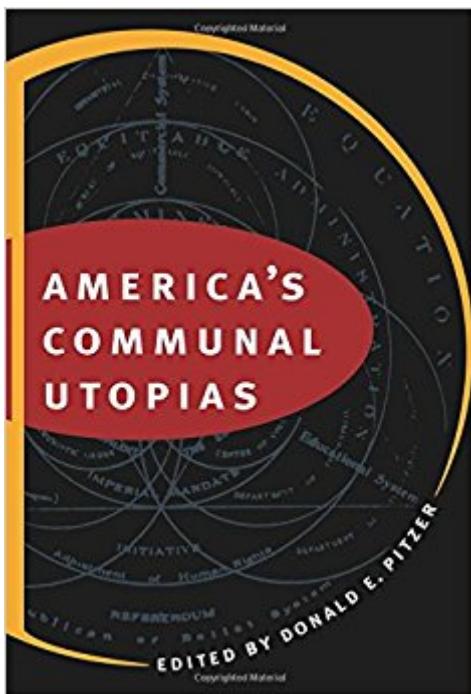


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America's Communal Utopias



Synopsis

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.

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A unique and most important contribution to modern literature about the American historical communes. . . . Indispensable to every library and to every student and researcher of the subject.--Bulletin of the International Communal Studies AssociationAmerica's Communal Utopias, a welcome and much-needed book, brings into sharp focus a hitherto ill-mapped stretch of American social-history terrain.--Paul Boyer, from the ForewordAn outstanding collection of historical vignettes of communal utopias founded in America prior to 1965. The essays are very well written, readable, and colourful contributions to the story of American religion."Journal of Contemporary ReligionThe publication of America's Communal Utopias is a milestone in the study of intentional communities in the United States. Communal living has been a part of the nation's social fabric for over 300 years, but only now do we have a comprehensive survey of the phenomenon written by those who know each community, or family of communities, best. Scholars and the larger public alike will be absorbed by this book for decades to come.--Timothy Miller, University of KansasFor readers who wish a searching exposition of the history of the most important communal experiments, incorporating the best recent scholarship, this is a valuable contribution.--People's CultureNo other book like it exists. . . . This work will be plagiarized extensively for lectures, consulted frequently for details and facts on various personages and movements, and dog-eared for specific references and points which will send readers off on their own research journeys.--Journal of Religious HistoryPitzer's volume provides readers an excellent survey of the variety of communal societies in the American experience. . . . Both specialists and the uninitiated will profit from this collection.--Indiana Magazine of History

I had no problem opening up the book in my kindle app. It's a great read, especially for my college course.

This book is very well written and thorough about each of the utopian communities that it assesses. I would highly recommend it to anyone interested in this subject.

I'm surprised and disappointed that none of the reviews of this book mentioned that there are SEVERAL blank pages and missing text. I purchased the 1997 paperback edition published by the University of North Carolina Press. This is obviously a printer's error and I find it highly doubtful that only one book came off the press this way. TopSellinMedia refunded my money, for which I am most grateful, as the missing pages make this book rather useless from a scholarly perspective. Here's a list of the blank pages and missing text: pp 76, 77, 80, 81, 84, 85, 88, 89, 92, 93, 96, 97, 100, 101, 104, 105

While others can rightly be considered greater experts in specific groups or movements, no other scholar has done the work of Don Pitner over the length of a career to understand the patterns and discontinuities of the massive number of experimental societies across American history and beyond. His theory of "developmental communalism" avoids the limited and misleading analysis found in many other sources to place the success of a group's efforts within the context of their development over time. And, it is exceptionally readable considering the wealth of material covered. A great teacher translates his guidance of students into this peculiar aspect of our heritage for all readers. It is the crowning achievement of a brilliant career. peace

This is an excellent book with an intro. to the idea of communal movements in America, and then is divided into chapters regarding many of the communal movements throughout history. It is well written, and easy to read. We used it as a textbook in a college course I took entitled "American Utopianism". Not your typical, boring, gotta read it a couple times to make sense of it book. It has really inspired me to learn more.

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