



Creating Perfect World: Religious & Secular Utopias In (Ohio Bicentennial Series)

Catherine M. Rokicky

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Among the many Americans in the nineteenth century who searched for more control and order in their lives were some who chose to create self-contained communities where they experimented with entirely remaking society to create the perfect world on earth. Utopianists challenged the existing social and economic order and introduced their own ideas about religion, marriage, family, sexual practices, distribution of property, and wage labor. Between 1787 and 1919, approximately 270 utopian communities existed in the United States. Because of geographic, political, and economic opportunities, the state of Ohio played a crucial role in all of these movements. *Creating a Perfect World* examines the utopian movements that found their way into Ohio, including the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming, or Shakers; the Society of Separatists of Zoar; and the Mormons. Other Ohio ventures described here are the Owenite communities and the Fourier Phalanxes, founded on the philosophy of French utopianist Charles Fourier. In an intriguing look at a unique side of Ohio's history, Catherine M. Rokicky provides profiles of these communities and explores their establishment, their leaders, the involvement of women, gender roles, economic activities, successes and failures, and reasons for abandonment.

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