

making the sublime mechanical

henry blake fuller's chicago

guy szuberla

"We need Nature," Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote in a journal entry, "and cities give the human senses not room enough."¹ That cities stifle the human senses has seemed a self-evident truth for a diverse number of American thinkers. This commonplace of agrarian thought, expressed by Jefferson, Henry Adams, Frederick Jackson Turner and others, reinforces the native notion that this country's open spaces and virgin land generate freedom and spiritual redemption. And so, Emerson's presumptive use of the all inclusive "we"—no less than Turner's famed frontier thesis—implicitly denies that writers, artists, or the ordinary city-dweller could experience the city as a place where the human senses are liberated or that anyone could see the urban landscape as a terrain without confining limits. Though America has built no walled cities, that old world image haunts the American imagination. It is, perhaps, not until the Chicago novelist Henry Blake Fuller articulates his vision of a cityscape that American literature reflects a new idea of urban space. For Fuller, the city, not Nature gives the human senses infinite room.

His transvaluation of the agrarian myth, with its concomitant image of the city's suffocating bounds, projects a discovery of the city's machine-made beauty. Fuller's Chicago novels, *The Cliff-Dwellers* (1893) and *With the Procession* (1895), celebrate an industrialized city, the mechanized anti-type of America's mythical garden. Like his contemporary, the Chicago architect Louis Sullivan, he shapes his spatial aesthetics out of the technological conditions of his time. Chicago's modern architecture, especially the towering skyscrapers built in the 1890s, created a new sense of urban space: urban vistas now pierced and fragmented Nature, obliterating the land that in terms of America's pastoral myth was boundless. By abandoning and subverting that myth, Fuller perceived that the

city's infinite vistas evoked a pleasing terror—a modern, technological sublime.

Functionalist assumptions inform Fuller's reading of Chicago's architecture and the urban landscape. Fully conscious that Chicago, "of all the very large cities in the world, is the only one that has been built together under completely modern conditions," he nevertheless urged architects and city-planners to stamp Chicago with the impress of machine-made "new materials."² His weekly newspaper columns in the *Chicago Evening Post* bristled with attacks on architecture that "reeks with far-fetched picturesqueness and foolish illogical effectism" or that "revels in the falsification of construction and of material."³ The modern city, his rejection of the picturesque suggests, could not be made over in the image of a garden or contained by time-worn architectural forms. In this embrace of modernism, he anticipates Hart Crane's contentious demand that literature "absorb the machine" and "surrender . . . temporarily, to the sensations of urban life."⁴

This is not to say Fuller willingly surrendered his sensibilities to every assault his city might mount. What he pleaded for and worked at in his fiction was the assimilation of the modern city into art. His novels, even today, teach the reader how to see the city's beauty and spatial form. To be sure, he had his doubts about using the city of Chicago as literary subject: "Who wants to read about this repellent town?" he once asked William Dean Howells.⁵ No modern writer—one now assumes—asks himself, as Fuller certainly did, whether an urban landscape seemingly void of meaning and beauty is worthy of fictional treatment, whether its denatured surface might compose an aesthetically significant pattern. Fuller's vision of the city's chaos, unlike that of contemporary novelists such as Saul Bellow or Thomas Pynchon, springs from a consciousness of genteel aesthetics: that is, the belief that art should present a vision of *ideal* beauty and harmony.

In defining the spatial form of the city, Fuller traced the split along the line of cleavage between genteel notions of order and beauty and the new visual order he believed Chicago's modern landscape created. The genteel landscape—rhetorically beflowered by the sublime, the beautiful and the picturesque—placed premium value on "Nature" and the mossy architectural motifs of the past. Fuller's own *The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani* (1886) distilled into exquisite prose "views" of picturesque old Italian villas and pastoral fêtes. That he parodies the genteel vocabulary in his city novels signals, to me, his discovery that the city inverts genteel values as well as the pastoral myth. Against an idealized pastoral landscape, his city novels reify the aesthetic values embodied in a landscape distinctively modern and machine-made.

I

Fuller's *The Cliff-Dwellers* demonstrated a novel appreciation of the beauty within the ugliness of the industrialized city. To many contempo-

rary reviewers, it was a startling and displeasing view of the urban landscape; critics thought it delighted in “the loathsome and cruel” and dwelled on the “sordid.”⁶ An anonymous reviewer, writing in the October 7, 1893 issue of *The Critic*, advised the “judicious reader” to skip over Fuller’s descriptions of skyscrapers to find those passages where the author confesses “Chicago stands in need of idealization.” He ended his review by smugly counseling Fuller “to vary” his talk about “realities . . . with a vision of some Offenbachian Arcadia.”⁷ Wrestling a meaning and aesthetic form out of the city’s chaos seemed insignificant to a generation that, perhaps much like our own, wished to reclaim a lost Eden. To be told that the city, in spreading its boundaries toward the infinite, rivalled and often transcended Nature was to be shown a reality they found both disgusting and incredible.

William Dean Howells came closer to interpreting Fuller’s intentions when he praised the work for “adopting Zola’s principles of art.” Moreover, he lauded Fuller’s masterly skill in handling the “ugliness” of the city, saying that “perhaps nine-tenths of the whole city life in America can find itself glassed in this unflattering mirror.”⁸ H. H. Boyesen, praising the novel in *The Cosmopolitan*, agreed with Howells: “we breathe, from the first chapter to the last, the atmosphere of Chicago; we quiver and tingle with a perpetual sub-consciousness of its intense activity and tremendous metropolitan uproar. . . .”⁹ What could not be denied, but what so many of Fuller’s genteel critics overlooked, is that Chicago’s “ugliness”—its force and sprawl and bluster—held genuine aesthetic and literary interest for Fuller.

The language that Fuller employs in the introductory chapter of *The Cliff-Dwellers* suggests the ambivalence of his attitude toward Chicago as well as the difficulties of hypostatizing an urban milieu. The opening lines set down the central metaphor:

Between the former site of old Fort Dearborn and the present site of our newest Board of Trade there lies a restricted yet tumultuous territory through which, during the course of the last fifty years, the rushing streams of commerce have worn many a deep and rugged chasm. These great canyons . . . cross each other with a sort of systematic rectangularity, and in deference to the practical directness of local requirements they are in general called simply—streets. Each of these canyons is closed in by a long frontage of towering cliffs, and these soaring walls of brick and limestone and granite rise higher and higher with each succeeding year, according as the work of erosion at their bases goes onward—the work of that seething flood of carts, carriages, omnibuses, cars, messengers, shoppers, clerks, and capitalists, which surges with increasing violence. . . . (CD, 1)¹⁰

The extended metaphorical comparison of buildings and streets to canyons, natural objects, sets up an implied antithesis between them and natural scenery, yet never explicitly condemns the unnatural quality of so

much masonry. We are later told that no "direct sunlight" (CD, 32) reached the lower floors of the Clifton, that this is a "treeless country" (CD, 3). Recording the obliteration and overshadowing of traditional and natural symbols of beauty, Fuller maintains the illusion of almost scientific impartiality in setting down details. While he echoes "Kubla Khan" in speaking of "a deep and rugged chasm," he does not extend the figure to the point where he exploits the sympathies the reader may carry over from romantic poetry. On the contrary, the reader, despite the reservations written into the passage, is enticed into admiring the power and movement of the scene, even the "violence" of it. Fuller does not describe a static scene, regardless of the fact that the salient objects in it are static. These buildings are "towering" and "soaring"; he dares to compare the wonder they inspire with marvels of Nature. In the next paragraph, the author asserts that "El Capitan is duplicated time and again both in bulk and in stature . . ." (CD, 2), and one marvels over the size and scale of the scene.

Fuller is playing on the reader's preconceived aesthetic values, values formed by romantic poetry. In mimicking nineteenth century poetic diction, he undercuts its spatial values, fitting this "mighty yet unprepossessing landscape" (CD, 4) into a novel aesthetic category. Romantic poetry disclosed the sublime feelings to be experienced in the presence of the natural landscape; Fuller lures the reader into transferring that response to an urban landscape. The antithesis of "mighty" and "unprepossessing" suggests the ambivalence of Fuller's attitude toward this scene—he is at once disgusted and fascinated by it. But in confessing to the "hideousness" (CD, 2) of the landscape, he continues to elaborate on the image and compile details—returning repeatedly to the central image of the skyscraper throughout the book—and in so doing confesses to his fascination with the power of this scene.

These buildings—or rather the forces symbolized by them—dominate the city and the people in it. The omniscient author views this scene from below, giving these architectural structures an emphasis and a prominence that reduces human beings to insignificance in the landscape. They are but particles in a stream flowing at the base of these skyscrapers. In this image, Fuller symbolizes man's relationship to the urban environment. He implicitly recognizes what architects now insist is true: a building defines and symbolizes spatial and temporal relationships, as well as social and psychological relationships among people. Within the Clifton skyscraper, the major and minor characters of the novel act out lives which are to a great extent controlled by the forces of economics and business housed within the building. For the first half of the novel, the Clifton, as an embodiment of the urban milieu, is a chief actor in the novel. Its impersonality and ubiquitous presence match the forces of the modern city.

Fuller stresses the modernity of this urban milieu by making his main

character, George Ogden, reflect a sense of discovery. An Easterner, newly arrived from the old state of Massachusetts, George comes to a city possessing the newest architecture and no visible past. He has come to Chicago to make his fortune, but before learning to adapt to the urban environment he suffers an unhappy marriage and financial reverses that nearly put him into jail. The setting for George's struggles is the Clifton, which symbolizes the modern technological forces Chicago produced. It was in Chicago during the 1880s and nineties, Fuller reminds us, that the construction of skyscrapers was pioneered.

By using the medium of George's perceptions, Fuller indirectly suggests what is new about Chicago and his own mode of interpreting the urban landscape. To indicate the difference between the old and the new, Fuller exploits that eighteenth century exercise in nature poetry: the view from a prospect. In applying the convention first to a rural Wisconsin scene and then to a Chicago landscape, Fuller subverts the genre and also reveals his distaste for pastoral pleasures. The distaste for the country that prompted him to call the chirp of the robins a "yelp" is rather subtly inscribed into George's view of rural Wisconsin. From a bluff high above the shores of a lake, George emits these bland, conventional remarks: "'How it balances—how it composes!' he said of the view, as he recrossed the bridge. 'And how it's kept!' he said of the town. . . . 'Really'—with unconscious patronage—'it's the only thing West, so far, that has tone and finish'" (CD, 204). Composing the scene in painterly terms, George concocts a representative illustration of the picturesque. The result might well be framed as a "chromo" in a Victorian living room; so neatly, in fact, does the scene fit the frame, and so quietly does the composition rest before the eye that one begins to wonder if Fuller is not attributing a disturbing stasis to nature. George's response, besides being remarkable for the extremely genteel quality in the reference to "tone and finish," is revealing for what it does not include. He attributes no spiritual values to the landscape: though he is troubled over love, he does not in any perceptible way project his feelings into the scene. And the banality of George's "unconscious patronage" ironically quashes any notion the reader might have had that this was meant to be beautiful, aesthetically interesting or pleasing.

George's limitations are no less apparent in another view from a prospect a few pages later where he acts the part of a Chicago native. From the top of the Clifton he proudly shows Chicago to an elderly Wisconsin couple visiting a friend of his. Fuller invests the urban vista with an energy and fascination not present in the Wisconsin scene:

Ogden waved his hand over the prospect—the mouth of the river with its elevators and its sprawling miles of railway track; the weakish blue of the lake, with the coming and going of schooners and propellers, and the "cribs" that stood on the faint horizon—"that's where our water comes from," George explained; the tower of the water-works itself, and

the dull and distant green of Lincoln Park; the towering bulk of other great sky-scrapers and the grimy spindling of a thousand surrounding chimneys; the lumber-laden brigs that were tugged slowly through the drawbridges, while long strings of drays and buggies and street-cars accumulated during the wait. "My! don't they look little!" cried Mrs. McNabb.

George smiled with all the gratified vanity of a native.
(CD, 210-11)

As Fuller notes, natural objects are obliterated by industrialism and urbanization; the scene, prised through a dusty haze of smoke, discloses a "weakish blue lake," the "dull and distant green" of a park, an urbanized and bounded garden. This imputes not beauty nor moral significance to Nature, but shows its weakness and diminution. The machine, an extension of man and the city, even marks the horizon, a symbol of Nature's once infinite power.

Unlike the Wisconsin scene, we do not have pictorial framing of the vista. Instead of balance and composition, we have limitless sprawl. The catalogue of the city's features—machines and natural scenery; the railroads, the river, streetcars and the lake—is given in no apparent order; the passage is designed to make us see the city's chaos, its transcendence of Nature. At the same time, Fuller invites us to marvel over the activity, movement and diversity of this chaos. In so doing, he parodies and overthrows the aesthetic category of the picturesque so patently present in the static Wisconsin scene. In opening the city's vistas to distant horizons, Fuller has created a mock or modern version of the sublime.¹¹ In the eighteenth century, poets and artists looked at mountains and delighted in their own smallness in facing the infinite majesty and terror of God. Here the scale of a *man-made* setting, as in the opening scene of the novel, shrinks Nature and human beings to a frightening smallness. This inverts the neo-classical sublime, since here man delights in his ability to see the smallness of other human beings: "My! don't they look little!" The novelty of its impression on the simple farm folk from Wisconsin underscores the newness and interest of the scene.

Neither the McNabbs' pleasure over the smallness of the spectacle below nor George's agreement with them passes as an authoritative comment on the urbanization of Chicago; in satirically calling George's attitude "the gratified vanity of a native," Fuller undercuts the credit we give George's pride or the McNabbs' surprise over the "prospect." The omniscient author, who has outlined this awesome array of mechanical, industrial and urban force attacking Nature, does not prompt the reader to feel pleasure, pride, surprise or unmitigated disgust. I think, instead, that this passage is meant to evoke a feeling akin to that the eighteenth century felt in the presence of the sublime: that is, a pleasing terror. There is a feeling expressed here that some terrible force is destroying a natural landscape, that it is in fact threatening to diminish man to noth-

ingness. Nevertheless, Fuller seizes out of this view the perception that, horrible as all this may be, there is in it a dramatic surge of power that when viewed from a distance holds a pleasure for him. That power, unlike the omnipotent God the eighteenth century located in the Alps and infinite vistas, is mechanical, social, urban. Cataloguing the effect of these forces, taking their animating power in the city as his theme, Fuller writes realistically, yet with a lyric intensity and energy that expresses wonder and awe.

Fuller thus displaces the aesthetic derived from America's pastoral ideal with one drawn from modern technology and a seemingly infinite urban space. The technological sublime that his characters experience atop the Clifton redefines the pastoral ideal. Once Nature seemed unbounded and infinite; here, it is the city that reaches out towards infinity and Nature that seems finite. From the height of the skyscraper, the city can no longer be measured against the pastoral ideal because it has, physically and symbolically, transcended it. The modern city, an unbounded and bewildering immense place, required an aesthetic that would give its sprawl order and meaning, and Fuller, in denying the myth of a boundless land, moved towards defining the city's sublime power, its subtle order and violent beauty.

II

With the Procession, Fuller's second city novel, resumes his parodic satire of the genteel landscape. As in *The Cliff-Dwellers*, his parody discloses why the city's beauty and visual order could never be revealed by measuring it against a pastoral ideal or the spatial aesthetics that ideal implied. He focuses his attack on what his newspaper column, some years later, was to call "far-fetched picturesqueness."¹² It does not, however, stretch analogy to the breaking point to suggest that Fuller's satiric view of a family bent on regaining Nature's picturesque pleasures anticipates the current flight to suburban split-shingled chateaus, ornamented by Mediterranean furniture, set, presumably, in Nature. The "picturesque" and the "natural" remain, in the mass mind, synonyms for beauty.

With the Procession recounts an old Chicago family's abandonment of their home for a more fashionable one. The Marshalls move because, among other reasons, their old neighborhood has changed radically in the thirty years they have lived there. That change is symbolized in the dust thrown off from a nearby railroad; the dust covers all their old furniture, all the pietistic curios Mrs. Marshall once thought to be beautiful. The dust kills their garden and the grass outside their home: "A locomotive was letting off steam opposite the house, and the noise and the vapor came across the hundred yards of dead grass together" (WP, 166). The locomotive here symbolizes all the intensive forces of industrialism and technology that pursued Thoreau to Walden. The locomotive in this context, however, does not invade the countryside, but the city. To escape this force, the Marshalls do not attempt to return to some simpler idyllic

wilderness. They cannot return to the countryside, because they did not come from it. Instead they move to another part of Chicago, hoping half-heartedly to regain their lost social position. Despite the industrialization of the city, Mrs. Marshall continues to see Chicago as "an Arcadia still—bigger, noisier, richer" (WP, 10). The city is not, Fuller's satire of Mrs. Marshall makes clear, an Arcadia. He implies that defining Chicago through a pastoral ideal is fatuous, since it is a search for a non-existent mythical garden. The pastoral myth, which has served to define the America of the past, has lost its relevance in the modern city.

Her son Truesdale Marshall, a would-be artist and sometime cosmopolitan traveler, holds no illusions about the Arcadian quality of Chicago. Through him, however, Fuller ironically undercuts an equally conventional and equally distorted view of the urban landscape, the affected and genteel love of "the picturesque" and "the beautiful." Truesdale airs carefully acquired European tastes when he ridicules Chicago and its lack of beauty. He sets forth, for example, what he insinuates is a paradigm for the city's "architectural conditions": "He improvised an ornate and airy edifice of his own, which he allowed them to dedicate to art, to education, to charity, to what you will. Then he festooned it with telegraph wires, and draped it with fire-escapes, and girdled it with a stretch of elevated road, and hung it with signboards, and hedged it in with fruit-stands, and swathed it in clouds of coal. . ." (WP, 245). Chicago's architecture, Truesdale believes, was "too debased to justify one's serious endeavors towards improvement." What debased it, in his mind, is the industry and technology that have given it form. From the viewpoint of a lover of the picturesque ruins of Europe, modern city architecture in Chicago appears as the antithesis of beauty.

Truesdale's pretensions to artistry and avant-gardism rest on his self-conscious love of the foreign and the picturesque. He jokes about his taste for the picturesque early in the novel, when he plans a sketching trip in rustic Wisconsin: "No canoeing, of course, on the Lahn and the Moselle; I must fall back upon the historic Illinois, with its immemorial towns and villages and crumbling cathedrals, and the long line of ancient and picturesque chateaux between Ottawa and Peoria" (WP, 73). Yet, when his own ideal of architecture floats before him in a reverie, we see revealed an infatuation with the "picturesque":

He saw before him a high-heaped assemblage of red-tiled roofs, and above them rose the fretwork of a soaring Gothic spire. A narrow river half encircled the town, and a battered old bridge, guarded by a round-towered gateway, led out into the open country towards a horizon bounded by a low range of blue hills. Trumpet-calls rang out from distant barrack-yards, and troops of dragoons clattered noisily over the rough pavement of the great square. . . . High towards stars towered the columns and pediments of a vast official structure, whose broken sky-line sawed the heavens, and whose varied cornices and ledges were disjointed by deep

and perplexing shadows. On each side of the great portal which opened through the pillared arcade there was stationed a mounted cuirassier. . . . (WP, 192)

The “towers” and battlements, with the “deep and perplexing shadows” topped by the “soaring Gothic spire,” bring into relief the irregular outlines of the picturesque. The scene exemplifies that quite eclectic Gothicism that swept through the United States in the 1880’s, leaving behind such landmarks as the French Gothic chateau Richard Morris Hunt designed for Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt.

Truesdale’s taste, despite his posture as an impressionist painter and decadent, reflects the old-fashioned perspective of a Claude glass, and his sketching tour through Wisconsin suggests that his vision has, most certainly, been formed by books like Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes* (1879) and F. Hopkinson Smith’s *Gondola Days*.¹³ These travel books had taught American travelers to view European scenes as though they were framed statically as pictures—ruins, moss, rot, decay, chasms and gorges, the principal elements of the scenery. No wonder, then, that Truesdale found Chicago “so pitifully grotesque, grewsome [*sic*], appalling . . .,” that it had “so little taste” (WP, 73). He would prefer, he says, to return to the “villeggiatura at Frascati or Fiesole” or to indulge a taste for “wild ravines and gorges” (WP, 73). His one moment of aesthetic delight in American scenery comes when he can paint water colors of the “picturesque” and “inexhaustible . . . beauties of nature” (WP, 237). He flaunts tastes patently derived from conventions of the picturesque, and expresses them in transparently pretentious clichés.

But Fuller is not Truesdale. Though his early fantasy-travel books, *The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani* and *The Chatelaine of La Trinite*, might suggest he too indulged himself in the pleasures of the picturesque, Fuller has articulated Truesdale’s precious disgust with Chicago’s modernity so that he can explode it. Truesdale, no less than his mother, is seen as a victim of faulty vision who insists on viewing the city against a long since vanished pastoral ideal. Fuller satirizes his characters’ affectations to show that the problem with modern technology was to assimilate it into the aesthetic, not to vainly look for ways to expunge it. The city, he argued, in his newspaper criticism of the picturesque, should treat “new materials” honestly.¹⁴ If the Chicago landscape disclosed no glimpses of the ideal and framed no picturesque ruins, it still held a strange beauty and a power to evince the technological sublime.

In an opening scene of *With the Procession* Fuller expresses, through Truesdale’s ingenuous sister Rosy Marshall, a powerfully impressionistic response to the city at night: “The evening lights doubled and trebled—long rows of them appeared overhead at incalculable altitudes. The gongs of the cable cars clanged more and more imperiously as the crowds surged in great numbers round grip and trailer. The night life of the

town began to bestir itself, and little Rosy, from her conspicuous place, beamed with a bright intentness upon its motley spectacle. . . ." (WP, 9) From below, we see skyscrapers, or rather their lights "at incalculable altitudes," fixing a scale and perspective almost beyond imagination. If this is not—in Hart Crane's terms—"a surrender . . . to the sensations of urban life,"¹⁵ it is, in any case, a vivid realization of the new spatial form of the city. The surge of mechanical vitality and movement, despite the ambivalence of the clinching epithet "motley," produces a cinematic effect, and suggests that Fuller has, temporarily, surrendered to the sensations and beauty of the city.

By covertly comparing the city's skyscrapers and mechanized landscapes to phantom pastoral gardens and picture book Gothic, Fuller comes close to seeing the city as a place of wondrous possibility, a modern and man-made Arcadia. His parodic strategy counters, overwhelms, and finally demolishes the genteel platitudes he places in Truesdale's mouth. The cult of ideality with the pastoral ideal fall before his satire. The novelty of his urban aesthetics stand in bold outline when it is remembered that not until 1908 did the Ash Can school of painters first begin to give visual form to the American city. Fuller does not precisely anticipate their imagery, though he, like John Sloan and George Bellows (who in 1913 titled a painting "Cliff Dwellers"), sees the city as possessing a peculiar beauty heretofore ignored or derided. He, thus, annexes and assimilates into the realm of the aesthetic the vast reality of the modern city, impressing its form with his own vision.

III

What Fuller saw in Chicago fit few of the established literary forms, yet he did not turn away or betray his impressions. Waking from the dream that America was a pastoral garden, the late nineteenth century found that their world was really a mechanized and industrialized city. The city landscape that emerges in Fuller's novels, nevertheless, reflects what few American writers of the nineteenth century had grasped or made vivid. That is, the artist who took the city for a subject had to abandon or modify a set of aesthetic values and a mode of perception based on a pastoral ideal. Fuller acknowledged that the city stood as the anti-type of America's pastoral garden, and in confronting that face honestly freed himself to construct an aesthetic out of the forms and materials of the modern city.

The flight from the American city, in this half of the twentieth century, does not testify to the failure of Fuller's vision. What it means, among other things, is that Americans have felt alien in the city because they have seldom abandoned the values, the aesthetics and the sense of space rooted in the pastoral myth. Harmony with the city seems, for many, an impossibility, a surrender of freedom or a compromise with the forces and ugliness of a modern inferno. Americans have not yet found the image of the city that would symbolize man's place in the urban

environment; we have not created an urban ideal to replace the pastoral ideal. To return to the garden has seemed, for much of this century, a far more compelling aim than building an urban civilization.

Only lately have students of American urban life, such as Alan Trachtenberg in his *Brooklyn Bridge*, begun to recognize that the pastoral myth, in fact, disguises a process of urbanization.¹⁶ Man's transcendence of Nature—whether figured as a trek to the frontier or as the building of roads into the wilderness—makes for the inevitable extension of the city and the machine's annihilation of the pastoral landscape. Fuller, in parodying our vision of inexhaustible and unbounded Nature, disclosed that truth long ago.

University of Toledo

footnotes

1. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson: V, 1835-1837*, ed. Merton Sealts (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 372.
2. Henry Blake Fuller, "Municipal Art Substitute," *Chicago Evening Post*, 11 May 1901, 6.
3. Fuller, "New Study for the Clubs," *Chicago Evening Post*, 13 July 1901, 6.
4. Hart Crane, "Modern Poetry," in *The Complete Poems and Selected Letters of Hart Crane* (Garden City, N.Y., 1966), 261-62.
5. Fuller in a letter to William Dean Howells, as quoted by Bernard Bowron, *Henry Blake Fuller: A Critical Study*, unpublished dissertation (Harvard, 1948), 440.
6. Among Fuller's papers at the Newberry Library is one folder containing reviews of *The Cliff-Dwellers*. The passages below, which provide the sources for the language in my text, are representative of the genteel complaints found there: "There is almost everywhere a sense of power and almost everywhere a misuse of it, and something that reminds you of M. Zola's delight in what is loathsome and cruel."—anon., *The Times* (August 13, 1895).
"We are far from saying that any aspect of life should be untouched by the novelist; it is his privilege as an artist to select his own subject. But the writer who says, 'Lo! I will be realistic,' usually becomes trivial or merely disgusting. Life is not altogether sordid, however we look at it. . . . We are inclined to think that he [Fuller] had better stick to his chevaliers and chatelaines. . . ."—anon., Providence, R.I., *Daily Journal* (March 27, 1893).
7. "The Cliff-Dwellers," *The Critic*, XXIII (October 7, 1893), 221.
8. Howells, "The Cliff-Dwellers," *Harper's Bazaar*, XXVI (October 28, 1893), 883.
9. Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen, "The Cliff-Dwellers," *The Cosmopolitan*, XVI (January, 1894), 373-74.
10. Future references to both *The Cliff-Dwellers* (CD) and *With the Procession* (WP) will be given parenthetically in the text. I have used the Gregg Press facsimile reprint of *The Cliff-Dwellers* (Ridgewood, N.J., 1968); the University of Chicago Press reprint of *With the Procession* (Chicago, 1965).
11. The critic Montgomery Schuyler, in "Last Words about the Fair," *Architectural Record* (January-March, 1894), speaks of his age's taste for the "artificial infinite" in architecture, defining it in part as "an effect that depends greatly upon magnitude." Discussing the architecture of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, he links the desire for the "artificial infinite" to an American preference for "mere bigness." He finds, moreover, that "in Chicago, the citadel of the superlative degree, [bigness] counts for more, perhaps, than it counts for elsewhere in this country." I cite his comments to illustrate that architectural aesthetics in this period retained a notion of the sublime or infinite, secularized though it was.
The term "modern version of the sublime" is mine, but my indebtedness to William Empson's *Some Versions of the Pastoral* (Norfolk, Conn., n.d.) is self-evident.
12. Fuller, "New Study for the Clubs."
13. Willard Thorp, "Pilgrim's Return" in *Literary History of the United States*, ed. Robert Spiller et al. (New York, 1963), 832.
14. Fuller, "New Study For The Clubs."
15. Crane, "Modern Poetry."
16. Trachtenberg, *Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol* (New York, 1965), 20, says "Americans have always subscribed to Eden, and proceeded to transform it in the name of progress."

