tion of urban communities and the negative influence of capitalism resulting in resource depletion. The annotated bibliography is extensive and very helpful to anyone interested in in-depth material.


United Nations Center for Human Settlements. (2001). Cities in a Globalizing World. London: Earthscan. Compilation of work by more than eighty international researchers. The report reviews the status of the world’s cities and summarizes global trends that will impact the cities of the future. Especially notable is the observation regarding the increased isolation of the urban poor in both developed and developing countries.

## UTILITARIANISM

SEE Consequentialism.

## UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA

Part of being human is the ability to dream of a better (or worse) life, either in this world or the next. Some dreams have led to the study of nature and humans, from the deep mysteries of the atom and the gene, to the even deeper challenges of individual and collective sanities—all with an understanding that how one acts can be as important as why, especially when studies of nature (science) and how to transform nature (technology) confer ever greater powers and responsibilities on human beings. Some of humanity’s best thinkers and artists have, for 2,500 years, created moral compasses by distilling human wisdom (and folly) into imaginative works called utopias and dystopias (sometimes called anti-utopias). These compasses are neither timeless nor universal; instead, their poles are constantly aligned and realigned by the forces of history, economics, politics, and aesthetics. Messages from these explorers of science, technology, and ethics have long had the potential to both frighten and enlighten. Indeed, they have been doing so at least since the hero escaped from that allegorical cave of shadows in Plato’s classic utopia, The Republic (360 B.C.E.)—a parable clearly revisited and updated in the film The Matrix (1999).

### Utopia Defined: Thomas More’s Pun and the Myth of Utopianism

The word utopia originated in December 1516, when Thomas More published a book with that one word, capitalized, as its title. More wrote his text in Latin. Its complete, twenty-seven word title—De optimo reipublicae statu deque nova insula utopia libellus vere aureus, nec minus salutaris quam festivus, clarissimi discretissimique viri Thomae Mori inclutae civitatis Londinensis civis et Vicecomitit—features not only a latinizing of his own name and city but also a brand-new word coined as a trilingual pun. In Latin and English, utopia minimally disguises its truncated roots in two made-up, latinized homophones from the Greek words for a good place (eu-topos) and for no place (ou-topos). Hence, “Utopia: the good place which is no place” (Sargisson, p. 1). Since 1516 More’s readers and translators alike have wrestled with the many puns and ambiguities of this multi-voiced dialogue that is, in Vita Fortunati’s words, “a bewildering mixture of reality and fiction” (Fortunati and Trousson 2000, p. 153).

The full title of More’s book, in its first English translation by Ralph Robinson in 1551, was On the best State of a Commonwealth and on the new Island of Utopia A Truly Golden Handbook, No Less Beneficial than Entertaining by the Most Distinguished and Eloquent Author Thomas More Citizen and Undersheriff of the Famous City of London. This language—especially best and Handbook, Commonwealth and Beneficial—evokes the common understanding of utopia and Utopia as a blueprint for a perfect society. Such an initial reading makes it easy to dismiss utopian arguments as just unrealistic. Since the late twentieth century, scholars such as Ruth Levitas, Tom Moylan, Lyman Tower Sargent, Lucy Sargisson, and W. Warren Wagar have challenged this colloquial, negative view of utopian texts, thoughts, and theories.

The recorded usages of utopia expose a long history of undervaluing the impulse for social dreaming, for collectively desiring a better way of being. Denotations for utopia show a sustained effort to disempower minority reports from the critics of the dominant ideologies that have sustained (mostly premodern) heads of state and (mostly modern) captains of capital. A distinction between imaginary and imaginative is helpful here. After first asserting, “Utopian thought is imaginative,” Northrop Frye observes that “The word imaginative refers to hypothetical constructions, like those of literature or mathematics. The word imaginary refers to something that does not exist” (Frye 1957, p. 193). More’s island is a new no place that people can hold in their hands and in their minds; it is imaginative, not imaginary.
Another, less nuanced point is raised by the adjective perfect being applied to this system depicted by More. There is a figure—it is tempting to call him a character—in More’s *Utopia* called “More,” who spends much of his time listening to the exploits of Raphael Hytholoday, a sailor and scholar who has been to Utopia. As Hytholoday (an imagined figure whose name means peddler of nonsense) tells his tale, “More,” the character, expresses several reservations. For “More”—and, one could surmise, for More, the man,—many of the Utopians’ laws and customs “were really absurd” (More 1995, p. 110). Then, when Hytholoday has finished, “More” says, “Meanwhile I can hardly agree with everything he has said (though he is a man of unquestionable learning and enormous experience of human affairs), yet I freely confess that in the Utopian commonwealth there are many features that in our own societies I would like rather than expect to see” (More 1995, p. 110–111). *Utopia* depicts, not a perfect social, legal, and political system, but instead a complex debate, enriched by humor, between More’s earned political realism of low expectations and his cautious optimism of higher desires for society.

**Utopian Studies: Modern Scholarship Challenges Utopian Stereotypes**

The debilitating myth of utopianism as unrealistic perfectionism comes, in part, from concentrating on the content and form of utopias—on what is held and what is doing the holding—rather than on the function of utopia. Some important work has been done with the content and form approaches, most significantly the magisterial tome by Frank and Fritzie Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (1979). But as Ruth Levitas notes, “to focus on the function of utopia is already to move away from colloquial usage, which says nothing about what utopia is for, but implies that it is useless” (Levitas 1990, p. 5).

Turning attention to how utopias function, scholars, led by Lyman Tower Sargent (1988), have challenged the dominant commonplace understanding of utopia by reexamining the history of utopian expressions, locating many newly-discovered and rediscovered resources. Other scholars, following the example of Ernst Bloch (1970), have expanded utopia by finding it “immanent in popular culture, in the fashion industry, dance, film, adventure stories, art, architecture, music, and even medical science” (Sargent, p. 12). Even a Parisian graffito from May 1968—“Be realistic. Demand the impossible”—becomes fodder for utopian analysis, with its second command serving as the apt title for Tom Moylan’s 1986 study of science fictional treatments of the critical utopian impulse by Joanna Russ, Ursula K. Le Guin, Marge Piercy, and Samuel R. Delany.

This new wave of utopian studies operates not as a small, monolithic cabal but rather as a growing international community. For example, Fortunati and Raymond Trousson’s 700-page *Dictionary of Literary Utopias* (2000) has ninety-nine contributors from more than a dozen countries. This key reference work offers a thorough comparative and interdisciplinary perspective on literary utopias and dystopias, yet even it cannot claim anything approaching complete coverage of utopian and dystopian thought. For a sweeping overview, historian and novelist W. Warren Wagar, contends, “At least two great rivers of utopian dreaming flow through the history of ideas, corresponding to the two great families of world-views, the naturalist and the idealist, which have contended with one another for thousands of years in every philosophical arena in the world” (Wagar 1991, p. 56). Furthermore “Since the seventeenth century, most blueprints for good societies have emanated from the naturalist family, as represented by the classic texts of Bacon, Condorcet, Comte, Caber, Marx, Bellamy, Wells, and Skinner. But not all. Many utopian visions are grounded in such members of the idealist family of world-views as Platonism, mysticism, orthodox religious piety, and modern and postmodern irrationalism” (Wagar 1991, p. 56). Key writers, for Wagar, in this second tradition include William Morris, George Bernard Shaw, Herman Hesse, Aldous Huxley, Teilhard de Chardin, C. S, Lewis, William Burroughs, and Doris Lessing. In their idealist works, “utopia is not a bustling city registering worldly progress but a community of spirit earning grace” (Wagar 1991, p. 56).

**Naturalistic Utopias: Bacon and Science**

For present purposes, the name at the head of Wagar’s naturalist tradition should be highlighted, Francis Bacon. His *New Atlantis* (1627) brings the politically responsible use of science and technology to the forefront of utopianism by way of its House of Salomon, a grand research institution that, historically speaking, serves as the prototype for modern laboratory science. Writing in 1665, Joseph Glanville affirms, “Salomon’s House in the New Atlantis was a prophetic scheme of the Royal Society” (Fortunati and Trousson, p. 448). Before detailing its personnel, equipment, and methods, an Elder of the House of Salomon first explains its underlying goals: “The end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and the secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible” (Bacon 1627, p. 240).
Their division of labor anticipates such ventures as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the Manhattan Project, and Bell Laboratories. One subgroup of Elders functions, in Bacon’s words, as interpreters of Nature, whose role foreshadows the modern scientific method itself. These protoscientists “raise the former discoveries by experiments into greater observations, axioms, and aphorisms” (Bacon 1627, p. 240). That is to say, two hundred years before the word scientist was coined, Bacon divided practitioners into the experimenters and the theorists. Moreover, his New Atlantis initiates the major model of modern utopias, ones that imagine liberating humanity through enhanced production and consumption, including Louis-Sebastien Mercier’s The Year 2440 (1770), Etienne Cabet’s Voyage en Icarie (1840), and, after Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852) by Harriet Beecher Stowe, the most popular nineteenth-century American novel, Edward Bellamy’s Looking Backward (1888).

Idealist Utopias: Morris and Community

Idealist utopias are quieter than their naturalistic cousins. A sense of community is earned in them not by way of technology but through the avenues of spirit in Hermann Hesse’s The Glass Bead Game (1949). In the naturalistic utopias (and in their dark avatars, the naturalistic dystopias), communication is enhanced (or thwarted) through the agency of faster and better telephones, telegraphs, and computers, among others, while in the idealist utopias (and their avatars) communication honors its root in communing, in the fullest sense of a people sharing life. (Tom Moylan [2000] provides an analysis of key examples of these science fictional utopias and dystopias from the 1980s and 1990s.) Idealist utopias are often explicit responses to naturalistic texts, as in Morris’s News from Nowhere (1890) as a pastoral reply to Bellamy’s Looking Backward (1888) and its shiny vision of an industrial army circa 2000. On rare occasions, a naturalist dystopia and its paired idealist utopia are written by the same author— for example, Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World (1932) and Island (1962). Taken together, these major utopian streams engage in a complex critique of science and technology, especially in the twenty-first century science fiction short story, novel, and (to a lesser degree) film.

Charting Wilde’s Map of the World and Beyond

In “The Soul of Man Under Socialism” (1891), Oscar Wilde poetizes the positive utopian impulse, saying, “A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias.” (Wilde 1891, p. 34). Yet while many anticipated and welcomed the rise of modern industry, science, and technology, a minority questioned their impact, wondering not about the feasibility but the wisdom of utopian schemes. Utopias and dystopias are asymmetrical concepts, akin to health and disease, whereby one person’s hopeful dream is another’s dyspeptic nightmare. One key example is behaviorist B. F. Skinner’s Walden Two (1948), written as a positive, naturalistic utopia, yet often read as a dystopia—and one Henry David Thoreau would not have warmed to.

Overall, the miscoupling of science (natural and psychological) and power (political and economic) found its most compelling expressions in the great twentieth-century dystopias, especially Yevgeny Zamyatin’s We (1920), Huxley’s Brave New World (1932), and George Orwell’s 1984 (1949). We is especially germane because of its moral calculus. That is, in Zamyatin’s hyper-rational world, ethical values are literally, not metaphorically, based on mathematical calculations. Even more disturbing is Huxley’s prophetic extrapolation of modern consumerism. He invented the perfect narcotics—soma and the feelies—for the dystopian year of our Ford, 632; in the twenty-first century, both can be found at the local mall. Lastly, 1984’s impact on the understanding of power and politics, language and truth, and banality and desire are difficult to underestimate. After all, not every writer has his name become a ubiquitous adjective—Orwellian.

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SEE ALSO Bacon, Francis; Brave New World; Critical Social Theory; Huxley, Aldous; More, Thomas; Morris, William; Posthumanism; Science Fiction; Science, Technology, and Literature; Wells, H. G; Zamyatin, Yevgeny Ivanovich.

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