. This paper focuses on the portrayal of a utopian community in one of her novels, *Seth Way* (1917), which follows a young man from the wilderness to the Owenite New Harmony.

Due to the outspoken female love interest, the few academic mentions of the novel highlight its engagement with the role of women (Albinski; Kessler). Indeed, marriage and the role of women in political activism are revised in the story (the wedding vows of the protagonists are a slightly altered version of the wedding vows Robert Dale Owen composed for his nuptials). However, as this paper will argue, the novel is for its time in many ways highly conservative: the novel participates in a historiography that renders the USA distinctly White (extending the historical community's racial segregation), and middle class, and narrates New Harmony through popular renditions of the national past, such as the wilderness discourse and the frontier myth. Further, notwithstanding its setting in a utopian socialist community, the novel ends endorsing rather small, bourgeois, family units. Thus, it is moving Owen's utopian endeavor for a new social order into the harmonization of private unions in a romance—a narrative treatment of communal movements that appears to contain conflicting notions over what would render the USA utopian.

Keywords: Communalism, Literary studies, USA

Climate Movement Politics and the Utopian Imperative

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In *Archaeologies of the Future*, Fredric Jameson stresses the practical-political value of Utopian thinking. Because it was easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism, Utopia was all the more attractive and urgent: ‘this increasing inability to imagine a different future enhances rather than diminishes the appeal and also the function of Utopia’ (p.232). The practical-political value of utopian extremism is confirmed in the history of social movement activity. Their limited, but not insignificant, attainments have been won largely through utopian postures, shifting the spectrum of political debate to a point where less impossible demands of the same movement seem eminently reasonable. More prosaically than Jameson, from the experience of the American civil rights movement, political scientists developed the concept of the “radical flank effect” to explain the political efficacy of having a dream: the phenomenon whereby extremism brings reforms more effectively than reformists are otherwise able to achieve. Are there lessons here for the climate movement? Critiquing capitalism for its creation of the climate change problem and demanding a much better, safe climate economy is more likely to result in governments enacting climate change mitigation measures in order to legitimate capitalism. Such reforms are more likely to be achieved when the climate movement challenges the existing system by insistence on a different, post-capitalist future. However, for the first time in the history of social movements, reforms might be valueless. Given the danger of ‘tipping points’ triggering catastrophic runaway climate change, the climate movement, unlike previous social movements, might need to achieve its Utopian, maximum program to save the world from catastrophe.

Keywords: Utopianism, Climate movement, Post-capitalism