The Utopian Moment in the New South

A roving utopian enthusiast in 1898 could have visited in Tennessee a socialist colony which published a radical newspaper with worldwide subscribers; in Georgia a Christian socialist colony that produced a journal that gave its name to the Social Gospel movement; in Florida both a Shaker community and a strikingly curious sect of post-Christian celibates; in Mississippi a cooperative colony inspired by Populism; in Alabama a single-tax colony; and in Texas a colony of "sanctified" women. These utopias were only one expression of a national fascination with both fictional and real utopias during the late 19th century. Between 1880 and 1920 thousands of Americans joined utopian communities in the South. Far from a new phenomenon, utopianism repeatedly gripped the national imagination when large numbers of Americans concluded that the nation was poised at an instant of "historic, indeed metahistoric, significance."[1] Utopianism challenged conventional social thinking by emphasizing that the existing, but flawed order was not a permanent reality, and that nothing in the essential nature of man or society should prevent the creation of a lasting state of material plenty, social harmony, and individual fulfillment.[2]

Utopianism arguably exerted its greatest influence upon American life during the mid- and late-19th century. The communitarian movements during these two periods shared many similarities, including basic aims and sources of inspiration.

And yet the utopian communities in the late-19th century South had no precedent. During the first three-quarters of the 19th century utopianism had barely touched the South, but between 1880 and 1920 thirty-five utopian communities sprung up in the region, a total which exceeded the number of utopian experiments even in the former heartland of utopianism, the Northeast and Great Lake States.

Given scholarly attention accorded the communitarian tradition in the United States, one might assume that historians would have chronicled the origins and speculated about the significance of the utopias in the New South. The number and variety of such communities alone would seem to merit scrutiny. Yet the history of the southern utopias remains to be written.[3] This neglect may be explained in part by the predictable tendency to concentrate on the quirks of each community, which encourage caricature, and to overlook the implications of utopianism in general for an understanding of the South.[4] The broader implications of utopianism in the South also have been overlooked because of the emphasis in scholarship on the increasingly "closed" character of late 19th century southern society. The advancing Democratic domination, the tightening grip of the planter-merchant elite on the southern economy, and the codification of segregation were only the most visible signs of social and political retrenchment in the South. Furthermore, scholars have placed great stress on the obstacles to cultural and social rebellion in the region.[5] Historians understandably

and properly have concentrated upon these defining traits of the postbellum South. In the process, however, they have neglected surprising and important manifestations of thought and behavior that did not accord with the larger trends shaping the region's development.

This historiographical thrust is unfortunate, for an understanding of postbellum utopianism in the South sheds new light on some key topics -- the evolving perceptions of southern exceptionalism, popular responses to the upheavals of the 1890s, and the limits of radicalism in the South. Although comprehensive analysis of these utopias lies beyond the scope of an essay, this article aims to explain both the conspicuous absence of utopianism throughout most of the 19th century and the social, economic, and cultural conditions that framed the utopian moment in the New South, the moment during the 1890s when an unprecedented impulse to create models of an ideal society emerged in a region long associated with hide-bound traditionalism.

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Typically, communitarian experiments have attracted the widest interest and participation in the United States when economic, social, and religious trends fostered demands for radical measures to reconstitute society.[6] During the antebellum era, both economic modernization and urbanization, with their

attendant disruption of traditional labor practices and notions of community, provoked deep national concern about the unravelling of the social order. Simultaneously, the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening inspired a powerful millennial optimism and raised expectations of the imminent redemption of society. In addition, critics of the emerging order in the North, especially working class spokesmen and ministers, sought ways to reap the benefits of the sweeping economic changes while at the same time preserving a rapidly vanishing communal ethos.[7]

There were, naturally, many ways of responding to these changes besides joining utopian experiments. For most Northerners the path did not lead to utopianism, but for many thousands it did. Between 1820 and 1850, a frenzy of utopia-building swept the North. Shakers, Owenites, Fourierists, Perfectionists, Harmonists, and scores of other utopians founded over one hundred utopias. Although often impermanent and unstable, the utopias stood at the very center of the contemporary debate over the emerging commercial and industrial society in the North. "Their creative and sophisticated critique of competitive society," Carl Gaurneri explains, "illuminated virtually every area of social life under early industrial capitalism."[8]

Aside from a French socialist colony in Texas, a handful of communes established by German pietists in Louisiana and Texas, and a few failed plans for Fourierist phalanxes and other model communities, the utopian movement that flourished in the North

failed to infiltrate the South.[9] More significantly, southerners played virtually no role in the utopias which emerged in the region. A few southerners journeyed North to investigate firsthand utopian lifestyles.[10] Others adopted utopian critiques of the northern way of life for their own purposes. But they showed little inclination to join or create pilot communities to transform American life. In 1854 George Fitzhugh went so far as to claim, with little exaggeration, that "In the whole of the South there is not one Socialist, not one man, rich or poor, proposing to subvert and reconstruct society."[11]

The lack of a utopian impulse was not evidence of impoverished social idealism in the antebellum South. Rather, the distinctive character of southern institutions inspired profoundly different aspirations for southern society, aspirations almost entirely free of utopianism. The evolution of the southern economy had followed a distinct path and produced few of the conditions that quickened the utopian movement in the North. The crowding and pell-mell struggle for existence in northern cities that so troubled utopians had no counterpart in southern cities, with their languid rhythms and comforting blend of city and country.[12] And while the market economy in the North brought with it wage labor and job specialization (which deskilled and proletarianized many artisans), the rural household remained the hub of southern economic activity.[13] Consequently the threat that wage labor posed to traditional notions of individual economic independence assumed an entirely different

magnitude in the North. Few of the solutions that the utopians offered for the North's economic and social ills resonated in the South.

The very economic foundation of the South -- slavery -- placed enormous obstacles in the way of communitarian experiments. The South's consensus on the propriety of slavery did not preclude spirited and creative discourse on issues that did not bear closely on slavery.[14] But, antebellum utopianism, of course, did impinge upon slavery. Because most utopians called into question existing institutions, they implicitly challenged slavery. And given the prominence of egalitarianism in antebellum utopianism, one cannot conceive of a contemporary utopian vision to reconcile the racial hierarchy inherent in slavery with the pursuit of equality central to communitarianism. Although Fanny Wright's Nashoba community, founded in Tennessee in 1826, failed utterly to reshape the institution of slavery, it remained a symbolic challenge to slavery. Even the few eccentric Louisiana slaveholders who tried to adapt Fourier's communitarianism to slave plantations came to recognize the incompatibility of utopianism and slavery.[15]

Nor were religious currents conducive to southern utopianism. In the North, many utopian communities channeled contemporary religious impulses, particularly the concern for Christian perfection carried to radical extremes. Tensions within the tradition of Puritan pietism between the drive to preserve a perfect moral order and to attain individual moral

freedom periodically burst forth in such endeavors as John Humphrey Noyes's Oneida. No comparable pietist-perfectionist tension existed in the South. Notions of perfectionism in the South remained largely confined within Methodism, where both doctrine and practice sharply limited their potential to inspire communitarian experiments.[16]

Slavery dictated both the character and the parameters of white southern Protestantism. The quest for respectability and the mounting pressure to sanction slavery overwhelmed the egalitarian impulse of the early 19th century and deterred all but the most muted perfectionist impulse.[17] Deference to community, family will, and, increasingly, racial unity, discouraged the contemplation of radical alternative societies.[18] Even on the frontier, where an undisciplined energy of spiritual creativity informed evangelicalism, preachers dwelled upon salvation, not Christian perfection. Here, the thrust of white evangelical culture was "as much toward Providence as toward purity, toward subduing the culture as toward withdrawing from it."[19] Unlike northern evangelicalism, which at times generated "an almost anarchistic condemnation of institutionalized oppression" (and in turn contributed to the utopian impulse), the most radical expressions of white southern evangelicalism spoke in behalf of reverence for the established order.[20]

Finally, the evolution of southern intellectual thought was inimical to any indigenous utopian movement. While many northern intellectuals flirted with utopian thought during the 1830s and

1840s, their southern counterparts embraced a conservative vision of an organic, paternalistic society. Northern intellectuals either championed free labor capitalism or searched for alternatives to it (including utopian communities). Southern intellectuals, meanwhile, saw slavery as a bulwark against the competitive anarchy and misguided reformism of the North. Fitzhugh, George Frederick Holmes, and other southern thinkers shared the northern utopians' longing for social harmony and rejection of unfettered individualism. But most southern intellectuals questioned man's ability to affect social processes: the only reforms they anticipated were cautious and gradual.[21] Holmes, writing in the Southern Literary Messenger in 1857, complained that "shoals of reformers" were appearing "like weeds after a shower, each with his own infallible panaceas."[22] Fitzhugh also disdained utopian socialism, which proposed to protect the working classes, to end competition, and to restore a measure of community between capitalists and laborers. "All these purposes slavery fully and perfectly attains," he boasted in 1854.[23] The defense of these hierarchical and reactionary values demanded that southern intellectuals condemn what Henry W. Ravenal of South Carolina portrayed as "the furious tide of social and political heresies now setting toward us. . . ."[24]

Contrasts between the northern propensity and southern hostility towards utopianism remained strong even as the antislavery crusade pushed communitarianism to the margins of American life. In the South, the escalating defense of slavery

ensured that no radical communitarian visions emerged. In the North, an emerging consensus over the virtues of free-labor capitalism overwhelmed the cooperative economic vision that had given utopianism much of its salience.[25] Yet, with the outbreak of war, many former northern utopians looked to the conflict as an instrument to achieve the social and moral regeneration that utopianism had failed to produce. Thus, lingering traces of the communitarian movement endured in the North even as the few remaining utopian communities were tolerated more as curiosities than as the seeds of a new order.[26]

After the Civil War communitarianism never regained the influence that it enjoyed during the 1830s and 1840s. Nonetheless, a revitalized communitarian ideology did appeal to a generation of Americans experiencing the full brunt of industrial capitalism. There is abundant evidence to dispute historian Arthur Bestor's view that "for most reformers in an industrial age, communitarianism was a tool that had lost its edge, probably forever."[27] In fact, the thirty utopian communities established during the 1870s tripled the number founded in the 1830s. Twenty-seven more utopias were launched in the 1880s. And in the 1890s, when interest in utopias peaked, at least thirty-nine communal experiments were organized, a total exceeded only during the 1840s.[28] If modest in comparison to utopianism during the 1840s, the utopian revival of the late 19th century nonetheless articulated a sustained critique of industrial capitalism and powerfully influenced contemporary debate about the nation's

future.

The utopian revival, in sharp contrast to its antebellum precursor, took on a decidedly southern accent. Every southern state, even Mississippi, was the site of at least one utopian community between 1880 and 1920. Utopian colonies were especially numerous in Texas, Florida, and Georgia -- the eight communities in Texas, and six in both Georgia and Florida accounted for half of the total in the South.

Much of the utopia building in the South was concentrated within the single decade of the 1890s. Five utopian ventures were launched in the 1870s, and four more in the 1880s. Then, during the 1890s, twenty utopias were established. Indeed, during the 1890s, the South became the center of utopian activity: over half of all the utopias established in the nation during that decade were located there. But after the turn of the century the flurry of communitarian activity in the South slowed dramatically. Utopians established only seven new colonies during the first decade of the 20th century, and only four in the following decade.[29]

Virtually every form of utopianism found expression in the late-19th century South, ranging from religious to secular, from capitalist to socialist. Perhaps the simplest method to classify these communities is to divide them between those organized primarily on religious doctrines and those primarily secular, though recognizing that many of the utopias fused both religious and secular inspirations.[30] Ten of the forty communities

organized between 1880 and 1920 were avowedly perfectionist religious colonies presided over by charismatic leaders who led their followers in pursuit of personal sanctity and spiritual fulfillment. Among these colonies were the Woman's Commonwealth, a community of proto-feminist Christian women in Texas; the Koreshan Unity, a post-Christian sect in Florida; Shaker communities in Florida and Georgia; and the Burning Bush, a settlement of Holiness Methodists in Texas. An equal number of the utopias in the region were founded as overtly political colonies by political radicals who were skeptical of piecemeal reform and instead looked to cooperative colonies as the path to the radical transformation of society. Although political colonies comprised only a portion of the utopias in the South, they included several of the most famous communal experiments of the period, including the Ruskin Cooperative Association, a socialist community in Tennessee and later in Georgia; the Fairhope colony, a Single-Tax community in Alabama; the Christian Commonwealth, a Christian socialist utopia in Georgia; and Newllano, a socialist colony and college in Louisiana. Finally, scattered along a continuum between the perfectionist and the political colonies were twenty cooperative colonies. Religious inspiration played a large role in many of the cooperative colonies, but unlike the perfectionist colonies, the cooperative groups organized themselves around a desire to establish economic cooperation and eschewed broader political and social goals. The role of religion was most conspicuous in the five colonies of

immigrant Jewish socialists and least important in such largely secular communities as the cooperative agricultural communes of Bohemian immigrants in Tennessee, the American Settlers Colony in Georgia and the Liberty Commonwealth Association in Tennessee.[31]

Most of the people involved in these communities were obscure men and women who, despite their sacrifices and commitment, left little mark on the historical record. What is clear, however, is the conspicuous participation of southerners both as leaders and members of many of the communities. Some colonies admittedly remained virtual northern enclaves in the South: rural and small town midwesterners populated Fairhope; farmers and laborers from Ohio established the American Settlers Colony; Holiness Methodists from Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois comprised the Burning Bush colony; and socialists from California founded Newllano. But other utopian communities included substantial numbers of southerners. They comprised roughly one quarter of both the one hundred members who filed through the Christian Commonwealth and the five hundred residents of the Ruskin Commonwealth.[32] And a few religious communities in the South, including the Woman's Commonwealth, and the House of Israel, a community of Perfectionist Baptists in Texas, were composed entirely of southerners. Unlike antebellum colonies, sometimes dismissed as the "sporadic adventures of foreign radicalism on Southern soil," the postbellum utopias nurtured the needs and aspirations of both southerners and northerners.[33]

To understand utopianism in the New South, then, one must

recognize its hybrid character -- a mix of indigenous and "imported" utopian impulses. Utopianism during the late-19th century appeared to clarify, explain, and resolve the many nettlesome economic, social, and cultural problems confronting the nation. Alternatives to recession-plagued industrial capitalism, ranging from currency reform to labor cooperatives, informed this resurgent utopianism, as did the tradition of postmillennial optimism within evangelical Protestantism. The nation's moral and social crisis impelled many reform-minded ministers and church-goers to view communitarianism with favor, and not a few to espouse Christian socialism.[34] A general sense of urgency about the nation's future also animated their calls for reform. Society, these postmillennialists argued, was in desperate need of fundamental reform. Political traditions, institutions, and social habits all drew intense scrutiny during the 1880s and 1890s, and most were found gravely flawed. The belief that the republic had strayed and was in need of purification united such disparate critics as Henry Adams, Henry Demarest Lloyd, and Mark Twain. A flood of reform and utopian literature, including Edward Bellamy's immensely popular Looking Backward, whetted the appetites of Americans for new experiments in social organization.[35] Yet the popular response to the upheavals during the late 19th century alone cannot fully explain the appearance of the unparalleled utopian activity in the South. The burst of utopian activity in the New South begs the question of what changes had occurred to transform the least utopian

region of the nation into a center of communal experimentation.

Timing accounts for much of the utopian impulse in the late 19th century South. The migration of utopians to the South was one manifestation of a far-reaching revision of northern perceptions of the South following the Civil War. During the 1890s especially, many utopians saw the South not as an irredeemably conservative backwater, as had their antebellum predecessors, but as an ideal setting for utopian communities. Simultaneously communitarianism emerged at an auspicious moment when the severe depression of the 1890s, the agrarian insurgency, the perception of spiritual decay, and the first incipient challenges to the older patriarchal order prompted some southerners to ponder novel remedies for their plight. Increasingly dependent upon seemingly uncontrollable economic forces for their livelihood, many southerners resented the new, unpredictable economic order. Social and economic turmoil convinced many that only the swift and substantial reorganization of society might produce an equitable future. For at least some of these southern critics of "progress," communitarian colonies offered a model of a new moral and economic order. The communitarians created neither the sense of urgency about the future nor the favorable atmosphere for utopian experiments. Instead, they benefited from the already existing hunger for alternatives to competitive capitalism and directed it according to their communitarian plans. Their ideological elasticity enabled them to appeal to disparate groups, ranging from

Populists intent on economic security and Christians committed to creating the Christian commonwealth to women set on escaping the restrictions of contemporary gender roles.

Fundamental to this communitarian activity was the change in northern perceptions of the southern environment. During the early 19th century, the South had been identified with deadly diseases, hazardous miasmas, and paralyzing heat. In northern eyes the southern landscape became inseparable from both physical and moral decay. Although persisting into the 20th century, this stigma began to recede following the Civil War when medical experts began to dismiss superstitions about the unhealthfulness of the southern landscape.[36] Large areas of the South previously thought to be pervaded by "an invisible poisonous exhalation" became the site of health resorts. Southern air, water, and scenery -- even at sea level -- became therapeutic.[37] While local color writers exalted the uniqueness of the region's landscapes, throngs of New South boosters joined in extolling the South's natural wealth. The revision of the northern attitudes was well advanced by 1875, when northern journalist Edward King wrote in a popular account of his southern travel experiences that in the South "Mere existence is pleasure."[38]

Revised images of the South greatly influenced utopians, many of whom concluded that the region suited perfectly their projects. The association of utopias with edenic paradises, of course, was rooted deeply in western thought.[39] The South's vividly-described fertility promised effortless abundance and

care-free leisure. The region's rural character was an additional virtue. Hostile to the "miasmatic mire of inequity" within the city, utopians envisioned the creation of new urban centers that would combine the moral vision of village life with the cultural amenities of civilized urban life.[40] This idealization of the southern environment made feasible utopian visions otherwise impossible in a northern landscape scarred by urbanization, industrialization, and commercialism.

For most utopian planners, the South's practical and aesthetic attractions were inseparable. Ruskin founder J. A. Wayland chose Tennessee, rather than his home state Indiana, for the site of his socialist utopia because land in the South was cheaper, "better and prettier" than in the Midwest. The climate and access to cheap building materials and transportation in the South outweighed the attractions of such areas as California and Colorado.[41] The "Divine beauty" of the Christian Commonwealth in Georgia led one of its founders, Ralph Albertson, to claim that "we were providentially led to locate here."[42] Even after a year of hardship belied this claim, he remained certain of its potential: "This region of the country was once more nearly a paradise than it is now. We are here to restore it."[43] The Iowa Single-Taxers who founded Fairhope, Alabama in 1894 were drawn to the South by its mild climate and cheap lands. After investigating five southern states, colony organizers located a site on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay that met their requirements. "There is probably no other place that we could

secure," they reported, "where so many friends from the North would be interested in visiting us and spending the winters for pleasure and health. Of the healthfulness of the situation there can be no doubt as it has all the advantages of the Gulf Breeze in its purity and the high altitude and perfect drainage and the health giving aroma of the pine trees."[44] For Dr. Thomas E. Will, a conservationist and cooperative colony enthusiast in the Florida Everglades during the 1910s and 1920s, "the Everglades Eden" was ideal for the location of his "New Order."[45] As late as 1925, boosters of the Newllano colony in the piney woods of Louisiana described their site as "A modern Garden of Eden."[46] Even the sheltered and ascetic Shakers in Ohio established three southern colonies in the 1890s after succumbing to glowing reports of the warm climate and luxuriant vegetation of the South.[47]

Utopians drawn to the South differed little from northern tourists who sought relief from the climate and the acquisitive, atomistic urban culture of the North in the exotic, curative landscape of the South. As advancing technology made the South more accessible, increasing numbers of Americans saw in it an escape from the angst of modern industrial society. For tourists, the escape was brief and exhilarating; for the utopians, it was intended to be both permanent and transcendent.[48]

But the southern setting alone was insufficient to draw utopians southward. Cheap land, bucolic landscapes, and soothing climate were available elsewhere, especially in the Far West.

Utopians detected enough signs of progressive tendencies in the South to conclude that communitarian thought and action were as likely to make inroads there as anywhere else in the country. Given the South's chronic social and racial problems, the utopians' optimism may, at first glance, appear curious, even delusional.

The utopians' rosy appraisal of the South reflected their judgment of the contemporary crisis. With the blight of slavery removed by the Civil War, most utopians were concerned primarily with the relentless advance of "wage slavery," not racial inequality. They shared many of the conventional racial attitudes that circulated within the American labor movement and radical political movements like the Greenbacker Party.[49] The utopians invested little passion in the cause of black civil rights and openly excluded blacks from their model egalitarian communities.[50] Recognizing the interest that some blacks showed in cooperative enterprises, members of Fairhope, Ruskin, the Koreshan Unity, and other communities did advocate cooperative colonies for blacks, but none of the proposals matured beyond sketchy ideas tossed out in the columns of the colonies' newspapers.[51]

Yet the utopians could not entirely avoid the issue of race. As the case of the Christian Commonwealth indicates, pragmatism and convention overcame leanings toward racial inclusiveness. The members of the Christian Commonwealth did agonize over the injustice of denying membership to fellow Christians who happened

to be black. Commonwealth members went further than any other utopians in recognizing the plight of their black neighbors.[52] But beyond modest gestures these Christian socialists would not go. Years later, founder Ralph Albertson recalled their dilemma: "Some of our members were ardently in favor of having them [blacks] come into our organization and it would have been on the basis of absolute equality." But, he explained, "Our mission in the world would then have been to become that of solving or aggravating the race problem rather than that upon which we started out. If we were going to tackle the race problem Georgia was not the place to do it. . . ."[53] By refusing to acknowledge the similarity between the black quest for economic equity and their own pursuit of a just economic order, the utopians separated their aspirations from those of their black neighbors. But by dismissing the thorny issue of race as peripheral to their reform program the utopians skirted a previously intractable obstacle to utopianism in the South.

The communitarians concentrated instead on tangible signs of economic and political radicalism in the South. They saw a region which increasingly suffered the same economic and social ills as the rest of the nation. The abolition of slavery and the incorporation of the South into the national market economy during the late 19th century removed many of the economic features which had made the antebellum South distinctive. The economic hardships that beset the South were now variations on, rather than exceptions to, national patterns. As a consequence,

utopian critiques of the Gilded Age acquired a new salience in the South.[54]

These wrenching economic changes promised new and broad interest in social and economic cooperation. Many utopians perceived in the agrarian insurgency of the 1880s and 1890s evidence that "co-operation" -- a catch-all slogan for alternatives to economic individualism -- might extend across old sectional boundaries. The Farmers' Alliance and Populist movement called into question orthodox notions of capitalist political economy, exalted the ethic of cooperation, and advanced programs that were far more egalitarian, democratic, and potentially radical than those of any previous political movement. Non-southern utopians heard in the language of Populism, with its mantra of the "Cooperative Commonwealth," visions of social and economic cooperation distinct from both the hierarchical organicism of antebellum southern intellectuals and the competitive individualism of contemporary laissez-faire conservatives.

For several northern utopians, the connection between communitarianism and the Populist movement was indeed intimate. During the 1880s and early 1890s, sectarian boundaries that later divided American radicals had not yet been drawn. Most utopians were steeped in the rich tradition of American political protest that inspired simultaneously the socialism of Debs, labor radicalism, communitarianism, and Populism. J. A. Wayland, founder of Ruskin, took his first steps towards communitarian

socialism in 1891 by becoming an ardent party organizer and the editor of a Populist paper in Pueblo, Colorado. The political evolution of Sumner W. Rose, co-founder of the Grander Age Colony near Biloxi, Mississippi, paralleled that of Wayland. Originally an Ohio Republican, Rose moved to Mississippi in the 1890s, where he joined the Populist Party and edited The Grander Age, a Populist communitarian newspaper. Before Ernest B. Gaston founded Fairhope in 1895, he spent three years working for the Populist Party in Iowa. Hiram and Harry C. Vrooman became driving personalities behind the Southern Cooperative Association Colony near Appalachicola, Florida in 1900, only after moving from Greenback-Labor Party politics in Missouri, to Populism and Christian Socialism in Maryland and finally to communitarianism. George Howard Gibson's search for "the standard of right" carried him from the temperance movement to Populism. After editing the Omaha Alliance-Independent (later the Wealth-Maker), the weekly official organ of the Nebraska Farmers' Alliance, he completed his hegira in 1897 by turning to Christian socialism and by founding the Christian Commonwealth in Georgia.[55]

Neither the partisan machinations nor the economic vision of the Populist movement ultimately satisfied these communitarians. Even as they dropped out of the movement and turned their attention to utopian plans, they hoped that Populism would educate southerners and other Americans in the merits of cooperation, as it had them. Whatever its flaws, Populism harbored forces which, if skillfully directed, could promote

communitarianism. Many communitarians concluded that the Populist party, as Wayland observed in 1894, was "fast travelling the road that ends in the cooperative Commonwealth."[56] Hence, the broad southern support for the Populist movement led communitarians, especially those founding political utopias, to be sanguine about the prospects for their southern ventures.

The utopians' hopes for Populism were not entirely misplaced. The Populist movement did encourage, for the first time in the 19th century South, popular interest in utopianism. Populism provided intellectual sanction for and practical lessons in the politics and economics of cooperation. In the dialogue that developed between movement leaders and their rural audiences, activists carried the ideas of Henry George and Edward Bellamy, Greenbacker polemicists, Knights of Labor activists, and other critics of laissez-faire economics, into the hinterland, where they fused with notions of republicanism, Protestant millennialism, and traditions of community obligation.[57] From this tangled skein of protest emerged an economic vision stressing the formation of producer- and consumer-cooperatives that would make workers independent entrepreneurs. Never a goal in itself, cooperation remained for the Populists a means of self-advancement in a competitive environment. Nevertheless, these cooperative ventures represented an attempt "to construct, within the framework of American capitalism, some variety of the cooperative commonwealth."[58]

The Populist insurgency also contributed to the

communitarian impulse in the South by encouraging southerners to question received notions about religion and reform. Populists chided churches for failing to apply Christian principles to social issues and flayed conservative ministers who defended the existing economic system. Populist activists seldom missed an opportunity to buttress their economic critiques with well-chosen references to the Scriptures. Writing as a Populist newspaperman, the future utopian George Howard Gibson informed his readers that "Populist principles and doctrines are the principles and doctrines of Christ."[59] At times, the fierce attacks on conservative mainstream churches approached ecumenical Christian socialism. Thomas Nugent, a leading Texas Populist, made the connection between Christ's work and radical reform explicit when he observed that Jesus "did not hesitate to denounce wrong, even though [it was] hedged about and protected by social power and influence." "Here," he announced, "was the beginning of Christian socialism."[60] Charles W. Bennett of Norfolk, agreed that "Socialism is Christianity reduced to practice."[61] Such rhetoric helped domesticate utopian socialism by linking it with the religious foundations of southern society.[62]

Moderate expressions of Christian socialism by Populists sometimes gave way to promises that radical reform might hasten the millennium. "I have as much reverence for pure religion (equality) as any one," C. A. Little, a former Populist in Lehigh, Arkansas, wrote in 1898, "but I have no patience with a

so-called religion that leads one to conclude that, by trials, he will be better fitted for the celestial center." Little predicted that when "a new order of things is set up, [socialism] will cause plutocracy and mock piety to tremble with fear."[63] Socialist millennialism was even more explicit in the prophecies of Charles W. Bennett, who announced that socialism, "the plan of God for the final happiness of all his creatures," would "come through the reign of Christ, and only through him working by human agency." "Ruskin [colony]," he proclaimed, "is the Start!"[64]

This heady mixture of Populism and socialist millennialism inspired some Populists to envision the reconstruction of society along explicitly communitarian lines. The communitarian potential within Populism became explicit in the Georgia Cooperative Association, the Pfafftown, North Carolina Labor Exchange, and the East Texas Cooperative Association. In 1894 members of the Populist Party in Macon organized the Georgia Cooperative Association "to conduct a general merchandise warehouse and manufacturing business." But W. A. Poe, local Secretary of the Executive Committee of the People's Party, soon announced loftier goals. "The grand and ultimate object of our cooperative association is a colony where we can erect manufacturing for artisans, [and] produce from the soils everything that can be grown in our productive country."[65] For reasons which remain unclear, the Macon venture floundered within months of its founding. The communitarian aspirations of the

Pfafftown Labor Exchange followed a similar evolution. Initially founded in 1898 as a producer cooperative, the Exchange quickly moved to consider plans "for adding the socialistic feature of complete cooperation in production." The Exchange president speculated that "Ultimately, we shall become a socialist colony."[66] Elsewhere, especially in east Texas, where the link between Populism and agricultural cooperatives was strong, communitarian goals among Populists led to numerous calls for communes and the establishment of at least two colonies. As early as December 1893, the Dallas Texas Advance, a leading Populist paper in the state, toyed with organizing "a colony of progressive farmers in some good agricultural section of Texas."[67] While nothing seems to have come of the proposal, Populists in Shepard, Texas, did launch the East Texas Cooperative Association, a short-lived cooperative colony, in 1895. In the same year another group of Populists in Van Zandt County established a school and community at Grand Saline.[68] And a year later, a shadowy group of Populists and socialists near San Antonio laid plans for, but failed to organize successfully, a colony at Goldenrod.[69]

After the devastating election defeat of 1896, some disillusioned southern Populists looked with new interest to socialism as the only practical means of achieving the cooperative commonwealth. Because of the ideological compatibility of radical, so-called "middle-of-the road," Populism and socialism, some Populists gravitated towards the

communitarian socialist movement championed by prominent socialists like Eugene Debs and Henry Demarest Lloyd.[70] The fusion of Democrats and Populists in 1896 was so intolerable to Sumner Rose of the Grander Age colony that he broke with Populism. His devotion to communitarianism remained, but it became incorporated into his new enthusiasm for socialism. In Ocala, Florida, a group of disillusioned Populists established the Southern Co-Operator, a weekly newspaper, and struggled unsuccessfully for six months to turn their plans for the Cooperative Union of Ocala into a functioning colony.[71] Floridian Charles H. Bliss underwent a similar metamorphosis from Populist into communitarian. For Bliss, communal colonies offered a practical alternative to quixotic Populism. He described himself as "one of the enthusiasts" who helped organize the Populist Party in Florida -- indeed, he claimed "the honor of coining the name [Populism] and publishing the first paper with that title." But by 1898, he cautioned that "reforms must grow rather than be made." With his high hopes for Populism dashed, Bliss explained that "I have not given up the work of reform, but I have turned my efforts from those of political endeavor to a line of co-operation." He proposed an elaborate cooperative utopia called "Dreamland City" near Pensacola, Florida, but his disappointments would continue, and despite his year-long efforts, Bliss failed to create the model of the Cooperative Commonwealth that he had sought first in Populism and then in communitarianism.[72]

Few in number and fleeting in duration, the Populist-

inspired cooperative communities suffered from some of the same problems -- inadequate capital and unskilled management -- that plagued the more conventional producers' cooperatives established by the Farmers' Alliance. Given the sketchy extant accounts of these Populist communities, it would be a mistake to exaggerate their significance. But, at the very least, they reveal an incipient communitarian impulse within Populism which encouraged some southerners to take an interest in and even join cooperative colonies. The eclectic ideological sources of the agrarian insurgency provided a rich cooperative lexicon to Populists who were intent upon stretching the principle of cooperation to its logical conclusion by founding cooperative communities. For a brief period, the agrarian critique of southern churches also created an opening for visions of communal living inspired by Christian and socialist millennialism. This possibility of creating a social and economic order premised upon Christian cooperation drew southerners to the Christian Commonwealth in Georgia both as colonists and as visitors, and led scores of southern readers to fill the columns of such utopian colony journals and newspapers as the Coming Nation, the Social Gospel, and the Fairhope Courier with letters of support. When viewed in light of the "encrusted layers of social habit" and thought in the South, the ideological latitude that Populism helped inspire goes far to explain the communitarian activity of the 1890s.[73]

While Populist millennialism drew many southerners to utopianism, the nascent challenge that some of the communitarian

experiments posed to the patriarchal order attracted others.[74] Both deliberately and unintentionally, the utopian communities undermined the conventions that sharply circumscribed the lives of late 19th century women. If utopians did not entirely abolish gender roles in work, they sought to elevate women's labor to the center of the cooperative vision and to merge the domestic and public spheres. At the very least, the communal lifestyle promised an alternative to the monotonous drudgery of domestic chores in isolated households. Moreover, at a time when southern women were struggling to gain greater influence within southern churches, women utopians enjoyed exceptional spiritual autonomy. Freed of economic dependence upon men by equal compensation for their labor and empowered with broad (and often equal) political rights within the colonies, women utopians subverted many traditional notions of southern womanhood.[75]

For women members, the possibility to transcend contemporary notions of gender more than compensated for the hardships of colony life. In a series of interviews with women at the Ruskin colony in 1895, Ella Jennings, a New York reformer and doctor, discovered the powerful allure of colony life for many of the women. Susie E. Funk, previously of Harriman, Tennessee, spoke for most of the women when she labelled herself a "socialist, co-operator, and woman suffragist" who looked "forward to perfect financial and industrial freedom [for women] in the course of time."[76] She and the other women colonists found deep satisfaction in the steps they were taking towards the "economic

emancipation" of women. As colony member Lydia Kingsmill Commander explained, "Yes, Ruskin is an harmonious whole. Its men are not living one life and its women another and separate one, but each for all and all for each. . . ."[77] Colony life, she continued, offered women a glimpse of the possibilities for women in the new millennial order: "The coming Cooperative Commonwealth will do much for men, but all that and more will it do for women in the freer, fuller, richer life it will bring to them."[78]

The complex mixture of proto-feminist ideology, spiritual commitment, and pragmatic economics which energized women communitarians was conspicuously evident in the Woman's Commonwealth of Belton, Texas. The history of the colony cannot be separated from the life and spiritual development of the colony's founder, Martha McWhirter. Born in 1827, McWhirter joined the Methodist Church at the age of sixteen and devoted herself to church work. After marrying, she endured a deep crisis of faith in 1866, which ended only after she experienced a profound "second blessing." Foreshadowing the Holiness movement which would divide many southern Methodist churches during the 1890s, McWhirter moved beyond conventional forms of faith and stressed sanctification and personal holiness. Beginning in 1866, she organized and presided over prayer meetings among women in Belton who shared her beliefs in sanctification. Gradually the group's perfectionism lead it away from established churches and by the mid-1870s McWhirter and her followers had rejected pastoral advice and increasingly separated themselves from

unregenerate sinners. They asserted the spiritual superiority of women and questioned openly the sanctity of conventional marriage. As McWhirter explained to a local newspaper in 1880, "there is no sense in a woman obeying a drunken husband. If a husband should go to his wife and ask her . . . for his sake to surrender her belief in sanctification as we teach it, I should say for her to do no such thing. For wouldn't that be giving up our religion?"[79] For many of the women, McWhirter's doctrine of perfectionism provided a compelling rationale to distance themselves from unfulfilling marriages and abusive, unfaithful husbands.[80]

As their isolation from conventional Christianity and their desire to cast off male domination grew, McWhirter and her followers inexorably moved towards communitarianism. Unable to escape completely the ideology that confined women to the domestic sphere, the Sanctificationists creatively seized the few economic opportunities open to them -- working as domestics, selling baked goods, delivering firewood, laundering clothes, and finally owning and running a hotel -- and transformed themselves into a prosperous and autonomous community.[81] McWhirter's idiosyncratic interpretation of Wesleyan perfectionism initially provided the spiritual impetus for the Woman's Commonwealth. But as the women struggled to shore up their precarious position, they developed an ideology which tied spiritual purity to feminine economic and sexual autonomy. If few of the other communitarians flaunted their disregard for conventional gender

norms as brazenly as did the "Sanctified Sisters," they still looked to cooperative communities as the best means to achieve women's equality. For women alienated by the patriarchal politics of the dominant political parties, isolated by class and location from the small cadre of elite southern women who campaigned for suffrage, and acutely aware of the exploitation of women wage earners, the experimental communities promised meaningful, if sometimes incomplete advances in the status of women.

Despite the diverse and even radical aspirations of the communitarians, ranging from the abolition of economic inequality to the elevation of the status of women, utopianism enjoyed greater tolerance in the South at the close of the 19th century than at any previous time. Much has been written about southerners' intense localism and hostility to lifestyles which deviated from local custom. As historian Edward Ayers observes, many southerners "had no notion of cultural pluralism or moral relativism -- only right and wrong."[82] While southern utopian colonies often faced skepticism and suspicion from their neighbors, they were tolerated because many rural southerners shared some of the guiding principles of the communes. Rural southerners were by no means averse to the utopians' goal of a society based on cooperation, communal obligations, and individual liberties. After all, the communitarians at the East Texas Cooperative Association colony, the Christian Commonwealth, and Ruskin attempted to preserve the same rural economic and

social order that many rural southerners also desperately fought to defend.

Even rural southerners who viewed the utopians' goals with skepticism often were won over by the colonies' cultural and social amenities. The baseball games, holiday celebrations, plays, lectures, and religious revivals staged by some of the communities provided novel and welcome escapes from the tedium of rural life. The artistic talents of the utopians in particular won them respect, sometimes from unlikely sources. The Ruskin Brass Band, for example, was so highly regarded in south Georgia that the Waycross Rifles, the local militia unit, overlooked the colony's socialist ideology and enthusiastically sponsored the band for a two week engagement at an annual military encampment.[83] The colonies also garnered good will by establishing schools which were open to non-colony children. Because of the importance that the utopians attached to education, their school programs were more innovative and extensive (extending from kindergarten through high school), and better staffed and supplied than most schools in the rural South. Several colony schools became defacto public schools and even received funding from county authorities. Local taxes helped fund and school boards accredited, for instance, the schools at Ruskin, the Christian Commonwealth, and the Koreshan Unity, where children were taught "the new moral economy," "indoctrinated with the communist philosophy," and tutored in the intricacies of alchemy and hollow-earth theories respectively.[84]

In addition to these educational and cultural benefits, many southerners looked to the colonies to stimulate economic activity. Because many communitarians championed technological innovation and adopted such capitalist tools as the corporation and the mail order business (through which they sold their diverse handicrafts, patent medicines, journals, and pamphlets), their southern neighbors not surprisingly often had difficulty distinguishing them from other settlers who were attracted to the South by commercial opportunities. Southeast Georgians, for instance, did not dwell upon the differences between the colony of socialists at the Ruskin Commonwealth and the much-ballyhooed colony of aged Civil War veterans at Fitzgerald. They warmly welcomed both.[85] Visions of the profits to be made from new passengers, additional freight, and property sales spurred local authorities and businessmen to lure utopians to their communities. Nashville newspapers and officials actively encouraged the Social Democracy of America Party to locate a colony in Tennessee.[86] State immigration recruiters in Georgia helped in attracting the American Settlers Company, a cooperative group from Ohio, to southeastern Georgia in 1898.[87] An aggressive real estate agent in Florida apparently played a prominent role in attracting Cyrus Teed and the Koreshan Unity to the Ft. Myers area in 1894. And in 1912 real estate agents in Texas alerted the Society of the Burning Bush, a Holiness Methodist organization in Wisconsin, of a suitable site for their colony in east Texas.[88]

Perhaps the most extraordinary effort to recruit a utopian colony was made by Ebbie Julian Watson, South Carolina's Commissioner of Agriculture, Commerce, and Immigration. Convinced of the potential value of immigration for South Carolina, in 1905 he persuaded Charles Weintraub, a Russian socialist in New York City, to consider establishing a Jewish cooperative agricultural community in South Carolina. Watson helped Weintraub and fellow colony organizers select a suitable location for the community near Aiken. By mid-December, Weintraub and ten families had moved to the site, and within months new settlers began to arrive from New York. The early promise of the colony faded quickly because of the settlers' woeful lack of agricultural skills.[89] Commissioner Watson, who boasted that the Jewish colony would "advertise South Carolina all over the United States," refused to allow the improbably-named Happyville colony to fail. In 1907 he recruited a specialist from the U. S. Department of Agriculture to supervise the colony's farming techniques, but the colonists' socialist idealism could not overcome bad weather, poor soil, and incompetence. By July, 1908, less than two years after the founding of the colony, the settlers had sold off the property and moved on. Despite the colony's ignominious fate, Happyville remains a conspicuous example of the surprising encouragement that southerners, including public officials, extended to utopians.[90]

Without question, some utopian colonies did test the limits

of southern tolerance. Utopians who directly challenged the most "sacred notions" of conventional morality or the authority of local elites risked isolation, hostility, and even violence. As noted earlier, the Woman's Commonwealth went much further than most communities in its challenge to traditional gender roles. Their commitment to celibacy predictably outraged many husbands and provoked a decade of harassment. Only the business acumen and perseverance of the women enabled the Woman's Commonwealth to endure until the late 1880s when the citizens of Belton finally became resigned to its existence.[91]

Unlike the hostility aroused by the Sanctificationists' doctrine of celibacy, the Koreshan Unity's elaborate spiritual/sexual theology aroused little comment when the group moved to Florida in 1894. Indeed, until 1906, the Koreshan Unity enjoyed the support and respect of its neighbors. Relations deteriorated, however, when the colony became involved in a bitter political dispute with county officials in Fort Myers who coveted the tax revenues of the Koreshan Unity's incorporated community of Estero. Disgusted by the Democratic clique that ran Lee County, the Koreshan Unity gathered a disparate group of socialists, Republicans, Populists, and disgruntled Democrats into the Progressive Liberty Party (PLP), launched a reform newspaper, and nominated a full slate of local and state candidates. The Koreshan-led insurgency enraged Democratic regulars in southwestern Florida and sparked a violent attack by a small crowd of staunch Democrats in Ft. Myers on Cyrus Teed,

the Koreshan founder, and a group of his supporters. The political skirmish permanently soured relations with powerful interests in the surrounding area and directly contributed to the debilitating bouts of neuritis from which Teed died in 1908.[92]

The hostility directed against the Woman's Commonwealth and the Koreshan Unity, although considerable, should not be exaggerated. None of the southern utopias was forced to relocate or suffered decline principally because of local opposition. To the contrary, most utopians stressed the cordial relations they maintained with their neighbors. In time, even the Woman's Commonwealth earned a measure of respect in Belton: McWhirter became the first woman elected to the local Board of Trade and the decision of the colony to move to more comfortable quarters in Washington D. C. in 1899 was lamented in local newspapers as a loss to the community.[93]

Despite the tolerance that the utopias in the South enjoyed at the end of the 19th century, communitarianism failed to attract a large southern following. Appearing at a moment of far-reaching political and social innovation when many communitarians believed in the possibility of transforming society within their own lifetime, the utopian revival nevertheless died within a few years of the turn of the century. The brevity of the utopian moment underscores the limits of the communitarian movement in the South. Like the communitarians themselves, we may wonder what happened to their vision? And why did they fail and their dream die?

For many of them the costs of the experiments were too high; they lacked the resources and fortitude to withstand the very real hardships -- disease, rustic living conditions, and debilitating heat -- that accompanied colony life in the South.[94] The shared commitment to cooperation and the powerful sense of common purpose that gave communal life its special quality failed to produce the material abundance and collective security that had been promised. Instead, hard-strapped communitarians watched as their investment in the colonies evaporated during the various legal disputes over property ownership which all too often brought the colonies down.[95] Moreover, the deteriorating condition of many of the communities after the turn of the century stood in glaring contrast to both the earlier predictions of effortless comfort in the southern setting and the return of prosperity "outside" the colonies. As long as the depression of the 1890s persisted, the sacrifices and discomforts of colony life had been offset by protection the colonies provided against social fragmentation and economic uncertainty. But by the end of the decade, the failure of the colonies to achieve a measure of affluence could no longer be reconciled with the cooperative economics that provided the rationale for the colony. After all, the colonies had been intended to demonstrate the manifold shortcomings of capitalism, not of communitarianism.

In addition, the utopian moment faded because the social and cultural forces that pushed some venturous and desperate southerners and northerners into communal experiments in the

South were incapable of spawning a mass utopian movement on the scale of antebellum utopianism. In the first place, Populism inspired only an attenuated communitarian impulse in the South. Although some Populists on the radical fringes of the party drifted toward communitarian socialism, many Populists were small producers intent on preserving a simple market economy in which they owned their land, practiced a cautious mix of commercial and subsistence farming, and reaped the rewards of their labor. Few questioned that freedom and independence were bound up with the individual ownership of productive resources. Consequently, most southern Populists drew up short of contemplating socialist solutions and remained committed to a degree of economic individualism which could not easily be reconciled with communitarian economics.[96] Jacob W. Braam, a former Populist and the founder of the Cooperative Industrial Colony at Milner's Store, Georgia, recognized the tensions between the Populist vision and communitarian goals when he observed that "the majority of people who are willing to cooperate are not ready to enter a system of cooperation in which there is so much communism as there is in the colonies of the present day." He added, "Something seems to be needed which is not so radically different from the competitive system and which will furnish an easy transitional step toward socialism."[97] In most instances, then, the Populist movement built up sympathy for cooperative communities without promoting broad participation in them.

Southern religion similarly failed to produce a vigorous

popular utopian impulse. Two pietist utopias, the Woman's Commonwealth and the Commonwealth of Israel, did emerge in the South during the late 19th century, but they merit attention precisely because they were so exceptional. Wesleyan perfectionism, as previously noted, provided the spiritual stimulus for the Woman's Commonwealth. A form of Baptist perfectionism led James D. Tracy and J. W. Fairchild to found the Commonwealth of Israel in Mason County, Texas in 1899. The Commonwealth's theology apparently had some appeal: membership at the colony quickly swelled to 150, and in 1901 the colony listed assets of 450 acres of land, a store, a blacksmith shop, dairy, and farming equipment. But within a year the colony collapsed for unknown reasons.[98] While notable as the first indigenous religious utopias in the South, the uniqueness of these two colonies is a measure of the very limited religious and cultural propensity for mass participation in religious communitarianism.

Just as Populism created a measure of sympathy but not a broad-based enthusiasm for utopias, so too southern religion provided only the smallest foundation for utopian ventures. In many regards, the shifting tide of turn-of-the-century Protestantism went against attempts at creating religious colonies. Certainly, the currents of religious thought and practice in "mainline" white southern churches were unlikely to foster utopian aspirations. Even the Holiness and nascent pentecostal movements, the most pietistic groups in the South, typically did not inspire any utopian inclinations.[99] Earlier in

the century, belief in postmillennialism, the need for purity, a sense of collective obligation, and the possibility of the progressive reform of society through human efforts all had been conspicuously present in the spiritual impulse behind utopianism. To varying degrees they were evident in the postbellum South as well. But the relative emphasis that southerners attached to each of these beliefs shifted across the late-19th and early-20th centuries as postmillennialism gradually gave way to a premillennial eschatology.[100] This belief in the imminent return of Christ and in the inability of humans to bring on God's kingdom had profound implications for beliefs about both purity and community. Although premillennialism encouraged an intense concern for spiritual vitality and purity and prompted anxiety about the nation's spiritual and material progress, it evolved along lines distinct from the pietism typically associated with religious utopianism. Rather than separate from society, premillennialists called for "an inner separation marked by the outward signs of a life free from specific vices."[101] The path to personal salvation was through the adoption, not the renunciation, of the respectable middle class way of life. The stress upon individual salvation did not mean that premillennialists viewed with skepticism all attempts to modify the social order, to remedy political ills, or to come to terms with contemporary social and economic change. But when questions arose over the form that Christian action should take, premillennialists were disposed to favor individual rather than

collective, private rather than public responses. Awaiting the hand of God in cataclysmic events rather than in steady human progress, premillennialists were unlikely to see communitarian experiments as the path to improving society. Thus, the prospects for utopianism diminished in direct proportion to the advance of premillennialism in the South and the nation as a whole.[102]

Moreover, because evangelical culture saturated the culture of the South, separation from society with the goal of creating a society of believers was unnecessary. The robust tradition of camp meetings and revivals and the web of social networks which bound together many evangelical churches enabled southerners to participate regularly in intense communities of fellow believers without taking the drastic step of creating separate spiritual communities. Southern camp meetings and revivals worked to create, if only in a temporary fashion, a communal experience not unlike that sought by many late 19th century utopians. Most postbellum southerners almost certainly looked to camp meetings and revivals, not utopian communities, for their vision of the ideal society.[103]

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The utopian ventures in the South between 1880 and 1920, and especially during the 1890s, are noteworthy not because they were successful -- by almost any measure they patently were not -- but

rather as one measure of the social and ideological flux in the postbellum South. The extravagant penchant for utopian undertakings which H. Richard Niebuhr and Ernest Tuveson point to as one measure of American exceptionalism has been conspicuously absent from the South for most of its history.[104] Admittedly, a form of conservative communitarian ideology sporadically surfaced in the South, as was evident in antebellum proslavery thought and in the Agrarian movement of the 1930s. But only for a brief time during the late-19th century did southern conceptions of an ideal society expand to include utopian visions. That the postbellum South became a center of utopian communities is a testament to the cultural and social distance which separated it from the antebellum South. The proliferation of utopian communities revealed a new, albeit only temporary, latitude for cultural and social innovation, further confirming Edward Ayers's observation that the New South was "far newer" than has been recognized.[105]

The brief utopian moment during the 1890s was one manifestation of the social and ideological transformations underway in southern society. However strong the resemblance between the agrarian character of the South before and after the Civil War, the postbellum South was "a bourgeois world" of loans, debts, profits, and middlemen.[106] As the South followed the path toward modern, centralized capitalism, the cooperative economic and egalitarian social vision of utopianism acquired, for the first time, real relevance for southerners. In the ideological contest to define the alternatives to maturing capitalism in the

New South, utopianism found a place alongside Populism and other reform programs.

By no means should the failure of the utopian ventures in the New South be interpreted as evidence of a distinctly hostile environment for utopianism. Nowhere in the nation, from Puget Sound to Tampa Bay, did the utopianism of the late nineteenth century endure. By the first decade of the twentieth century, utopians everywhere appeared to stand "on the farside of an intellectual watershed."[107] After the turn of the century, the diverse ideological strands of radical thought that the communitarians had woven together quickly unravelled. With the collapse of Populism and the retrenchment that followed, utopianism in the South was deprived of much of the oxygen that had given it life.[108] At the same time, the utopians' inherited notions of republican interdependence increasingly seemed quaint in the era of the managerial revolution in business and of ascendant bureaucracies in politics. Similarly, the widely held postmillennial optimism which had imbued the communitarians' quest with a religious quality and made it simultaneously accessible and attractive, began to give way to premillennial pessimism. And finally, the stubborn refusal of most communitarians to be bound by ideology moved against the current of radicalism in the United States. The socialists who brought ideological order to American socialism demanded a single-mindedness that the theosophists, vegetarians, Social Gospelers, Populists, feminists, reformers, anarchists, and utopian

socialists who made up the communitarian movement could not accept. The ideological "purification" of the Socialist movement after 1900 removed most traces of utopian socialism. The subsequent socialist renaissance in the Southwest between 1905 and 1915 generated virtually no communitarian activity in Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana.[109] And the communitarian experiments that struggled on after the turn of the century became increasingly peripheral both to the culture that had once inspired them and to pressing public debates of the day. Not until the Depression of the 1930s would radical communitarianism emerge again in the South.[110]

The enduring legacy of the utopian impulse consists of the quaint Ruskin chapel in the pine barrens of south Georgia, the Koreshan State Park in Florida, the charming town of Fairhope, Alabama, a few standing buildings at other utopian sites, and little else. Certainly the social vision of the utopians lingered on only to the degree that later communitarians drew inspiration from it. What remains striking is that they would attempt in the South to make a modest contribution to what Aldous Huxley calls "the most difficult and important of all arts -- the art of living together in harmony and with benefit for all concerned."[111] When viewed against the backdrop of the misery in the late-19th century South, there is justice in the favorable assessment of the colonies' achievements by Henry Demarest Lloyd, a supporter of the Christian Commonwealth and the international representative of the Ruskin Commonwealth. "Only within these

communities," he wrote "has there been seen in the wide borders of the United States a social life where hunger and cold, prostitution, intemperance, poverty, slavery, crime, premature old age, and unnecessary mortality, panic, and industrial terror have been abolished. . . All this has not been done by saints in heaven but by average men and women.[112]

Table One:
Utopias in the South and Border Slaves States, 1800-1860

1.	South Union	1809-1922	Kentucky	Shakers
2.	Pleasant Hill	1806-1910	Kentucky	Shakers
3.	Nashoba	1826-1829	Tennessee	Owenite
4.	United Order of Enoch	1831-1834	Missouri	Religious
5.	Grand Encore	1834-1836	Louisiana	Religious
6.	Germantown	1836-1871	Louisiana	Religious
7.	Bethel	1841-1880	Missouri	Religious
8.	Darmstaedler Kolonie (Bettina)	1847-1848	Texas	Socialist
9.	Zodiac	1847-1853	Texas	Religious
10.	Icaria	1848	Texas	Socialist
11.	Nineveh	1847-1878	Missouri	Religious
12.	Mountain Cove	1851-1853	Virginia	Religious
13.	Reunion	1855-1859	Texas	Fourier
14.	Icaria (Cheltenham)	1856-1864	Missouri	Socialist
15.	Harmonial Vegetarian Society	1860-1864	Arkansas	Secular

Table Two:
Utopias in the South, 1865-1920

1.	Warm Springs Colony	1871	N. C.	Secular
2.	German Socialist Colony	1873-1876	Virginia	Socialist
3.	Social Freedom Community	1874-1880	Virginia	Secular
4.	Woman's Commonwealth	1874-1906	Texas	Religious
5.	Cooperative Industrial Assn.	1877	Virginia	Secular
6.	Rugby	1880-1881	Tennessee	Secular
7.	Sicily Island	1881-1882	Louisiana	R (Jewish)
8.	Cremieux Jewish Colony	1882-1889	Louisiana	R (Jewish)
9.	Am Olam Group Settlement	1883	Arkansas	R (Jewish)
10.	Narcoossee	1894-1912	Florida	Shakers
11.	Ruskin Cooperative Assn.	1894-1901	TN./GA.	Socialist
12.	Koreshan Unity-Estero	1894-1980	Florida	Religious
13.	Grander Age Colony	1894-1898	Miss.	Secular
14.	New House of Israel	1895-1920	Texas	Religious
15.	Willard Cooperative Colony	1895-1896	N. C.	Socialist
16.	Fairhope Industrial Assn.	1895-1908	Alabama	Single-Tax
17.	East Texas Cooperative Assn.	1895	Texas	Secular
18.	Grand Saline Coop. Assn.	1895	Texas	Socialist
19.	Liberty Cooperative Assn.	1895-1898	TN.	Socialist
20.	"Maple" Labor Exchange Colony	1896	Ark.	Secular
21.	Christian Commonwealth	1896-1900	Georgia	R/Social
22.	Rys Bohemian Colony	1897	Virginia	Secular
23.	Montecello Colony	1898	Florida	Secular
24.	American Settlers (Duke)	1898-1899	Georgia	Secular
25.	White Oak	1898-1902	Georgia	Shakers
26.	Ruskin Commonwealth	1899-1901	Georgia	Socialist
27.	Friedheim	1899-1900	Virginia	Religious
28.	Lystra	1899-1902	Virginia	Religious
29.	Commonwealth of Israel	1899-1902	Texas	Religious
30.	Cooperative Industrial Colony	1900-1902	Georgia	Secular
31.	Kinder Lou	1900-1901	Georgia	Secular
32.	Southern Cooperative Assn.	1900-1904	Florida	Socialist
33.	Home Industrial College	1902?	Texas	Secular
34.	Tyler Jewish Colony	1904-1905	Texas	R (Jewish)
35.	Happyville Jewish Colony	1905-1908	S. C.	R (Jewish)
36.	Ruskin	1908-1918	Florida	Secular
37.	Order of Theocracy	1910-1931	Florida	Religious
38.	The Burning Bush	1913-1919	Texas	Religious
39.	Bohemian Cooperative Farming	1913-1916	Tennessee	Secular
40.	Newllano	1917-1938	Louisiana	Socialist

Notes

1. Michael Barkun, "Communal Societies as Cyclical Phenomena," Communal Societies 4 (Fall 1984): 41.

2. Throughout this article, utopianism and communitarianism are used interchangeably. While some scholars advocate the use of the term "intentional communities," I see no reason to abandon the term "utopian communities." Whether labelled "intentional communities" or "utopian experiments," the communal ventures described in this article share certain defining traits: They were consciously founded; membership was voluntary and was based upon a perception of the community as distinct from the surrounding society; the community was united (if only briefly) by a shared ideology, which was collective in orientation and had a moral value and purpose which transcended mere individual benefit; and finally members perceived the community's way of life to be inherently good. For an introduction to the definition of "intentional communities," see Barry Shenker, Intentional Communities: Ideology and Alienation in Communal Societies (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), Chapter 1.

3. Several of the communities have been studied, but no systematic effort has been made either to place the communities in the context of larger social and intellectual developments or to treat the utopias as a significant expression of radical social imagination in the South. The literature on utopian communities after the Civil War, including many of those in the South, is catalogued in Timothy Miller, American Communes, 1860-1960: A Bibliography (New York: Garland, 1990).

4. Even William Alfred Hinds, a member of the Oneida colony and a historian of utopian communities, admitted that compared to the claims of earlier utopians, the doctrines of at least one of the utopian communities in the South "outrival[ed] those of any human being since time began." William Alfred Hinds, American Communities (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1902), 387.

5. According to Daniel J. Singal, Victorianism "with a vengeance" formed the rigid core of southern culture. Pete Daniel notes that although southerners tolerated almost any eccentricity, they did so only "so long as it posed no threat to the established order." Daniel J. Singal, The War Within: From Victorian to Modernist Thought in the South, 1919-1945 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 8; Pete Daniel, Standing at the Crossroads: Southern Life in the Twentieth Century (New York: Hill and Wang, 1986), 66. See also Bruce Clayton, The Savage Ideal: Intolerance and Intellectual Leadership in the South, 1890-1914 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).

6. Michael Barkun, Disaster and the Millennium (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986); Robert S. Fogarty, All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860-1914 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), Chapter 1; Carl J. Guarneri, The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth-Century America (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), Chapter 3; Frank E. and Fritzie P. Manuel, Utopian Thought in the Western World (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), Introduction; and Yaacov Oved, Two Hundred Years of American Communes (New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Books, 1988), Chapter 1.

7. Valuable studies of the transformation in the antebellum North include Michael Barkun, Crucible of the Millennium: The Burned-Over District of New York in the 1840s (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986); Christopher Clark, The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950), Mary P. Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Charles Sellers, The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), and Sean Wilentz, Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

8. Guarneri, The Utopian Alternative, 11. The impact of antebellum utopianism is discussed in Guarneri, The Utopian Alternative, esp. Chapters 4, 5; Edward K. Spann, Brotherly Tomorrows: Movements for a Cooperative Society in America, 1820-1920 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), esp. Chapters 2-7; John L. Thomas, "Antislavery and Utopia," in Martin Duberman, The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 240-269; and Ronald G. Walters, American Reformers, 1815-1869 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), Chapters 2-3.

9. Of the roughly one hundred utopias founded between 1800 and 1860, only fifteen utopias were attempted in the slave states, including six in the border states of Kentucky and Missouri. See Table One: Utopias in the South and Border Slave States, 1800-1860. For comprehensive lists of antebellum utopias, see Otohiko Okugawa, "Annotated List of Communal and Utopian Societies, 1787-1919," in Robert S. Fogarty, Dictionary of American Communal and Utopian History (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1980), 173-234; and Oved, Two Hundred Years of American Communes, 485-494.

10. The attraction of utopianism for three southerners is briefly described in Clement Eaton, The Freedom-of-Thought Struggle in the Old South (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 335, 342; and Spann, Brotherly Tomorrows, 165.

11. George Fitzhugh, Sociology of the South or the Failure of Free Society (Richmond: A. Morris, 1854), 306.

12. So powerful were the agrarian influences on southern cities that David Goldfield has referred to their expansion during the period as "urbanization without cities." David R. Goldfield, Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers: Southern City and Region, 1607-1980 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), Chapter 2. See also Michael O'Brien, Rethinking the South: Essays in Intellectual History (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 34.

13. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), Chapter 1; and Steven Hahn, The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), Part One.

14. O'Brien, Rethinking the South, 34-35.

15. Celia Morris Eckhardt, Fanny Wright (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), Chapters 5-6; William Randall Waterman, Frances Wright (New York: Columbia University Press, 1924), Chapters 4-5; Carl Guarneri, "Two Utopian Socialist Plans for Emancipation in Antebellum Louisiana," Louisiana History 24 (Winter 1983): 5-24. Perhaps the only vaguely utopian experiment with slavery to succeed was Jacob Davis' Davis Bend Plantation in Mississippi; see Janet Sharp Hermann, The Pursuit of A Dream (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), Chapter 1.

16. Ira L. Mandelker, Religion, Society, and Utopia in Nineteenth-Century America (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), Part 2; Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War rev. ed. (1959: Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); and Robert D. Thomas, The Man Who Would Be Perfect: John Humphrey Noyes and the Utopian Impulse (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1977), Chapters 1-3.

17. John B. Boles, "Evangelical Protestantism in the Old South: From Religious Dissent to Cultural Dominance," in Charles Reagan Wilson (ed.), Religion in the Old South (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985), 13-34; Donald G. Mathews, Religion in the Old South (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 238; and John L. Peters, Christian Perfection and American Methodism (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 97. Although perfection was always a concern of early Methodists, Donald Dayton suggests that "there is a sense in which preaching of the second blessing is especially adapted to the spiritual condition of second-generation Christians." Thus, in much of the frontier South, many Methodists may not yet have been ripe for perfectionist

teachings. Donald W. Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism (Grand Rapids: Francis Ashbury Press, 1987), 65.

18. Mathews, Religion in the Old South, 249. See also Jean E. Friedman, The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1985), 128, 240.

19. Nathan O. Hatch, The Democratization of American Christianity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 188.

20. Robert M. Calhoon, Evangelicals and Conservatives in the Early South, 1740-1861 (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 161. See also Eugene D. Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "The Religious Ideals of Southern Slave Society," Georgia Historical Quarterly 70 (Spring 1986): 1-16; and Jack P. Maddex, Jr., "Proslavery Millennialism: Social Eschatology in Antebellum Southern Calvinism," American Quarterly 31 (Spring 1979): 46-62.

21. For Holmes, "the amelioration of society proceeds by the gradual and constant substitution of what is demanded by present necessities for what has ceased to satisfy them; and by the cautious modification of what is no longer sufficient, and its careful adaptation to the altered condition of society." Holmes, quoted in Neal C. Gillespie, The Collapse of Orthodoxy: The Intellectual Ordeal of George Frederick Holmes (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1972), 169. See Thomas, "Antislavery and Utopia," 240-244.

22. George Frederick Holmes, "Theory of Political Individualism," De Bow's Review 22 (February 1857): 135.

23. Fitzhugh, Sociology of the South, 48.

24. Henry W. Ravenal, quoted in Eaton, Freedom-of-Thought Struggle in the Old South, 350. On the conservative, hierarchical character of antebellum southern thought, see Drew Gilpin Faust, A Sacred Circle: The Dilemma of the Intellectual in the Old South, 1840-1860 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); Eugene Genovese, The World the Slaveholders Made (New York: Pantheon, 1969), Part 2; Gillespie, The Collapse of Orthodoxy, and Laurence Shore, Southern Capitalists: The Ideological Leadership of an Elite, 1832-1885 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), esp. Chapter 1.

25. Spann, Brotherly Tomorrow, 130.

26. Guarneri, The Utopian Alternative, Part 4; Spann, Brotherly Tomorrow, Chapter 8.

27. Arthur Bestor, "Patent Office Models of the Good Society: Some Relationships between Social Reform and Westward Expansion," American Historical Review 58 (April 1953): 526.

28. Of course, when the vast expansion of the nation's population across the 19th century is taken into account, the percentage of Americans who participated in utopian ventures after the Civil War was far smaller than the number during the antebellum period. For lists of postbellum utopias, see Fogarty, All Things New, 227-233; and Oved, Two Hundred Years of American Communes, 485-494.

29. See Table Two: Utopias in the South, 1865-1920.

30. I have followed the nuanced categorization of utopias developed by Robert Fogarty. He has defined three types of utopias; charismatic perfectionist colonies, cooperative colonies, and pragmatic political colonies. See Fogarty, All Things New, 16-19.

31. Because the focus of this article in on the indigenous sources of southern utopianism, the immigrant Jewish utopian settlements in the South are touched upon only in passing. The various Jewish colonies deserve more scholarly attention than they have received. For discussions of various Jewish agricultural colonies in the South, see Gabriel Davidson and Edward Goodwin, "An Arkansas Colonization Episode," Jewish Tribune 95 (July 12, 1929): 2, 9; idem, "Chalutzim in the Land of Cotton," Jewish Tribune 95 (September 27, 1929): 2, 15; Violet & Orlando J. Goering, "The Agricultural Communes of the Am Olam," Communal Societies 4 (Fall 1984): 74-86; Uri Hersher, Jewish Agricultural Utopias in America, 1880-1910 (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981), passim; and Leo Shpall, "Jewish Agricultural Colony in Louisiana," Louisiana Historical Quarterly 20 (1937): 821-831.

32. A convenient, although incomplete, source for the membership of the Ruskin Commonwealth is Vera W. Gilmore, "The Ruskin Colony, 1894-1901: Experimental Model for the Socialist Commonwealth," (MA thesis, University of Tennessee, 1973), 91-100. See the "Colony Notes" column in each issue of The Social Gospel for ongoing announcements of membership of the Christian Commonwealth.

33. Eaton, Freedom-of-Thought Struggle in the Old South, 339.

34. See Robert M. Crunden, Ministers of Reform: The Progressive Achievement in American Civilization, 1889-1920 (New York: Basic Books, 1982); James Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936); Charles H. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865-1915 (New Haven: Yale University Press,

1940); and Henry F. May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America (New York: Harper, 1949), 3-87.

35. Three works stand out in the vast body of work on late nineteenth century utopianism: Kenneth Roemer, The Obsolete Necessity: America in Utopian Writings, 1888-1900 (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1976); Vernon L. Parrington, Jr., American Dreams: A Study of American Utopias (Providence: Brown University Press, 1947); and John L. Thomas, Alternative America: Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Henry Demarest Lloyd, and the Adversary Tradition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).

36. Phyllis Allen, "Etiological Theory in America Prior to the Civil War," Journal of the History of Medicine, 2 (Autumn 1947): 489-520; Robert P. Hudson, Disease and Its Control: The Shaping of Modern Thought (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), Chapters 8-9; Billy M. Jones, Health-Seekers in the Southwest, 1817-1900 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), passim; and Richard H. Shryock, The Development of Modern Medicine: An Interpretation of the Social and Scientific Factors Involved (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1948), Chapter 12. No amount of revision in attitudes towards the healthfulness of the South could erase the fact that the region remained a hothouse for disease, as is made abundantly clear in Todd L. Savitt and James Harvey Young (eds.), Disease and Distinctiveness in the American South (Knoxville: University Press of Tennessee, 1988).

37. Daniel G. Brinton, A Guidebook of Florida and the South (Philadelphia: George Maclean, 1869), p. 9.

38. Edward King, The Great South (Hartford: American Publishing Co., 1875), 380. The remaking of the southern image is traced in Paul H. Buck, The Road to Reunion, 1865-1900 (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1947); Paul Gaston, The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970); Elliot J. Mackle, Jr., "The Eden of the South: Florida's Image in American Travel Literature and Painting, 1865-1900," (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1977); David C. Miller, Dark Eden: The Swamp in Nineteenth-Century American Culture (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), esp. 53-76; Anne Rowe, The Enchanted Country: Northern Writers in the South, 1865-1910 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); and idem, The Idea of Florida in the American Literary Imagination (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), esp. Chapters 1-2.

39. E. N. Genovese, "Paradise and Golden Age: Ancient Origins of the Heavenly Utopia," in E. D. S. Sullivan (ed.), The Utopian Vision: Seven Essays on the Quincentennial of Sir Thomas More (San Diego: San Diego State University Press, 1983), 9-28; Krishan Kumar, Utopianism (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota

Press, 1991), 1-6; and Manuel and Manuel, Utopian Thought in the Western World, Chapter 1.

40. Coming Nation, January 20, 1894, 1-5. For similar sentiments of a utopian, see George Howard Gibson, "The Climax of Capitalism," The Social Gospel 2 (June 1899): 18. The symbiotic relationship between the utopian impulse and urban culture is sensitively treated in James Gilbert, Perfect Cities: Chicago's Utopias of 1893 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

41. Coming Nation, December 16, 1893, 4-3; February 17, 1894, 1-4; and April 28, 1894, 4-5. The natural beauty of the Tennessee landscape also captivated Thomas Hughes, the British author and founder of Rugby, Tennessee. See John Egerton, Visions of Utopia: Nashoba, Rugby, and Ruskin, and the "New Communities" in Tennessee's Past (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977), 50. Cyrus Teed, the founder of the Koreshan Unity in Florida, envisioned an immense but idyllic city of millions in his utopia. See Frank D. Jackson and Mary Everts Daniels, Koreshan Unity. Communistic and Co-operative Gathering of the People. Bureau of Equitable Commerce. (Chicago: Guiding Star Publishing House, 1898), 3-12; and Elliot J. Mackle, Jr., "The Koreshan Unity in Florida, 1894-1910," (M.A. thesis, University of Miami, 1971), p. 43-47. Similarly, Albert Kimsey Owen, the visionary behind the failed colony of Topolobampo, Mexico, laid plans in 1899 for a "model city in these states -- in the New South" where "There's big work to be done . . . ." Quoted in Leopold Katscher, "Owen's Topolobampo Colony, Mexico," American Journal of Sociology 12 (September 1906): 174.

42. "Commonwealth Possibilities," Social Gospel 2 (March 1899): 22.

43. Social Gospel, 2 (May 1899): 26.

44. Quoted in Paul E. Aleya and Blanche R. Alyea, Fairhope, 1895-1954: The Story of A Single Tax Colony (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1956), 25. See also Paul Gaston, Women of Fair Hope (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 64.

45. Mark Derr, Some Kind of Paradise: A Chronicle of Man and the Land in Florida (New York: William Morrow, 1989), 171-172; Alfred Jackson Hanna and Kathryn Abbey Hanna, Lake Okeechobee: Wellspring of the Everglades (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1948), 272. The British novelist D. H. Lawrence laid plans for "starting life in a new spirit" by founding "Rananim," a utopian community, on the western fringe of the Everglades. See Harry T. Moore, The Priest of Love: A Life of D. H. Lawrence (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1974), 213, 238, 247-255.

46. Llano Colonist, July 6, 1925, 7.

47. Atlanta Constitution, August 6, 1898, 6-1; Russell H. Anderson, "The Shaker Community in Florida," Florida Historical Quarterly 38 (1959): 29-44; idem, "The Shaker Communities in Southeast Georgia," Georgia Historical Quarterly 50 (1966): 162-172; and Stephen J. Stein, The Shaker Experience in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 278-279, 281-283, 302-303. For Cyrus Teed of the Koreshan Unity, the attraction of the South went beyond climate and landscape. He emphasized instead that the site of his colony was dictated by his elaborate cosmology. Contrary to conventional wisdom, Teed claimed that man lived on the interior of a hollow earth, and that the Koreshan Unity colony, though isolated on the very fringes of the Florida frontier, had been "scientifically located at the vitellus of the Cosmogonic Egg [i.e. Earth]." Presumably, no other location could match the cosmic attributes of Estero, Florida. Mackle, "The Koreshan Unity in Florida," 26.

48. The Georgia poet Sidney Lanier, in a guidebook to Florida published in 1876, explicitly endowed the southern landscape with the power to ease civilization's discontents: "The question of Florida is a question of an indefinite enlargement of many people's pleasures and of many people's existences as against that universal killing ague of modern life -- the fever of unrest, of trade throbbing through the long chill of a seven month's winter. . . ." Sidney Lanier, Florida: Its Scenery, Climate, and History (1875; rpr., Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), 16. See also Mackle, "The Eden of the South," Chapter 3; and Miller, Dark Eden, Chapter 2; Rembert W. Patrick, "The Mobile Frontier," Journal of Southern History 29 (February 1963): 7.

49. Sally M. Miller, "The Socialist Party and the Negro, 1901-1920," Journal of Negro History 56 (July 1971): 220-229; R. Laurence Moore, "Flawed Fraternity -- American Socialist Response to the Negro, 1901-1912," The Historian 32 (November 1969): 1-18; David R. Roediger, The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class (New York: Verso, 1991), Part 4; Alexander Saxton, The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class, Politics, and Mass Culture in Nineteenth Century America (New York: Verso, 1990), Part 3. For a more charitable view, see Philip S. Foner, American Socialism and Black Americans: From the Age of Jackson to World War II (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1977), Chapter 4.

50. On black communitarianism, see Coming Nation, November 7, 1896, 3-5; Mozell C. Hill, "The All-Negro Communities of Oklahoma: The Natural History of a Social Movement," Journal of Negro History 31 (July 1946): 254-268; Glen Schendemann, "Nicodemus: Negro Haven on the Solomon," Kansas Historical Quarterly 34 (Spring 1968): 10-31; and Joseph Taylor, "The Rise and Decline of a Utopian Community, Boley, Oklahoma," Negro History Bulletin 3 (March 1940). For an account which downplays

black communitarianism, see Kenneth M. Hamilton, Black Towns and Profit: Promotion and Development in the Trans-Appalachian West, 1877-1915 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).

51. Coming Nation, February 10, 1894, 4-1; January 15, 1898, 4-2; January 7, 1899, 2-1; September 2, 1899, 3-3; National Ripsaw, May 1913, 2, 22; May 1914, 20; Gaston, The Women of Fairhope, 7-9; and Mackle, "The Koreshan Unity in Florida," 71.

52. Social Gospel, I (March 1898): 21-22; 2 (April 1899): 26; 3 (March 1900): 30. See also Paul D. Bolster, "Christian Socialism Comes to Georgia: The Christian Commonwealth Colony," Georgia Review 26 (Spring 1972): 67.

53. Ralph Albertson, "Christian Commonwealth in Georgia," Georgia Historical Quarterly 29 (June 1945): 139.

54. Gavin Wright, Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War (New York: Basic Books, 1986), passim. Southerners themselves recognized that the essential foundation of their economic distinctiveness had been "excised" by emancipation. See Shore, Southern Capitalists, Chapter 3.

55. Stephen Cresswell, "Red Mississippi: The State's Socialist Party, 1904-1920," Journal of Mississippi History 50 (August 1988): 153-172; Fogarty, All Things New, 154; Paul M. Gaston, "Ernest Berry Gaston" in Alden Whitman (ed.), American Reformers (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1985), 342-343; Christine McHugh, "Midwestern Populist Leadership and Edward Bellamy," American Studies 19 (Fall 1978): 62; Ross E. Paulson, Radicalism & Reform: The Vrooman Family and American Social Thought, 1837-1937 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), Chapters 5, 7; Elliott Shore, Talkin' Socialism: J. A. Wayland and the Radical Press (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1988), 25-28, 41-42; and Samuel Walker, "George Howard Gibson, Christian Socialist Among the Populists," Nebraska History 55 (Winter 1974): 553-72.

56. Coming Nation, March 3, 1894, 1-3. For similar sentiments, see also Coming Nation, December 3, 1893, 4-2; January 13, 1894, 1-5; and March 31, 1894, 1-3. Edward Bellamy and his followers had similar hopes that Populism would become the vehicle for the Nationalist movement; see Spann, Brotherly Tomorrows, 198-199; Thomas, Alternative America, 313-316.

57. The diverse ideological strands within southern Populism are untangled in Edward L. Ayers, The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), Chapters 9-10; Theodore R. Mitchell, Political Education in the Southern Farmers' Alliance, 1887-1900 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987); Bruce Palmer, "Man Over Money": The Southern Populist Critique of American Capitalism (Chapel Hill:

University of North Carolina, 1980); Lois S. Self, "Agrarian Chautauqua: The Lecture System of the Southern Farmers' Alliance Movement" (Ph. D. diss, University of Wisconsin, 1987).

58. Lawrence Goodwyn, The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 90. The role of cooperatives in the Populist movement is stressed in Goodwyn, Populist Moment, Chapter 3; Joseph G. Knapp, The Rise of American Cooperative Enterprise: 1620-1920 (Danville, Il.: Interstate Printers & Publishers, 1966), Chapter 3; and Theodore Saloutous, Farmer Movements in the South, 1865-1933 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 64-67, 94-97. Stanley Parsons has argued that too much significance has been placed upon cooperatives in Stanley B. Parsons, et. al., "The Role of Cooperatives in the Development of the Movement Culture of Populism," Journal of American History 69 (March 1983): 866-885.

59. Gibson, cited in Walker, "George Howard Gibson," 555.

60. Goodwyn, The Populist Moment, p. 191. See also Wayne Alvord, "T. L. Nugent, Texas Populist," Southwestern Historical Quarterly 1 (July 1953): 69-80. In a letter to the Coming Nation, C. Howell of Tillman, Florida, reached conclusions similar to Nugent's: "I am a Christian minister, but I think that you are advocating more of the principles of the Christ than a VERY GREAT number of our POPULAR PREACHERS, so please consider me a comrade." Coming Nation, February 11, 1899, 4-3.

61. Coming Nation, July 9, 1898, 4-4.

62. For a sample of Populist attacks on conservative Christianity, see Dallas Southern Mercury, February 21, 1895, 5-3; March 7, 1895, 5-3; May 2, 1895, 11-1; March 19, 1896, 2-1. See also Peter H. Argersinger, "Pentecostal Politics in Kansas: Religion, the Farmers' Alliance, and the Gospel of Populism," Kansas Quarterly 1 (Fall 1969): 24-39; Frederick A. Bode, "Religion and Class Hegemony: A Populist Critique in North Carolina," Journal of Southern History 38 (August 1971): 417-438; Robert C. McMath, Jr., Populist Vanguard: A History of the Southern Farmers' Alliance (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 133-136; and Dale E. Soden, "Northern Georgia: Fertile Ground for the Urban Ministry of Mark Matthews," Georgia Historical Quarterly 69 (Spring 1985): 39-54.

63. Coming Nation, April 30, 1898, 4-2.

64. Coming Nation, July 9, 1898, 4-4.

65. Coming Nation, February 24, 1894, 3-3.

66. Coming Nation, April 8, 1898, 4-3. A Labor Exchange and College was organized in Cado, Texas in 1895. See Dallas Southern Mercury, August 1, 1895, 3-1. The Pfafftown and Cado Labor Exchanges drew inspiration from utopian socialism, Populism, and the Labor Exchange movement founded by G. B. DeBarnardi of Missouri. See H. Roger Grant, "Utopia Without Colony: The Labor Exchange Movement," Communal Societies 1 (August 1981): 43-54; David Thelen, Paths of Resistance: Tradition and Dignity in Industrializing Missouri (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 160-163; and Spann, Brotherly Tomorrows, 212-213.

67. Dallas Texas Advance, December 16, 1893, 4-1; December 23, 1893, 4-1.

68. Coming Nation, June 1, 1895, 3-3; May 22, 1897, 4-1. Margaret Elizabeth Hall, A History of Van Zandt County (Austin: Pemberton Press, 1976), 52, 57; --, The History of Van Zandt County, Texas (Willis Point, Tx.: Van Zandt County History Book Committee, 1984), 48-49. For another proposal to establish a Populist community near Texarkana, see the Coming Nation, June 25, 1898.

69. Coming Nation, January 11, 1896, 4-3.

70. See letters to the Coming Nation, November 21, 1896, 4-6; September 24, 1898, 4-4; October 8, 1898, 4-3. See also the growing sympathy for socialism in the columns of the Dallas Southern Mercury, the leading Texas Populist newspaper, between 1898 and 1900. See esp. January 12, 1899, 9-1; March 30, 1899, 4-2; and May 18, 1899, 3-1.

71. C. Hosnbuger (?) to William A. Hinds, February 3, 1901. Cooperative Union File, Oneida Collection, Special Collections, Syracuse University Library.

72. Coming Nation, May 14, 1898, 4-3. There is no evidence to substantiate Bliss' claim to have coined the term Populism. On the semantics of Populism, see Gene Clanton, Populism: The Humane Preference in America, 1890-1900 (Boston: Twayne, 1991), 70-71; and George B. Tindall, "Populism: A Semantic Identity Crisis," Virginia Quarterly Review 48 (Autumn 1972): 501-518.

73. On "the encrusted layers" that Populism had to overcome, see Pollack, The Just Polity, 100.

74. Jacquelyn Dowd Hall has challenged the conventional wisdom about the white South's "monolithic" sexual conservatism in "Disorderly Women: Gender and Labor Militancy in the Appalachian South," Journal of American History 73 (September 1986): 354-382; idem, et. al, Like a Family: The Making of the Southern Cotton Mill World (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,

1987), 225-236, 252-288; and idem, "Private Eyes, Public Women: Images of Class and Sex in the Urban South, Atlanta Georgia, 1913-1915," in Ava Baron (ed.), Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 243-272.

75. Jill Kerr Conway, "Utopian Dream or Dystopian Nightmare? Nineteenth-Century Feminist Ideas About Equality," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 96 (1987): 285-294.

76. Coming Nation, August 10, 1895, 4-3.

77. Coming Nation, January 14, 1899, 3-7.

78. Coming Nation, December 3, 1898, 3-7. During a visit to Ruskin in 1899, Charlotte Perkins Gilman concluded that colonies offered nothing but discomfort and disappointment. See Charlotte Perkins Gilman to George Houghton Gilman, January 29 to February 5, 1899. Series 8, Box 28, Vol. 40, Gilman Papers, Schelsinger Library, Radcliffe College. For extended discussions of women and cooperative communities, see Coming Nation, February 5, 1898, 4-2; November 26, 1898, 3-6; December 3, 1898, 3-7; January 21, 1899, 3-6; January 28, 1899, 3-6. The satisfactions of colony life for women in other colonies are evident in Albertson, "The Christian Commonwealth," : 134-135, 138; Dombrowski, Early Days of Christian Socialism, 150-153; and Gaston, Women of Fairhope, Chapters 2-3.

79. Belton Journal, February 26, 1880. Two decades later, when asked by a reporter whether men could participate in the Woman's Commonwealth, McWhirter responded: "Oh yes, we have had men among us. They are welcome if they are willing to live the life we do. But they never stay very long. You see it is in the nature of men to want to boss -- and -- Well, they find they can't." Margarita Spaulding Gerry, "The Woman's Commonwealth of Washington," Ainslee's Magazine 10 (September 1902): 139.

80. George P. Garrison, "Woman's Community in Texas," Charities Review 3 (November 1893): 28-46; Gerry, "Woman's Commonwealth of Washington," 133-141; Sally L. Kitch, Chaste Liberation: Celibacy and Female Cultural Status (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), esp. 126-141; Jayme Sokolow and Mary Ann Lamanna, "Women and Utopia: The Woman's Commonwealth of Belton, Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly 87 (April 1984): 371-393, and George W. Tyler, History of Bell County (San Antonio: Naylor Co., 1936), 391-395.

81. Garrison, "Woman's Community in Texas": 39-42; Eleanor James, "The Sanctificationists of Belton: A Woman's Community in Texas," American West 2 (Summer 1965):69-71; Sokolow and Lamanna, "Women and Utopia": 382-386; and Gwendolyn Wright, "The Woman's

Commonwealth: Separation, Self, Sharing," Architectural Association Quarterly 4 (1974): 39-42.

82. Edward Ayers, Vengeance and Justice: Crime & Justice in the 19th-Century American South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 256.

83. Waycross Herald, July 21, 1900, 3-2; August 18, 1900, 5-4, 5-5. For other examples of popular colony activities, see the Burning Bush's religious revivals, Troup (Tx.) Banner, August 20, 1914, 1-4; on Fairhope's cultural programs, see Alyea and Alyea, Fairhope, 82-83; on The Christian Commonwealth's religious revivals, see Bolster, "The Christian Commonwealth," 65; on Newllano, see Conkin, Two Paths to Utopia, Chapter 7.

84. Albertson, "The Christian Commonwealth," 138; Bolster, "The Christian Commonwealth," 67; Alyea and Alyea, Fairhope, 76; Hinds, American Communities, 472-479; Mackle, "The Koreshan Unity in Florida," 75-81.

85. Compare Fitzgerald Colony Citizen, December 24, 1896; December 31, 1896; and Waycross Herald, November 11, 1899, 1-2; February 2, 1901, 5-2. See also Charles Lewis and Brian Brown, "Fitzgerald, the Yank-Reb City," Georgia Journal 12 (Spring 1992): 20-21, 27.

86. Chicago Social Democrat, October 7, 1897, December 23, 1897, June 16, 1898; Coming Nation, October 23, 1897, 4-2, November 6, 1897, 3-6; Quint, Forging of American Socialism, 304-306.

87. Atlanta Constitution, April 18, 1900, 2-1; Waycross Herald, June 10, 1899, 5-4.

88. Mackle, "The Koreshan Unity in Florida," 27; Edwin Smyrl, "Burning Bush," Southwestern Historical Quarterly 50 (January 1947): 335.

89. Within a year experience had demonstrated the fallacy of Weintraub's unorthodox (and unwise) belief that "poor land improved was land that brings forth the best results."

90. Aiken Journal and Review, January 16, May 25, July 31, 1906, August 9, 1907, January 13, 1908; Charleston News and Courier, January 6, 1906; Columbia State, October 6, 1905, August 6, 1907; Arnold Shankman, "Happyville: the Forgotten Colony," American Jewish Archives 30 (1978): 3-19.

91. The husbands of several members attacked two immigrant men who joined the colony and ordered them out of the community. In 1883, one sister was judged insane and sentenced to the state mental asylum after she refused to accept a life insurance premium from the estate of her deceased and unsanctified husband.

Years passed before Martha McWhirter convinced Governor John Ireland to allow the woman to return to the colony. Garrison, "Woman's Community in Texas": 39-42; Eleanor James, "The Sanctificationists of Belton," 69-71; and Sokolow and Lamanna, "Women and Utopia": 382-386.

92. Fort Myers Press, October 25, 1906, 1-4; Mackle, "The Koreshan Unity in Florida," 101-125; idem, "Cyrus Teed and the Lee County Elections of 1906," Florida Historical Quarterly 57 (July 1978): 1-18; R. Lyn Rainard, "Conflict Inside the Earth: The Koreshan Unity in Lee County," Tampa Bay History 3 (Spring/Summer 1981): 5-16.

93. Garrison, "Woman's Community in Texas": 40-43; Sokolow and Lamanna, "Women and Utopia": 385-386.

94. Disease and illness sealed the fate of several utopian colonies, including the Jewish colonies in Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas. See Davidson and Goodwin, "An Arkansas Colonization Episode,": 9; Herscher, Jewish Agricultural Utopias, 32-37, 52-55; Richard E. Singer, "American Jew in Agriculture: Past History and Present Condition," (unpub. manuscript, American Jewish Archives), I, 336-337; On disease and the Christian Commonwealth, Rugby, and Ruskin, see Albertson, "The Christian Commonwealth": 141-142; Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism, 166; Egerton, Visions of Utopia, 56; and H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed," Gunton's Magazine 22 (May 1902): 434-443.

95. On the breakup of the Christian Commonwealth, see W. A. Ross to William A. Hinds, September 27, 1899, December 29, 1900. Christian Commonwealth File, Oneida Collection, Special Collections, Syracuse University Library. See also Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism, 164-166. On Rugby, see Egerton, Visions of Utopia, 56-57. On Ruskin, see Isaac Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1902), Chapters 8-11; and Walter G. Davis, "Failure of the Ruskin Colony," Gunton's Magazine 21 (December 1901): 530-537. On Happyville, see Shankman, "Happyville": 15.

96. Hahn, The Roots of Southern Populism, 269-286; Palmer, "Man Over Money", 199-221. For contemporary expressions of Populist hostility to socialism, see Atlanta People's Party Paper, August 16, 1895; Dallas Texas Advance, October 28, 1893, 2-3; Dallas Southern Mercury March 14, 1895, 7-2; March 5, 1896, 10-1.

97. Jacob W. Braam to W. A. Hinds, February 4, 1901. Cooperative Industrial Colony File, Oneida Collection, Special Collections, Syracuse University Library. See also Social Gospel 2 (May 1899): 25.

98. Ralph Albertson, "Survey of Mutualistic Communities in America," Iowa Journal of History and Politics 34 (October 1936): 393; Hinds, American Communities, 389; and Alexander Kent, "Cooperative Communities in the United States," Bulletin of the Department of Labor 6 (July 1901): 634.

99. Elsewhere pentecostalism did generate a communitarian impulse, as demonstrated by the activities of John Alexander Dowie, an early Pentecostal minister, who founded Zion City, a theocratic utopian community near Chicago. See Philip L. Cook, "Zion City, Illinois -- The Kingdom of Heaven and Race," Illinois Quarterly 38 (Winter 1975): 50-62; Alden R. Heath, "Apostle in Zion," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 70 (May 1977): 98-113; and Grant Wacker, "Marching to Zion: Religion in a Modern Utopian Community," Church History 54 (December 1985): 496-511.

100. Paul Boyer, When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), Chapter 3; James H. Moorhead, "The Erosion of Postmillennialism in American Religious Thought, 1865-1925," Church History 53 (March 1984): 61-77.

101. George M. Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 38.

102. Ayers, The Promise of the New South, 396-408; Edith L. Blumhofer, The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism (Springfield, MO.: Gospel Publishing House, 1989), 13-66; Dayton, The Theological Roots of Pentecostalism, Chapters 4-6; David Edwin Harrell, Jr., All Things are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), Chapter 2; Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 32-102; and Timothy P. Weber, Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1982 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), Chapters 1-3.

103. The best account of late nineteenth century camp meetings and revivals is Ted Ownby, Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920 (Chapel Hill: University of North carolina Press, 1990), Chapter 8; see also Ayers, The Promise of the New South, Chapter 7.

104. H. Richard Niebuhr, The Kingdom of God in America (1937); Ernest L. Tuveson, Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), esp. Chapter 3.

105. Ayers, The Promise of the New South, viii.

106. Harold D. Woodman, "Economic Reconstruction and the Rise of the New South, 1865-1900," in John B. Boles and Evelyn T. Nolen (eds.), Interpreting Southern History: Historiographical Essays in Honor of Sanford W. Higginbotham (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1987), 279-280.

107. Thomas, Alternative Americas, 392.

108. Subsequent cooperative movements in the South were characterized by a conservative and narrowly conceived producer ideology. See, for example, the chief organ of the Farmer's Union, the Dallas National Cooperator, June 12, 1907, 2-4; March 11, 1908, 4-4. See also Saloutous, Farmers Movements in the South, Chapter 12.

109. Daniel Bell, "The Problem of Ideological Rigidity," in John H. M. Laslett and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.), Failure of a Dream? Essays in the History of American Socialism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 3-29; Paul Buhle, Marxism in the United States (New York: Verso, 1991), Chapter 3; James R. Green, Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 388-392; Ira Kipnis, The American Socialist Movement (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), passim.

110. On the communitarian revival of the 1930s, see William H. Cobb, "From Utopian Isolation to Radical Activism: Commonwealth College," Arkansas Historical Quarterly 32 (Summer 1973): 132-147; idem and Donald H. Grubbs, "Arkansas' Commonwealth College and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union," Arkansas Historical Quarterly 25 (Winter 1966): 293-311; Paul Conkin, Tomorrow a New World: The New Deal Community Program (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959); Jonathan Daniels, A Southerner Discovers the South (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 142-155; and Donald Holley, Uncle Sam's Farmers: The New Deal Communities in the Lower Mississippi Valley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

111. Aldous Huxley, Adonis and the Alphabet (London: Chatto & Windus, 1956)), 100.

112. Caroline Augusta Lloyd, Henry Demarest Lloyd, 1874-1903 (New York: 1912), I, 66-67.