
Article

The Oneida Community and the utility of liberal capitalism

Kevin Coffee 

Independent Scholar, P.O. Box 7273, Lowell, MA 01852 USA; kevin.coffee@museplan.com

How to Cite: Coffee, K. 'The Oneida Community and the utility of liberal capitalism.' *Radical Americas* 4, 1 (2019): 3. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.ra.2019.v4.1.003>.

Submission date: 25 December 2018; Acceptance date: 13 September 2019; Publication date: 21 November 2019

Peer review:

This article has been peer reviewed through the journal's standard double blind peer-review, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.

Copyright:

© 2019, Kevin Coffee. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY) 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>, which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited • DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.ra.2019.v4.1.003>.

Open access:

Radical Americas is a peer-reviewed open access journal.

Abstract

Historians studying the utopian Oneida Community have often located its demise in rising internal dissent and failing consensus among its members, with special emphasis on the personal jealousies and generational tensions that its practice of group marriage may have produced. Those studies step past the essential place of work and industry in communal life and especially the community's theology, which equated economic prosperity with Christian virtue. This essay reframes our understanding of the political economy of the Oneida Community, with specific attention to their last decade, and the social tensions stoked by their reliance upon market capitalism and waged labour. While acknowledging the internal dissent that accompanied the structural demise of the commune, the present study asks how such discord arose from business-centred theology within the social environment of competition and a prolonged economic depression. The Community's dependence upon the surrounding capitalist economy challenged their self-described 'Bible communism' and precipitated its demise.

Keywords: utopian socialism; industrial capitalism; industrial revolution; communitarianism

The Oneida Community (1848–80) was a communitarian experiment that styled itself after the early Christians portrayed in the New Testament. Community leaders measured their religious righteousness by their industrial efficiency and profitability. That metric repeatedly complicated their shared vision of good and evil, and that shared purpose was ultimately undermined by their inability to prosper within the turbulent post-US Civil War economy, especially the long depression that began in 1873. This essay describes contradictions that arose from Community leaders' liberal capitalist theology in tension with increasing financial and industrial concentration outside the Community and thereby explicates the political economy of its demise.

Nineteenth-century communes and other cooperative economic schemes were an episodic response to a growing capitalist society and the attendant growth of social dislocations, political dysfunctions and economic inequalities. Efforts to create alternative social organisation included self-sufficient extended families, grey market parallel economies and secessionist political movements. Those practical initiatives have prompted scholarly interest in the rationales for, and histories of, various intentional communities.

The industrial and financial processes that evolved throughout the nineteenth century produced tremendous societal imbalances and conflicts. Indeed, the long nineteenth century displays no extended period of social peace or harmony, either within or between polities. Wars of conquest, inter-imperial and civil wars, social revolutions and episodes of alternative social organisation describe capitalism's prolonged instability. During the formative years of capitalist industrialisation, when trans-Atlantic 'free trade' was just beginning to replace European mercantilism and mechanised labour was still new, the social restructuring within affected countries produced a flowering of dissent and of alternative social movements. Republicanism, universal suffrage and abolition of slavery are all products as much as drivers of that transformation, as are nascent concepts of communitarianism.

Within that garden of dissent, various shoots arose of what are now termed 'utopian' experiments. Robert Owen and Charles Fourier were prominent advocates of 'utopian' (versus 'scientific') socialism, but their adherents coexisted with a host of other communitarians, including various primitive Christians, whose settlements dotted the Americas.¹

Several historians surveying that landscape have assessed the practices of the Oneida Community in upstate New York and especially the religious beliefs, sexual practices and personal psychologies of its most literate members. Fewer are studies of the socio-economic relationships that gave rise to and enabled those beliefs and practices. Notable exceptions are Matthew Cooper's comparison of Shaker and Oneida communes, and Paul Johnson's examination of nineteenth-century millennialism – a social movement that touched many within the Oneida Community, including founders Erastus Hamilton and Charles Burt.²

Tracing relationships between modes of producing and modes of thought provides a critical framework for understanding the developmental arc of the Oneida experiment. Although their religious curiosity was galvanised by self-described prophet John Humphrey Noyes, they shared attitudes and understandings that they derived from a much wider matrix of practices and experiences, including those that they encountered in their dealings with neighbours, customers, suppliers and government. Their ensemble of social practices – cooperative labour, common property, group marriage, mutual criticism sessions – were as essential to their cohesion as was their trust in Noyes as the divine communicator of 'open intercourse with the Primitive Church'.³ Explicitly linking theology with political economy, Noyes and other leaders valorised economic success as a key indicator of moral probity and religious fitness. Such equivalency underscores the importance of exhuming the associated practices to understand how they unintentionally subverted the commune.

Previous historical comparisons

Frederick Engels faulted many of the early nineteenth-century autonomous cooperatives as attempts to build a 'kingdom of reason and eternal justice ... out of the human brain'.⁴ Tellingly, a variety of subsequent non-Marxist studies of the Oneida Community have located communal collapse along ideological fault lines that formed within their practice of group marriage, defined internal hierarchies, and corresponded to contested interpretations of Perfectionist theology.

Thus, Maren Lockwood Carden's extensive sociological study determined that 'without faith in Noyes's divine sanction, without a united belief in Perfectionism, and without complex marriage, Oneida lost its justification for existence', and Robert Carl Duncan interpreted 'increasing secularisation of the organisation [as having] undermined its founding religious coherence, but without providing an alternate ideology of social cohesion'.⁵ More recent scholarship has focused on divergent ways of thinking *per se*, as in Spencer Klaw finding causation in 'appeals of positivism, with its rejection of all knowledge not founded on science', and Ellen Wayland-Smith's determination that 'nothing less than a fundamental disagreement about how to define the scope and status of the self within the group' brought about communal collapse.⁶

Such analyses play off earlier official histories written by corporate chairman Pierrepont B. Noyes and historical fictionist Walter D. Edmonds, in which the commune was declared ultimately successful for its transformation into an explicitly capitalist operation: the tableware company Oneida Community Limited. More recently, that narrative has been recapitulated by Anthony Wonderly in his history of the group.⁷ Those theses neatly avoid the complex dynamics through which the utopian cooperative degenerated, and also cloak the economic difficulties of its corporate child. By glossing over key features of nineteenth-century liberal capitalism – and detaching economics, ideology and politics – such histories decontextualise the Oneida Community, particularly from the trans-Atlantic economy in which it operated.

Noyes's empirical metaphysics

John Humphrey Noyes styled himself as a supernatural guide to human agency in achieving an ideal, sinless, society. His theology drew upon some of the central precepts of British utilitarianism, particularly the equivalency of human virtue with human happiness, and of both with divine will.⁸ Noyes claimed to confer regularly with that divinity, and constructed an empirical metaphysics that directed communal practice. Noyesian Perfection was simultaneously considered a biologic trait conveyed across generations and a totalising system that could guide 'reconciliation with God, proceed to a restoration of true relations between the sexes, then to a reform of the industrial system, and end with victory over death'.⁹

Noyes's theology was elastic rather than rigid. The wage system that he decried as evil in the 1850s was redeemed as 'business communism' in the 1860s. 'Complex marriage', which Noyes had initially declared to be 'permanent and sacred', was suspended twice and then fully abandoned in the interest of conflict avoidance.¹⁰ Despite public pronouncements of gender equality, practice within the commune was conditioned by episodic assertions of adult male supremacy over women and minors. Practical inequalities produced various internal rifts. The subordinate position of minors within the cooperative regime is underscored by the fact that throughout the 1870s a fourth of the commune was younger than 21 years and excluded from decision-making (but not from labour).¹¹ Internal commune hierarchies were reinforced by the practice of sending select male youth to attend Yale and other colleges. That practice unintentionally introduced worldly thinking and fuelled further internal friction. Thus, founder Jonathan Burt's son Charles A. Burt 'became convinced that the practices, habits and the government of the Community needed reformation'.¹² Worldly perspectives also accompanied the commune's commercial and industrial activities. Members supervised the commune's animal traps, food preparation and silk-making operations, in which they hired and fired waged workers and contracted with suppliers. From a business office in New York City, members conducted purchasing and wholesale transactions with clients. Community salesmen criss-crossed North America.¹³

Ideological distinctions within the commune were not a late-stage development. Polemics responding to emergent positivism and to atheism were launched by elders John Herrick, Theodore Pitt, James Towner and, of course, J. H. Noyes himself.¹⁴ Internal proponents of unorthodoxy were branded as objectionable 'parties'. Commune leaders tried to compel compliance by invoking Noyes as sacramental authority and by dissecting non-conformist behaviour during mutual criticism sessions. Persistent dissenters eventually quit the commune, including at least 84 adults during the period 1855 to 1880. Those splits assumed such significance that, from 1875 on, all members were required to contractually indemnify the commune against any future claim to its property, including that which an adult might have brought with them when they joined. In its final year, Harriet Skinner identified no less than seven factions within the commune.¹⁵

While some of his contemporary communitarians decried capitalism as an evil to be overcome, Noyes decidedly did not. Free market capitalism was both foundational to the Community's daily survival and tied directly into the Community's belief system. The communal library of several thousand books covered a broad spectrum of contemporary thought, including 'all the leading Political Economists' such as Adam Smith, Thomas Malthus, David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill,¹⁶ as well as Charles Fourier and other social reformers. The *Oneida Circular*, and later the *American Socialist*, often published editorials and commentary that extolled liberal capitalism while inveighing against 'practical atheism and materialism'.¹⁷ The *Oneida Circular* carried a lengthy review of Mill's *Subjection of Women*, for example, and expressed gratitude for 'a philosopher like J. S. Mill agreeing with us'.¹⁸ Noyes's embrace of free market capitalism was also shared at nightly Community meetings and through their newspaper. The *Circular* reported internal discussions that valorised economic prosperity as a sign of righteous morality. Noyes himself described Jesus Christ as 'a thoroughly scientific man' who surely embraced nineteenth-century empiricism. George Washington Noyes described God as the 'great capitalist who dispenses profitable jobs'.¹⁹

A weak egalitarianism

Oneida Community leaders encouraged replication of Perfectionist communes elsewhere. But admission to their own commune was strictly limited by metrics of property, productive skill and religious conviction. That insularity did not save the Community from episodic derision for its 'shameful immoralities' and 'impure and shocking practices'.²⁰ Threats of legal action prompted Noyes to flee Vermont for New York in 1848, and the young Community suspended group marriage for several months in 1852 in fear of criminal prosecution.²¹ The US Civil War and its aftermath may have diverted social conservatives' attention during the 1860s, but by the late 1870s the commune again attracted scrutiny. A campaign by Presbyterian minister and Hamilton College professor John Mears was duly reported in the *New York Times*, which joined in railing against practices 'too obscene and revolting ... to admit of their publication in a respectable newspaper'.²² This time, Noyes fled to the relative safety of Ontario, Canada, from where he recommended that the commune officially abandon group marriage.²³

Stirpicultural unions of theologically elite members and the repeal of complex marriage undermined the Community's social structure and basis in shared property. In the 1840s, Noyes had denounced monogamy as a practice that subordinated women as property of their husbands, and that conflicted with the norms of heaven described in scripture.²⁴ Ending complex marriage exacerbated covetousness among members, reintroduced competition for spouses, and impoverished the losers. Prior to the abolition of group marriage, member encounters with private property and commodity exchange were rare and external phenomena. After abolition, those features became central to how commune members perceived of, and interacted with, each other. New social practices included auctioning communal furnishings to the highest bidders and insisting that female spouses be addressed as 'Mrs' and use their husband's surname.²⁵

Internal stratification had begun several years prior to 1878. It was manifest in vocational distinctions among members, in the subordinate status of youth, in the ranking of 'ascending fellowship' and in the selective breeding programme known as 'stirpiculture'. Genetic affinity with central leaders influenced social status and enabled managerial appointments. Residual egalitarianism was further undermined by the increasing priority assigned to commodity production and exchange, and the commune's essential dependence upon the waged labour of its employees.

The social composition of a nineteenth-century cooperative

The Oneida Community cooperative was formed by recapitulating the early Christian practice of extended family. In its first years, the commune declared itself to be 'at once a church, a state, a family, and a business association'.²⁶ In his study of nineteenth-century religious revivalism, Johnson situated millenarianism as a response to industrialisation and related socio-economic relationships. Johnson found the most fervent revivalists to be master workmen, manufacturers, journeyman craftsmen and farmers – a profile that describes most of the male members of the Oneida Community.²⁷ Congruently, Vickers

proposes that Noyes and company were driven ‘less [by] an urge to be free from the forces of social change than [the] wish to impose order on a world many saw as spinning out of control’.²⁸

The organic composition of these cooperatives also illustrates some of the socio-economic tensions arising from changing economic relationships in agriculture and industry, and especially the increasing importance of waged work for others. While in 1800 nearly 75 per cent of the economically productive activity in the US was agricultural, by 1860 that share had declined to 50 per cent. During the same period, the value of agricultural capital assets fell by half, while the value of industrial capital assets doubled, and the female waged workforce aged 16 and older doubled.²⁹ By 1850, waged labour accounted for the majority of the employment in the Northern states.³⁰ Wages oscillated alongside unemployment and through a succession of economic crises so that, in the north-eastern United States, real wages had increased only incrementally during the years 1821 to 1850.³¹ These social transformations were repellent to the subsistence farmers and self-taught artisans who comprised most communitarian experiments.³²

The industrial and banking economy that emerged out of the Civil War either subsumed small farmers in upstate New York or pushed them westward.³³ The war had institutionalised large-scale debt by businesses and government; debt financing now drove economic and civic development. Speculative debt inflated the railroad bubble that burst with the banking crash of 1872–3, further intensifying the transformation of agriculture from subsistence to production for distant markets. The rising industrial order also accelerated the commodification of work as labour power, with wages calculated as an input similar to raw materials and purchased subject to changing production requirements.³⁴

Mutual aid initiatives appealed to small producers dislocated by the changing economy and refusing to accept a new role as waged labourer. Such was certainly the case for founders of the Oneida Community. Indeed, a useful skill and Yankee heritage weighed favourably in member selection according to ‘the strictest application of the principal of selection’.³⁵ But failing as farmers, by the mid-1850s the Community turned to manufacturing for exchange. Noyes justified that turn by pronouncing business to be part of the communal religion that placed ‘everything for sale except the soul’.³⁶

The commune’s central management – ‘ascertained and recognised as chosen by God’ – consisted of a few founding men. In the 1860s, those managers were J. H. Noyes, George Cragin Sr, Jonathan Burt and E. H. Hamilton. From 1872, operational managers comprised a business board, which supervised manufacturing and domestic affairs such as housekeeping and food preparation. The business board’s finance committee kept accounts and controlled expenditures. Managers were charged with making a ‘clear, written account’ of annual sales and profits, and for proposing capital expenditures for the following year.³⁷

Although the board made planning decisions, it did not formulate a multi-year forward strategy. Instead, profitable opportunities were discovered through trial and error. Among various less-successful experiments were foundry and machine shop jobbing, carpet bag making and printing. The mass production of game traps grew from a handmade tool created by Sewell Newhouse. Thread manufacturing was chosen following the finding by John Miller and other peddlers that silk goods sold for high prices. After repeated failures with grains, the commune succeeded with fruit trees and vegetable gardens, the produce of which it then preserved and sold.³⁸

The 1873 financial collapse and subsequent depression accelerated capital concentration in America; more than 54,000 firms were bankrupted and their assets sold off for pennies on the dollar. The depression forced down wages, further impoverishing the working classes and intensifying the work of those still employed. During the depression, while overall industrial production fell 32 per cent and wages fell 50 per cent or more, the net value of goods produced increased 131 per cent.³⁹ Economic historians have argued convincingly that the post-Civil War economy animated new political alignments and ideologies. Public perception of the crash and depression engendered monetarist and other political activity among small-scale agriculturalists, rejuvenated the Democratic Party, and disrupted social reconstruction within the former slave states.⁴⁰

Arc of economic development

The Oneida Community – which had intentionally insinuated itself within the capitalist ‘world of Mammon’ – was greatly influenced by the post-war changes in the US economy.⁴¹ And while each of its operations engaged somewhat different production relationships, technologies and markets, together those operations describe the arc of the commune’s maturity and demise.

Manufacture of silk thread

The Oneida Community began importing raw silk in 1866 from Guangzhou, one of the five Chinese cities demanded as concessions by the British Empire at the close of the Opium War. Commune mechanics automated the several processes required to spin raw silk into a homogeneous thread suitable for machine sewing. This ‘machine twist’ was marketed to manufacturers, putting-out workers, and household producers who had adopted newly invented sewing machines. Of the thousands of Singer machines in use by 1866, six had been bought by the commune to stitch up carpet bags.⁴²

Confident in their manufacturing decisions, the Community commissioned a factory building alongside Sconodoa Creek, a mile north of their main compound in Oneida. Following the model of New England textile manufacturers, they hired scores of young women from nearby farming villages to work at the production of silk thread. Charles A. Cragin, a son of Community founders, was placed in charge of the silk works, where thread was spun, dyed, spooled and packaged for sale throughout North America. They expanded silk thread operations in 1869 to include their satellite site in Wallingford, Connecticut.⁴³

The commune’s silk profits were dependent upon keeping materials and wage costs below industry averages, as can be seen by comparing costs across the sector. In 1860, across 42 American silk factories, female workers received an average wage of \$2.88 per week. By 1870, the number of factories had grown to 86, with an average weekly wage of \$5.61. Ten years later, women’s wages in the sector were incrementally higher: \$6.35 for winders and \$4.96 for spoolers. Comparatively, in 1869, the Oneida Community’s ‘silk girls’, working 60 to 70 hours per week, were paid an average of \$3.14; after the 1873 crash, wages were reduced by 20 per cent.⁴⁴ The commune’s factory conditions were typical of the period: noisy, dusty and otherwise physically hazardous. The *Circular* reported that half of the *members* working in their carpentry shop had been injured by machinery; they did not track injuries to *hired* workers. During the summer months, the ‘little girls’ who cleaned silk were granted a 30-minute recess at 8:00 p.m. for bathing in the factory millpond.⁴⁵

A key market for finished silk goods was elites who bought garments and paid in cash. That customer base, combined with the end of wartime production, injected new investment in silk manufacturing and increased competition. Between 1860 and 1880, silk factories in New York state grew from just 3 to 151. Most of those were located near the transport hub of New York City with access to American and trans-Atlantic markets. Also influencing the sector were newly organised mail-order merchants, such as Montgomery Ward & Co., which made competing products ever more widely available.⁴⁶ The Community responded to increased competition by reducing its production costs. In addition to cutting wages, they sought out cheaper raw silk. During the long depression, while prices for Chinese silk dropped 40 per cent, the price of better quality Japanese raw silk fell even further, prompting the Community to change their source of raw material. The commune also attempted technical improvements in their manufacturing, enrolling factory supervisor Cragin in the Yale Scientific School, where he studied silk and silk manufacturing. The Oneida *Circular* serialised Cragin’s Yale thesis, demonstrating their attention to technical knowledge.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the commune’s marketing strategy of selling thread to homeworkers and to larger-scale producers was upended by the 1873–80 depression. In 1868, they shipped 125 lb (56.7 kg) of thread per week ‘to the firesides and sewing circles of the country’, but after the 1873 crash, and ‘fearing to accumulate a stock of goods on a falling market’, they cut back production. Further decline in 1875 prompted a complete and prolonged shutdown; by 1878, their silk factory was running at just half capacity.⁴⁸

Manufacture of prepared foods

Following the introduction of canned and bottled food in the early nineteenth century in Europe – to feed French and British armies – American subsistence farmers adopted the practice for home use and to occasionally trade their surplus produce. Expeditions west into the North American continent and process mechanisation spurred further development of a canning industry in America, with annual revenues that grew from \$1.1 million in 1860 to \$15.9 million by 1880.⁴⁹

Although the Oneida Community was never self-sufficient in grain production, it did succeed in cultivating fruit trees and vegetable gardens, and it began peddling canned produce in the 1850s. In 1866, the manager of its canning department, George E. Cragin – elder brother of Charles – was enrolled at Yale, where he encountered the work of Louis Pasteur and the nascent field of biochemistry. Drawing on his practical experience, Cragin wrote his thesis on the topic ‘Oxalic Acid in Rhubarb’. After graduation, he resumed supervision of the commune’s canning department and applied new science to that operation. The *Circular* subsequently published essays about nutrition, food preparation and Pasteur’s research, and the commune expanded its library collection in agronomy, biology and food science.⁵⁰

Community salesmen traversed the United States in search of volume customers and the *Circular* advertised their canned goods. During the late 1870s, they were selling tens of thousands of quarts to wholesalers in Chicago and San Francisco; one of their large volume customers was the posh Palmer House Hotel in Chicago. The commune was also a significant regional buyer of produce, so that in 1878 alone it bought and canned \$19,495 worth of fruit and vegetables from other farms in the region.⁵¹

Nonetheless, the depressed economy combined with already thin profit margins to reduce earnings from prepared food, a decline that was exacerbated by growing competition. In the post-war period, newly capitalised firms such as Armour & Co., Swift & Co., Libby, McNeil & Libby, and Campbell Soup easily out-produced regional suppliers such as the Oneida Community. In New York state alone, between 1860 and 1880 the prepared food sector expanded 670 per cent. Meanwhile, profits declined by 50 per cent to just \$152,593 on total revenue of \$2,379,816. Wages in the food sector also fell significantly, from an average of \$4.10 per week in 1860 to \$1.98 twenty years later.⁵²

Even before the depression, in 1868, and with regional sales share of about 5 per cent, the commune halted production, announcing that ‘the wear and tear in the height of the season was more than [they] could afford’.⁵³ After three years of continued decline in commune income, in 1872 the business committee decided to restart the prepared food operation, investing in new Pasteurising and refrigeration equipment. The Community also began a promotional campaign, printing display ads in the *Circular*, publishing a cookbook for canned foods, and renewing attempts to sell large volume to wholesale clients. This renewal was not successful, however, and after four seasons of still-marginal profits, commune managers once again shut down the operation, declaring that ‘although the amount of goods packed was considerably greater than in 1877, the receipts from sales are only about \$4,000 more’ and not sustainable.⁵⁴

Manufacture of game traps

As told in every popular history of the Oneida Community, its most significant manufacture was the Newhouse game trap, which evolved from a handmade tool invented by Sewall Newhouse before he joined the commune. Commune machinists automated trap production, and the commune’s trap sales grew from a few hundred units in 1851 to more than 300,000 traps in 1870.⁵⁵

Their factory building on Sconondoa Creek was originally conceived as a trap works. That capital investment, which took two years to complete, cost more than \$30,000 – a major sum at the height of the Civil War. After Erastus Hamilton failed to secure a loan from financier Gerrit Smith, J. H. Noyes published a prospectus in the *Circular* offering bonds at 6 per cent and pledging the commune’s real estate as collateral. With some difficulty, they found investors in New York City who – at 7 per cent – underwrote the expansion (Figure 1).⁵⁶

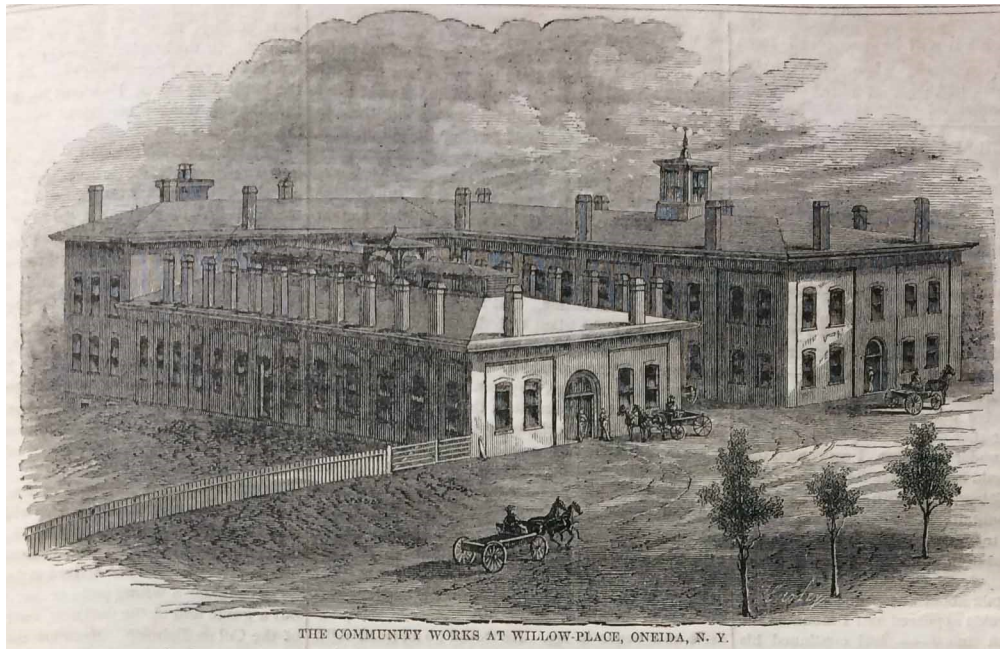


Figure 1 Oneida Community Willow Place factory. *The Circular*, 19 August 1867, 179. In the public domain.

Newhouse traps were sold by the dozen to hardware retailers, to farmers and to other users, including the Hudson's Bay Company. For several years, trap sales brought substantial revenues to the Community: from \$82,899 on sales of 275,152 traps in 1864, to \$114,841.20 on 337,437 units in 1869. But because they did not track profits by department, it is difficult to distil net returns from those sales. What is known is that total communal earnings – across all operations – declined after the Civil War, even before the onset of the long depression, from \$55,100 in 1868 to \$30,920 in 1869.⁵⁷

Materials and wages were substantial inputs for trap production: in 1863, wage costs were \$13,200 and materials costs were approximately \$21,000. By 1868, wage costs had been reduced to \$10,123 – an average of \$2.21 per week per worker. Further complicating revenues was the cyclic demand for traps. While rodents were year-round problems for a farmer, fur trapping was most active during autumn and winter. As 1872 began, a rise in fur prices combined with an anticipated rise in iron and steel prices served to trigger an uptick in orders, but the 1873 banking collapse impacted customers' ability to pay, including on past due invoices. Worried about declining revenue and overstocked materials, the commune cut its trap production by 20 per cent.⁵⁸ In its efforts to cut costs further, the commune increased use of unwaged labour by commune children. In 1878, those children produced 182,111 trap chains, representing potential revenue of about \$15,000. But while that unwaged labour lowered wage costs, it could not in itself improve revenues.⁵⁹

Finding blessings in prosperity and damnation in failure

Early on, in October 1855, commune managers had identified the utility of liberal capitalism in an essay entitled 'First Principle of Business':

It is to be counted a first principle, that the special blessing of God upon any business is the grand element of success. There are, undoubtedly, a variety of elements that come in to contribute to success, as skill in doing business, tact in managing the financial concerns of it, the advantage of profitable connections, the patronage of men and institutions, etc. ... the blessing of God is the special and main element concerned in prosperity.⁶⁰

Citing divine favour as both cause and result of economic prosperity, Noyesian theology equated devotional commitment with such prosperity. Nonetheless, the commune's financial accounting practices were rather imprecise. Annual inventories were not made until 1857, unwaged labour was overlooked

or irregularly tracked, and end-of-year balance statements were inconsistent from one year to the next. The commune’s net earnings, drawn from their 1871 *Handbook* and year-end business meeting minutes, illustrate widely variable results:

1857	\$5,470.11
1858	\$1,763.60
1859	\$10,278.78
1860	\$15,611.03
1861	\$5,877.89
1862	\$9,859.78
1863	\$44,755.30
1864	\$61,382.62
1865	\$11,382.81
1866	\$13,198.74
1871	≈\$30,500.00
1875	\$6,110.81
1876	\$7,830.33
1877	−\$32,393.38
1878	\$3,852.30
1879	\$40,045.24.61

These figures do not capture the full picture of communal earnings. Most of the profit reported for 1871, for example, was actually expensed on debt service and equipment maintenance. Unwaged labour, debt service and maintenance costs were often omitted from profit/loss calculations. As their balance sheets show, earnings fluctuated while debt increased, even as the nominal valuation of buildings and other assets also increased.⁶²

Commune leaders must have been disorientated by the 1873 banking collapse and the extended depression that followed, and which J. H. Noyes attributed to ‘the evil which most affects not only the Community, but all mankind’ – religious doubt. Outwardly, they blamed dishonest bankers, joined the growing public sentiment against finance as the major culprit, and editorialised that the economic depression ‘sets us to anticipating a time when financial management shall be based on inspiration, trust in God, and cash payment’.⁶³ But at each year’s end they consistently voted to maintain or incur significant debt, which grew through the end of the decade to \$60,000.

Accumulating inequality

Economic uncertainty influenced the thinking of many commune members, not just managers. Founding principles of cooperative religious spirit, labour and property were expected to protect the group from the ‘evil’ instability of the outside world. Indeed, the commune’s protective environment explains why several younger members who left soon sought readmission. The difficulty of making a life on one’s own was especially acute for those with no prior experience in the outside world. Nonetheless, strained feelings of internal inequity on the part of members were not assuaged by appeals by leaders to remain calm in the face of mounting economic difficulty.⁶⁴ Member diaries document how elder members dominated – ideologically and physically – commune youth and orchestrated interpersonal relations. The faithful Harriet Worden recorded in her March 1875 diary ‘there are some people here who do not recognize that Frank [Wayland-Smith], as well as the rest of the young people, are no longer children’. In his own 5 February 1879 journal entry, Francis Wayland-Smith wrote ‘there is very little of the old-fashioned “mutual criticism” done in these days. Occasionally a few persons are called together to exhort or reprove some one or more of the younger members, but that is about all’. Wayland-Smith also recounted a complaint heard from young Charles A. Burt, that ‘Mr. Noyes had prostituted the finances of the community’. Reporting such dissent, Harriet Skinner – whose own son Joseph had already quit the commune – wrote to her brother John H. Noyes that ‘the young folks, especially the boys, are in the most awful state of disrespect’ but that ‘we are getting up a machine to bring them to order’. Thus,

the quasi-militaristic Order of Obedience and Faithfulness was organised to stimulate good habits via compulsion and punishment.⁶⁵

Some saw the growing inequality of a social order that was built upon the stratified ‘ascending fellowship’ of elders whose privilege included directing interpersonal relationships and selective reproduction. Others recognised the contradiction of maintaining a utopia based on the labour of non-members. Indeed, not only was the commune dependent upon waged employees for its manufactures, hired labour also washed its laundry, prepared its meals, cleaned its latrines, and stoked the furnaces of the commune’s massive Italianate residence.⁶⁶ Fundamental damage was done by the 1879 abandonment of complex marriage, which, for most members, was not simply polyamorous sex; it fostered gender equality and defined communal property relationships. In 1849, Noyes had railed against the ‘prison door’ of traditional, monogamous marriage between women and men, but in September 1879, he urged abandoning complex marriage to circumvent rising public opinion against it. The reinstatement of patrilineal marriage meant competition among men for brides, and among women for husbands. It also meant that female parents assumed principal caregiver responsibility for children, including the children of partners to whom they were not married.⁶⁷

The increasing use of hired labour throughout the 1860s and early 1870s transformed Community leaders into capitalists and, consequently, their shared mentality morphed in mimicry of prominent capitalists. Echoing mainstream newspapers, the *Oneida Circular* and *American Socialist* disparaged labour organisation and collective actions as threats to private property. Editorials attacked ‘rationalism, positivism, practical atheism and materialism’; denounced the ‘violent class of abolitionists’; and disavowed strikes, the Paris Commune, and ‘any attempt to take from one man or class of men by force any part of that property to which the laws of the land entitle them’. Immigrants and the rural poor were disdained as ‘tramps’.⁶⁸

Although rebranded in 1876 as a forum for their unique interpretation of American socialism, their newspaper garnered just 316 subscribers and ceased publication in 1879.⁶⁹ By that time, and for several years prior, commune leaders were expressing kindred spirit with some of the most notorious capitalists of the time, who were lauded as ‘example[s] of what might be called Communism in business’. In line with elite concepts of utilitarianism and improvement, J. H. Noyes, E. H. Hamilton, J. Burt, E. S. Burnham and other leaders identified profit as the key moral organiser and measure of divine favour.⁷⁰

In his study of nineteenth-century millennialism, Johnson argued that the Second Great Awakening resonated most among small-scale entrepreneurs. The working men and women who also participated in those religious revivals adopted behaviours and thinking that suited potential employers. As the Oneida Community built a cooperative association of insiders, it also built networks of employees, clients and customers linked to the commune by commodity exchange. Indeed, in its first years the Oneida Community had composed a hymn – sung at the dedication of their residence – that promised ‘we’ll battle with the wiles/ of the dark world of Mammon/ and return with its spoils/ to the home of our dear ones’.⁷¹

That mission of liberal capitalist exchange was promoted throughout the lifetime of the commune. In 1868, J. H. Noyes directed ‘that the whole body of the Community should study finance ... so that each member will be a financier for himself’. His brother, George Washington Noyes argued that ‘what is thus claimed as a right in the station between man and man is an inestimable gift and privilege, looking toward God as the great employer ... a great capitalist who dispenses profitable jobs’. Likewise, Edwin Burnham extolled the ‘Communism in business’ of the Vanderbilt family and other prominent elites ‘in pursuit of a common object’, namely profits. Alfred Barron proposed that his readers ‘consider how far happiness is dependent upon the possession of wealth, and then, how far the production of great wealth is dependent on organized capital’ derived from ‘men in bundles’.⁷²

Noyes described how his interpretation of ‘socialism’ meant liberal corporate capitalism:

If you are poor, by combination you can become rich. Agreement can make its own fortune, and need not wait to be endowed. The blessing of heaven is upon it, and it can work its way from the lowest poverty to all the wealth that Fourier taught his disciples to beg from capitalists.⁷³

The equations of virtue with prosperity and of theology with business, meant that reliance upon hired labour, dependence upon markets and accumulation of wealth defined Noyesian Perfection. But the

shared experience of persistent economic decline undermined that logic for many commune members and set the stage for the group's ultimate dissolution.

Endgame

The 20 February 1879 *American Socialist* printed an editorial defending the biblically inspired communal society:

Historically, the Communal relation of the Oneida system grew out of the spiritual relation which its original members conceived they had come into toward Christ ... theoretically, and as far as it has been carried out practically, this Communism has lifted both men and women in the Community out of bondage to one another. Instead of any such subjection of women to man as pertains to monogamy and polygamy, multiplied by the hundred-fold in the Community relation, woman in the Oneida Community is made free. ... Her person is sacred; her support is guaranteed.⁷⁴

Six months later, the commune adopted patrilineal monogamy.⁷⁵

Meeting minutes throughout their final two years document a series of discussions and decisions intended to cope with their tenuous financial position. Business managers had calculated 'net profits' of \$40,048 for 1879 but neglected to account for debt service, taxes and maintenance costs. Ignoring their declining fortunes, the board voted at its 28 January 1880 meeting to apportion \$288,000 in non-existent funds for capital improvements and another \$20,000 to pay creditors. Indeed, on 30 January, the business board acknowledged that the commune had 'scarcely paid its way for the last five years', but could not agree on the amount of additional debt to incur to cover the coming year.⁷⁶ Proposals were explored to sell off or lease commune property in Oneida. Management entertained an offer from a competitor, Meriden Britannia Co., to buy the commune's tableware operation in Wallingford, Connecticut. In July, Theodore Noyes warned they were 'drifting toward bankruptcy [and] must do something soon or the Community would have to break up'. The younger Noyes recommended that every able-bodied member be put to work four unwaged hours each day, but receive wages for anything additional. Alfred Barron complained privately to Erastus Hamilton that he did not want to pay one cent in wages to members, but would spend \$100,000 to expel 'the parasite element'.⁷⁷

On 18 July 1880, the board met to form a commission to propose a long-term structural solution. Board secretary Francis Wayland-Smith provided the following record:

1. In regard to leadership and government. We have no government worthy of the name. The Council is a failure. The young people do just as they like.
2. We have no religious unity, which is the cornerstone of communistic success.
3. Our business credit is threatened by our divisions and internal dissensions. Our businesses are so expanded that we have been obliged to borrow about \$60,000 of the banks.
4. Our own members are, many of them, no longer industrious. They see no object in toiling while the earnings and profits are controlled by others.
5. We are no longer so economical as formerly and the present government is powerless.
6. The young people are no longer under proper control.⁷⁸

The other shoe dropped on 20 August 1880, when that commission proposed to create a limited liability joint stock company – Oneida Community Limited – from the communal assets, with shares sold to current commune members according to a calculus determined solely by the commission. In so doing, the group formally shed any further pretence to communalism in favour of operating as a private capitalist enterprise.⁷⁹ That plan purposefully shielded the managers from personal liability for bank loans and was implemented on 10 November, accepting member subscriptions at 10 per cent of the par value of their shares. Managers became directors and the largest shareholders of the new corporation. Others were less compensated, such as Harriet Worden, the unmarried mother of three Community children, who received 115 shares and worked the remainder of her years in the Oneida Community Limited factory. Jonathan and Lorinda Burt, whose farm comprised the founding real property along Oneida Creek, received 175 and 155 shares, respectively. Trap inventor Sewell Newhouse, who had never patented his device and who

voted against devolution, received no shares but his daughter was issued 87. Several managers fared very well: Myron Kinsley received 1,241 shares, Erastus Hamilton received 750, and Alfred Barron received 676 shares. The legal transformation completed the stratification process begun years earlier.⁸⁰

Subsumed by capitalism

While the empirical metaphysical explanation is that the Oneida Community's economic distress resulted from their fall from grace, a data-driven hypothesis points to the cascading effects of industrial concentration, widespread debt financing and the episodic foundering of such fictitious capital. Certainly, the Oneida Community's principal industries did not incur above average production costs – and certainly not above average labour costs – nor were they technically deficient. Arguably, the commune's market viability, such as it was, was fuelled by frugality and ingenuity. But their dependence upon globe-spanning capitalism ensured their concomitant inability to escape its destructive effects. Commune business managers responded to declining profits as would any typical capitalists – cutting wages, sourcing less expensive raw materials and implementing inventory controls – but such measures could not address the systemic weaknesses of the enveloping economy, nor could such measures restore profitability to their specific enterprise. The commune's declining economic fortunes fuelled internal disagreement; commune leaders' persistent inability to right the ship amid a confusing economic storm stood in dramatic contrast with prior claims to divine guidance. Internal communal dissention was exacerbated by external social conservatives, who lashed out at the Community for its 'open hostility to the foundations of social order'.⁸¹

Many of those who formed or joined the Oneida Community in its first years sought to escape the chaos of capitalist society and its periodic economic panics – such as they may have experienced in 1837 and 1847 and would witness in 1857. Joiners were attracted to John Humphrey Noyes's charismatic profession of the alternative economy based on an extended cooperative family, the validity of which was taken from readings of the New Testament. The Noyesians sought to build a regime of reason and eternal justice out of their own theology, which explicitly linked religious fidelity with economic profit. Viewed through that lens, the commune's economic decline complicated the distinction between good and evil, between perfect and imperfect souls. In the face of diminishing economic fortune, a theocracy that equated blessedness with wealth turned in on itself. Fellowship dissolved, pitting member against member.

The Oneida Community's commitment to commodity production for market exchange was also fundamentally at odds with its communitarian structural experiment, so that one feature would ultimately overcome the other. Acting within the framework of mid-nineteenth-century liberal capitalism, the commune was challenged by the systemic transformations taking place in the wider trans-Atlantic world. The array of small-scale producers that characterised the American economy prior to the Civil War was quickly being eclipsed by a juggernaut of mechanisation, fuelled by windfall wartime profits and the rise of banking capital, which engendered new and much different capital formations. None of those changes aligned well with an intentional community attempting to model itself after Paul and other early Christians. Faced with growing economic uncertainty, commune managers amplified their affirmation of capitalism. The foundational practice of complex property relationships was abandoned in favour of nuclear family property ownership and shares of stock. Former equals were now waged employees of the new corporation or, if their status merited, salaried managers. Former communitarians could continue to live in the common 'mansion house' so long as they paid a rent proportional to the size of their rooms.⁸² One other fundamentally telling result was that within ten years, less than half of the original population remained in Oneida. The joint-stock formation itself continued to flounder into the next century, 'prey to unscrupulous profiteers' and the business world of the 1890s. Frugal restructuring alone could not shelter, much less invigorate, small-scale capitalists in the age of trusts and monopolies.⁸³

Utopia then

Noyes and his co-founders were products of the social relationships being undermined by greater societal forces then emerging in America: industrialisation, urban concentration and waged labour off the homestead. Even those contemporary communitarians not preoccupied with modelling the imagined lives of early Christians formed their world views by looking backward rather than forward. Aversion

fuelled the shopkeeper's millennialism. The spontaneous but class-grounded choice to ameliorate societal dysfunction by pooling resources with like-minded producers was constrained by ideologies that could not break with market exchange *per se*.

The effects of capitalist markets upon the Oneida Community exacerbated and fertilised whatever seeds of theological and political discord were present among its members. And, since commune managers increasingly conflated theological beliefs with business outcomes, poor market performance triggered an internal crisis of confidence.

We see in the Noyesian commune a microcosm of some of the same constraints that were encountered on larger scales in twentieth-century communal experiments. The Oneida Community's failure to isolate itself from the destructive effects of the surrounding world of Mammon assists in problematising successive alternative socio-economic constructs in the age of mature capitalism. In particular, the Oneida Community experiment predicts the future failure of other attempts by various twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century alternative economies to peacefully coexist with insatiable global capital. That the Oneida experiment did not meet forceful opposition so characteristic of the period is perhaps indicative of the commune's stature as a minor social threat within the growth stage through which the encircling industrial capitalist society was developing. A similar attempt at coexistence today would certainly diverge from the structural form of the Oneida Community, but would almost as surely arrive at a comparable destination.

Declarations and conflict of interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest with this work.

Notes

¹ Robert S. Fogarty, *All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860–1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 227–33. Fogarty has catalogued 141 intentional communities operating in the United States from 1860 to 1914.

² Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815–1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978); Matthew Cooper, 'Relations of Modes of Production in Nineteenth Century America: The Shakers and Oneida', *Ethnology* 26 (1987): 1–16.

³ John H. Noyes, *Mutual Criticism* (Oneida, NY: Office of the American Socialist, 1876), 15.

⁴ Frederick Engels, 'Socialism: Utopian and Scientific', in *Selected Works, Volume 3* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970), 117–9.

⁵ Maren Lockwood Carden, *Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 89, 104, 111; Robert Carl Duncan, 'Descent from Utopia' (PhD diss., Syracuse University, 1971), 153, 165.

⁶ Spencer Klaw, *Without Sin: The Life and Death of the Oneida Community* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 4; Ellen Wayland-Smith, *Oneida: From Free Love Utopia to the Well-Set Table* (New York: Picador, 2016), 167.

⁷ Pierrepont B. Noyes, *A Goodly Heritage* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958); Walter D. Edmonds, *The First Hundred Years* (Oneida, NY: Oneida Ltd, 1948); Anthony Wonderley, *Oneida Utopia: A Community Searching for Human Happiness and Prosperity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017).

⁸ John Gay, 'Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue or Morality', in *British Moralists, Being Selections from Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Lewis Amherst Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 849–87; John Hill Burton, 'Introduction to the Study of Bentham's Works', in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham, Vol. 1*, ed. John Bowring (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843), 19.

⁹ John H. Noyes, 'Bible Communism', in *The Putney Community*, ed. George W. Noyes (Oneida, NY: no publisher given, 1931), 119.

¹⁰ John H. Noyes, 'God's Method of Business', *Oneida Circular*, 4 November 1873, 353; Edwin S. Burnham, 'Business Communism', *Oneida Circular*, 6 January 1873, 14; Anon. 'Special Notice', *Oneida Circular*, 6 October 1873, 321.

- ¹¹ Duncan, 'Descent from Utopia', 165; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 10 November 1873, 365; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 12 December 1878, 397; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 23 October 1879, 341.
- ¹² Court of Appeals of the State of New York, 84, *Burt v Oneida Community Ltd.* (New York: Abraham Stimson, 1892), 11. See also: Jessie Catherine Kinsley and Jessie Kinsley Rich, *Lasting Spring: Jessie Catherine Kinsley, Daughter of the Oneida Community* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1983), 41–2; 'The Lower Deep', *Oneida Circular*, 15 December 1873, 404.
- ¹³ Pierrepont B. Noyes, *My Father's House: An Oneida Boyhood* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1937), 85, 97, 113–8; George Wallingford Noyes and Lawrence Foster, *Free Love in Utopia: John Humphrey Noyes and the Origin of the Oneida Community* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 197–206; Constance Noyes Robertson, *Oneida Community: An Autobiography, 1851–1876* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1970), 218–64.
- ¹⁴ James B. Herrick, 'Religion as a Civilizing Force', *Oneida Circular*, 15 January 1872, 20; Theodore Pitt, 'To Arms!', *Oneida Circular*, 30 June 1873, 212–3; James Towner, 'Experience with Positivism', *Oneida Circular*, 14 July 1873, 227–8.
- ¹⁵ 'Receipts and settlements with seceders', Box 19, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; 'August 18, 1875 Covenant of the Oneida Community', Box 19, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; Constance Noyes Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup, 1876–1881* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 251.
- ¹⁶ 'Our Books', *Oneida Circular*, 8 February 1869, 375.
- ¹⁷ Pitt, 'To Arms!', 212–3.
- ¹⁸ 'The Subjection of Women, IV', *Oneida Circular*, 12 February 1872, 50–1.
- ¹⁹ John H. Noyes, 'Watching', *Circular*, 6 April 1868, 17; George Washington Noyes, 'Government Jobs', *Oneida Circular*, 29 July 1872, 242.
- ²⁰ Robert Allerton Parker, *A Yankee Saint: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community* (Hamden CT: Archon, 1973), 268.
- ²¹ Robertson, *Oneida Community*, 266–7; George Wallingford Noyes and Lawrence Foster, *Free Love in Utopia*, xxxiv.
- ²² 'The Oneida Community', *Oneida Circular*, 8 February 1875, 43; 'Oneida Perfectionists', *New York Times*, 10 August 1878.
- ²³ Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup*, 153–7; Klaw, *Without Sin*, 251–2.
- ²⁴ John H. Noyes, *History of American Socialisms* (New York: Hillary House, 1961), 623–9.
- ²⁵ Carden, *Oneida*, 117–8; Tirzah Miller and Robert S. Fogarty, *Desire and Duty at Oneida: Tirzah Miller's Intimate Memoir* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 190. See also Ellen Wayland-Smith, *Oneida*, 171–3; Klaw, *Without Sin*, 272–5.
- ²⁶ Noyes and Foster, *Free Love in Utopia*, 23.
- ²⁷ Johnson, *Shopkeeper's Millennium*, 137; 'Our Muck Heap', *Circular*, 26 October 1868, 252.
- ²⁸ Jason Vickers. "'That Deep Kind of Discipline of Spirit': Freedom, Power, Family, Marriage, and Sexuality in the Story of John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community', *American Nineteenth Century History* 14 (2013): 1–26.
- ²⁹ Donald R. Adams, 'The Standard of Living During American Industrialisation: Evidence from the Brandywine Region, 1800–1860', *The Journal of Economic History* 42 (1982): 903–17; Robert E. Gallman and John Joseph Wallis, 'Introduction', in *American Economic Growth and Standards of Living Before the Civil War*, eds. Robert E. Gallman and John Joseph Wallis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 4; Thomas Weiss, 'U.S. Labor Force Estimates', in *American Economic Growth*, eds. Gallman and Wallis, 22, 43, 48.
- ³⁰ John Ashworth, 'Toward a Bourgeois Revolution? Explaining the American Civil War', *Historical Materialism* 19 (2011): 195.
- ³¹ Robert A. Margo, 'Wages and Prices during the Antebellum Period: A Survey and New Evidence', in *American Economic Growth*, eds. Gallman and Wallis, 184–5.

- ³² Percy W. Bidwell, 'The Agricultural Revolution in New England', *American Historical Review* 26 (July 1921): 683–702; James A. Henretta, 'Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America', *The William and Mary Quarterly* 35 (1978): 12–4; Michael Merrill, 'Cash is Good to Eat: Self-Sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States', *Radical History Review* 13 (1977): 42–71; Richard Schneirov, 'Thoughts on Periodizing the Gilded Age: Capital Accumulation, Society, and Politics, 1873–1898', *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 5 (2006): 189–224.
- ³³ Paul W. Gates, 'Agricultural Change in New York State', *New York History* 50 (1969): 115–41; Adam Ward Rome, 'American Farmers as Entrepreneurs, 1870–1900', *Agricultural History* 56 (1982): 37–49; Richard Lyman Bushman, 'Markets and Composite Farms in Early America', *The William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (1998): 362–7.
- ³⁴ C.F. Adams, 'The Currency Debate of 1873–4', *The North American Review* 119 (1874): 111–65; Donald R. Adams, 'Wage Rates in the Early National Period: Philadelphia, 1785–1830', *The Journal of Economic History* 28 (1968): 404–26; Jeremy Atack, Fred Bateman and Robert A. Margo, 'Skill Intensity and Rising Wage Dispersion in Nineteenth-Century American Manufacturing', *The Journal of Economic History* 64 (2004): 172–92; Percy W. Bidwell, 'The Agricultural Revolution in New England', *The American Historical Review* 26 (1921): 683–702; Lance E. Davis, 'The Investment Market, 1870–1914: The Evolution of a National Market', *The Journal of Economic History* 25 (1965): 355–99.
- ³⁵ 'Where to find one's cousins', *Oneida Circular*, 7 March 1870, 402; Carden, *Oneida*, 37–40; John B. Teeple, *The Oneida Family: Genealogy of a 19th Century Perfectionist Commune* (Oneida, NY: Oneida Community Historical Committee, 1985), 1–83; William Hinds, 'An Applicant Answered', *Oneida Circular*, 30 September 1972, 316. The commune's initial male members included 43 mechanics, farmers or craftsmen; 9 other small-scale proprietors; 12 professionals, including ministers.
- ³⁶ William Hinds, 'Answers to Correspondents', *Oneida Circular*, 8 July 1872, 224; Noyes, *My Father's House*, 14; Robertson, *Oneida Community*, 236.
- ³⁷ 'Principles of the Association', *Circular*, 28 December 1868, 322; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 29 January 1872, 37; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 9 December 1872, 397; 'Business Board Oct. 1875 – Dec. 1880', Box 23, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- ³⁸ The Community's business initiatives were a regular topic in its newsletter: cf. 'An Oneida Journal', *Circular*, 6 April 1868, 20; 'Our Wallingford Letter', *Circular*, 4 May 1868, 52; 'Correspondence, On the Wing', *Circular*, 29 June 1868, 117; 'The Mop Wringer', *Circular*, 16 November 1868, 275; 'Letter from William Lawson', *Circular*, 4 January 1869, 335; 'Community Journal', *Circular*, 22 February 1869, 390; 'Community Journal', *Circular*, 9 August 1869, 164.
- ³⁹ Samuel Bernstein, 'American Labor in the Long Depression, 1873–1878', *Science & Society* 20 (1956): 60–1.
- ⁴⁰ Nicolas Barreyre, 'The Politics of Economic Crisis: The Panic of 1873, the End of Reconstruction, and the Realignment of American Politics', *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 10 (2011): 403–23; Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 242–311; Schneirov, 'Periodizing the Gilded Age', 196–207.
- ⁴¹ Cooper, 'Relations of Modes of Production', 11.
- ⁴² 'Our Wallingford Letter', 52; Advertisement, *American Socialist*, 21 November 1878, 376.
- ⁴³ 'Our Wallingford Letter', 52; 'Community Journal', *Circular*, 22 November 1869, 285.
- ⁴⁴ Eighth Census: Manufactures of the United States in 1860 (Washington, DC: Department of Interior, 1864), xciv–ciii; Ninth Census: Statistics of Wealth and Industry of the United States (Washington, DC: Department of Interior, 1872), 404, 624; Tenth Census: Report on the Silk Manufacturing Industry of the United States (Washington, DC: Department of Interior, 1883), 25; 'Financial Statement for 1869', *Circular*, 10 January 1870, 339; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 27 October 1873, 349; 'Women's Work and Wages', *Circular*, 20 April 1868, 38–9. 'A woman, after seven months experience in silk-making, will earn from seventy-five cents to a dollar a day'.
- ⁴⁵ 'Buzz-saws', *Oneida Circular*, 16 August 1869, 174; 'Community Journal', *Circular*, 15 June 1868, 100.

- ⁴⁶ Eighth Census: Manufactures of the United States in 1860, xcv; Tenth Census: Report on the Silk Industry, 25; 'Montgomery Ward & Co. Catalogue No. 13' (Chicago: Montgomery Ward, 1875), 29.
- ⁴⁷ W. C. Wyckoff, *Eighth Annual Report of Silk Association of America* (New York: Silk Association of America, 1880), 74–5, 83; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 24 October 1878, 341; Charles A. Cragin, 'Silk Manufacture in the United States, II', *Oneida Circular*, 28 July 1873, 246; Charles A. Cragin, 'Silk Manufacture in the United States, III', *Oneida Circular*, 11 August 1873, 262.
- ⁴⁸ 'Our Wallingford Letter', 52; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 27 October 1873, 349; 'Home Items', *Oneida Circular*, 28 June 1875, 204; 'Community at Home', *American Socialist Extra*, 10 August 1878, 1.
- ⁴⁹ Martin Brown and Peter Phillips, 'Craft Labor and Mechanization in Nineteenth-Century American Canning', *The Journal of Economic History* 46 (1986): 743–56; *Eighth Census: Manufactures of the United States*, 684, 698; *Tenth Census: Statistics of Manufacturers*, 40.
- ⁵⁰ Wendy E. Chmielewski, 'Strawberries and Cream: Food, Sex, and Gender at the Oneida Community', in *Eating in Eden: Food and American Utopias*, eds. Etta M. Madden and Martha L. Finch (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 131–2; 'Preserved Fruits and Vegetables', *Oneida Circular*, 23 September 1872, 312; Carden, *Oneida*, 39; Noyes and Foster, *Free Love in Utopia*, 51; 'Community Children', *Circular*, 28 September 1868, 220; 'Scientific Notes', *Oneida Circular*, 29 July 1872, 247; 'Value of Scientific Knowledge', *Oneida Circular*, 3 March 1873, 79.
- ⁵¹ 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 29 August 1878, 277; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 13 February 1879, 53; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 11 September 1879, 293; Henry G. Allen, 'Statistics of a Single Department', *American Socialist*, 20 February 1879, 63; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 10 March 1879, 7.
- ⁵² *Eighth Census*, 417; *Tenth Census*, 156; 'Fruit Preserving – Beginning and Growth', *Oneida Circular*, 16 September 1872, 302; 'Agricultural Growth', *Oneida Circular*, 23 September 1872, 312.
- ⁵³ 'Financial Report for 1868', *Circular*, 11 January 1869, 343.
- ⁵⁴ 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 17 June 1872, 196; 'Refrigerators for Fruit Men', *Oneida Circular*, 14 April 1873, 127–8; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 8 July 1872, 221; 'Preserved Fruits and Vegetables', *Oneida Circular*, 23 September 1872, 312; 'OC Cook-Book Just Published', *Oneida Circular*, 15 September 1873, 304; 'Fruits, Vegetables and Jellies', *Oneida Circular*, 19 May 1873, 168; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 18 September 1879, 301; Allen, 'Statistics of a Single Department', 63.
- ⁵⁵ 'Community Journal', *Circular*, 6 September 1869, 196; 'Financial Statement for 1869', *Circular*, 10 January 1870, 339.
- ⁵⁶ 'Things at Oneida', *Circular*, 2 May 1864, 52; 'Working Community', *Circular*, 18 September 1865; 'E. H. Hamilton to Gerrit Smith, Feb. 23, 1865', Box 21, Gerrit Smith Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; John H. Noyes, 'Financial Statement No. 2', *Circular*, 20 February 1865, 388.
- ⁵⁷ 'Financial Report for 1868', *Circular*, 11 January 1869, 341–3; 'Financial Statement for 1869', *Circular*, 10 January 1870, 339–40.
- ⁵⁸ 'The Trap Business', *Circular*, 27 June 1864, 113–4; James M. Swank, *Statistical Abstract. A Collection of Statistics Relating to Iron and Steel* (Philadelphia, PA: American Iron and Steel Association, 1888), 18; Noyes, 'Financial Statement No. 2', 388; 'Financial Report for 1868', *Circular*, 11 January 1869, 341–3; 'Financial Statement for 1869', *Circular*, 10 January 1870, 339–40; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 11 March 1872, 85; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 15 April 1872, 124–5; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 26 August 1872, 276; 'Rats and Traps', *Oneida Circular*, 8 September 1873, 295; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 20 October 1873, 341; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 27 October 1873, 349.
- ⁵⁹ 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 28 November 1878, 381; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 6 February 1879, 45. Trap chains sold at \$1.00 per dozen.
- ⁶⁰ Robertson, *Oneida Community*, 220–1. See also: Jeremy Bentham, 'Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation', in *Works of Jeremy Bentham*, ed. John Bowring (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843), 1–154.

- ⁶¹ *Handbook of Oneida Community, No. 2* (Oneida, NY: Oneida Community, 1871), 215; 'O.C. Journal, Jan. 30, 1880', Box 19, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; 'Financial History', *Circular*, 9 January 1865, 340; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 12 February 1872, 53.
- ⁶² 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 12 February 1872, 53; Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup*, 11–2.
- ⁶³ 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 10 November 1873, 366.
- ⁶⁴ Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup*, 24–31; Constance Noyes Robertson, *Oneida Community Profiles* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1977), 63.
- ⁶⁵ *Burt v Oneida Community Limited*, 45–115; Tirzah Miller and Robert S. Fogarty, *Desire and Duty*, 53–77; Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup*, 38–9, 91, 94–5, 136–7; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 23 October 1879, 341.
- ⁶⁶ 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 27 February 1879, 69; 'Community Journal', *Oneida Circular*, 24 June 1872, 205.
- ⁶⁷ John Humphrey Noyes and George Wallingford Noyes, *John Humphrey Noyes, The Putney Community* (Oneida, NY: no publisher given, 1931), 118; 'Reason of the Change', *American Socialist*, 4 September 1879, 282; Miller and Fogarty, *Desire and Duty*, 166–90. Klaw, *Without Sin*, 254–8.
- ⁶⁸ Cooper, 'Relations of Modes of Production', 10–1; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 19 September 1878, 301; 'Review Notes', *American Socialist*, 5 December 1878, 388; Pitt, 'To Arms!', 213; Herrick, 'Religion as a Civilizing Force', 20; John H. Noyes, 'Bible a Banner of Reform', *Oneida Circular*, 1 January 1872, 1; 'Community Items', *American Socialist*, 5 September 1878, 285.
- ⁶⁹ 'Prospectus of a New Weekly', *Oneida Circular*, 9 March 1876, 73; 'F. Wayland-Smith Meeting Notes, Feb. 1, 1879', Box 76, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- ⁷⁰ John H. Noyes, 'God's Method of Business', *Oneida Circular*, 4 November 1873, 353; Edwin S. Burnham, 'Business Communism', *Oneida Circular*, 6 January 1873, 14.
- ⁷¹ Johnson, *Shopkeeper's Millennium*, 137–8; 'Opening of Community Hall', *Circular*, 26 June 1862, 77.
- ⁷² John H. Noyes, 'Finance', *Circular*, 30 March 1868, 10; George Washington Noyes, 'Government Jobs', *Oneida Circular*, 29 July 1872, 242; Edwin Burnham, 'Business Communism', 14; Alfred Barron, 'Souls in Bundles', *Oneida Circular*, 6 October 1873, 324.
- ⁷³ Noyes, *History of American Socialisms*, 671–2.
- ⁷⁴ 'Evil to Him Who Evil Thinks', *American Socialist*, 20 February 1879, 63.
- ⁷⁵ 'The Community's New Departure', *American Socialist*, 4 September 1879, 282–3; 'Complex Marriage and Oneida Communism', *American Socialist*, 4 September 1879, 284.
- ⁷⁶ 'O.C. Journal, Jan. 28, 1880'; 'Business Board Minutes, March 7, 1880', Box 23, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; 'O.C. Journal, Jan. 30, 1880'.
- ⁷⁷ 'Business Meeting, Jan. 18, 1880', Box 23, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; 'Business Meeting, Feb. 4, 1880', Box 23, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup*, 280–3.
- ⁷⁸ Robertson, *Oneida Community*, 289–90.
- ⁷⁹ 'Agreement to Divide and Organize, September 1, 1880', Box 20, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- ⁸⁰ *Burt v Oneida Community Limited*, 149–65; 'Ledger Showing Settlement, Nov.–Dec. 1880', Box 20, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- ⁸¹ 'The Oneida Community', *Oneida Circular*, 8 February 1875, 43.
- ⁸² 'Outline of the Joint Stock Plan of Settlement, Aug. 20, 1880', Box 19, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries; '1880 Agreement to Divide and Reorganize: Right to Inhabit Dwellings', Box 20, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- ⁸³ Carden, *Oneida*, 123, 127.

References

- '1880 Agreement to Divide and Reorganize: Right to Inhabit Dwellings'. Box 20, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- Adams, Charles Francis. 'The Currency Debate of 1873-4'. *The North American Review* 119 (1874): 111-65.
- Adams, Donald R. 'Wage Rates in the Early National Period: Philadelphia, 1785-1830'. *The Journal of Economic History* 28 (1968): 404-26. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Adams, Donald R. 'The Standard of Living During American Industrialization: Evidence from the Brandywine Region, 1800-1860'. *The Journal of Economic History* 42 (1982): 903-17. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Advertisement. *American Socialist*, 21 November 1878: 376.
- 'Agreement to Divide and Organize, September 1, 1880'. Box 20, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'Agricultural Growth'. *Oneida Circular*, 23 September 1872: 312.
- Allen, Henry G. 'Statistics of a Single Department'. *American Socialist*, 20 February 1879: 63.
- Anon. 'Special Notice'. *Oneida Circular*, 6 October 1873: 321.
- Ashworth, John. 'Toward a Bourgeois Revolution? Explaining the American Civil War'. *Historical Materialism* 19 (2011): 193-205. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Attack, Jeremy, Fred Bateman, and Robert A. Margo. 'Skill Intensity and Rising Wage Dispersion in Nineteenth-Century American Manufacturing'. *The Journal of Economic History* 64 (2004): 172-92. [[CrossRef](#)]
- 'August 18, 1875 Covenant of the Oneida Community'. Box 19, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- Barreyre, Nicolas. 'The Politics of Economic Crisis: The Panic of 1873, the End of Reconstruction, and the Realignment of American Politics'. *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 10 (2011): 403-23. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Barron, Alfred. 'Souls in Bundles'. *Oneida Circular*, 6 October 1873: 324.
- Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014.
- Bentham, Jeremy. 'Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation'. In *Works of Jeremy Bentham, Vol. 1*, edited by John Bowring, 1-154. Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843.
- Bernstein, Samuel. 'American Labor in the Long Depression, 1873-1878'. *Science & Society* 20 (1956): 59-83.
- Bidwell, Percy W. 'The Agricultural Revolution in New England'. *American Historical Review* 26 (July 1921): 683-702. [[CrossRef](#)]
- 'Book-Keeping in the Community'. *Circular*, 10 January 1870: 341-2.
- Brown, Martin, and Peter Phillips. 'Craft Labor and Mechanization in Nineteenth-Century American Canning'. *The Journal of Economic History* 46 (1986): 743-56. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Burnham, Edwin S. 'Business Communism'. *Oneida Circular*, 6 January 1873: 14.
- Burton, John Hill. 'Introduction to the Study of Bentham's Works'. In *The Works of Jeremy Bentham, Vol. 1*, edited by John Bowring, 5-83. Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843.
- Bushman, Richard Lyman. 'Markets and Composite Farms in Early America'. *The William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (1998): 351-74. [[CrossRef](#)]
- 'Business Board Minutes, March 7, 1880'. Box 23, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'Business Board Oct. 1875 - Dec. 1880'. Box 23, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'Business Meeting, Jan. 18, 1880'. Box 23, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'Business Meeting, Feb. 4, 1880'. Box 23, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'Buzz-saws'. *Oneida Circular*, 16 August 1869: 174.

- Carden, Maren Lockwood. *Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*. Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969.
- Chmielewski, Wendy E. 'Strawberries and Cream: Food, Sex, and Gender at the Oneida Community'. In *Eating in Eden: Food and American Utopias*, edited by Etta M. Madden and Martha L. Finch, 125–42. Lincoln NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2008.
- 'Community at Home'. *American Socialist Extra*, 10 August 1878: 1.
- 'Community Children'. *Circular*, 28 September 1868: 220.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 29 August 1878: 277.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 5 September 1878: 285.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 19 September 1878: 301.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 24 October 1878: 341.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 28 November 1878: 381.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 12 December 1878: 397.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 6 February 1879: 45.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 13 February 1879: 53.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 27 February 1879: 69.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 10 March 1879: 7.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 11 September 1879: 293.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 18 September 1879: 301.
- 'Community Items'. *American Socialist*, 23 October 1879: 341.
- 'Community Journal'. *Circular*, 15 June 1868: 100.
- 'Community Journal'. *Circular*, 22 February 1869: 390.
- 'Community Journal'. *Circular*, 9 August 1869: 164.
- 'Community Journal'. *Circular*, 6 September 1869: 196.
- 'Community Journal'. *Circular*, 22 November 1869: 285.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 29 January 1872: 37.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 12 February 1872: 53.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 11 March 1872: 85.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 15 April 1872: 124–5.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 17 June 1872: 196.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 24 June 1872: 205.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 8 July 1872: 221.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 26 August 1872: 276.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 9 December 1872: 397.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 20 October 1873: 341.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 27 October 1873: 349.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 10 November 1873: 365.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 27 October 1873: 349.
- 'Community Journal'. *Oneida Circular*, 10 November 1873: 366.
- 'The Community's New Departure'. *American Socialist*, 4 September 1879: 282–3.
- 'Complex Marriage and Oneida Communism'. *American Socialist*, 4 September 1879: 284.
- Cooper, Matthew. 'Relations of Modes of Production in Nineteenth Century America: The Shakers and Oneida'. *Ethnology* 26 (1987): 1–16. [[CrossRef](#)]
- 'Correspondence, On the Wing'. *Circular*, 29 June 1868: 117.
- Court of Appeals of the State of New York, 84, *Burt v Oneida Community Ltd*. New York: Abraham Stimson, 1892.
- Cragin, Charles A. 'Silk Manufacture in the United States, II'. *Oneida Circular*, 28 July 1873: 246.
- Cragin, Charles A. 'Silk Manufacture in the United States, III'. *Oneida Circular*, 11 August 1873: 262.
- Davis, Lance E. 'The Investment Market, 1870–1914: The Evolution of a National Market'. *The Journal of Economic History* 25 (1965): 355–99. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Duncan, Robert Carl. 'Descent from Utopia'. PhD diss., Syracuse University, 1971.

- Edmonds, Walter D. *The First Hundred Years*. Oneida, NY: Oneida Ltd, 1948.
- Eighth Census: Manufactures of the United States in 1860*. Washington, DC: Department of Interior, 1864.
- Engels, Frederick. 'Socialism: Utopian and Scientific'. In *Selected Works, Volume 3*, 95–151. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970.
- 'Evil to Him Who Evil Thinks'. *American Socialist*, 20 February 1879: 63.
- 'Financial History'. *Circular*, 9 January 1865: 340.
- 'Financial Report for 1868'. *Circular*, 11 January 1869: 341–3.
- 'Financial Statement for 1869'. *Circular*, 10 January 1870: 339.
- Fogarty, Robert S. *All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860–1914*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.
- 'Fruit Preserving – Beginning and Growth'. *Oneida Circular*, 16 September 1872: 302.
- 'Fruits, Vegetables and Jellies'. *Oneida Circular*, 19 May 1873: 168.
- Gallman, Robert E. and John Joseph Wallis, 'Introduction'. In *American Economic Growth and Standards of Living before the Civil War*, edited by Robert E. Gallman and John Joseph Wallis, 1–18. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Gates, Paul W. 'Agricultural Change in New York State'. *New York History* 50 (1969): 115–41.
- Gay, John. 'Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue or Morality'. In *British Moralists, Being Selections from Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Lewis Amherst Selby-Bigge, 849–7. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897.
- 'E.H. Hamilton to Gerrit Smith, Feb. 23, 1865'. Box 21, Gerrit Smith Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- Handbook of Oneida Community, No. 2*. Oneida, NY: Oneida Community, 1871.
- Henretta, James A. 'Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America'. *The William and Mary Quarterly* 35 (1978): 3–32. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Herrick, James B. 'Religion as a Civilizing Force'. *Oneida Circular*, 15 January 1872: 20.
- Hinds, William. 'An Applicant Answered'. *Oneida Circular*, 30 September 1872: 316.
- Hinds, William. 'Answers to Correspondents'. *Oneida Circular*, 8 July 1872: 224.
- 'Home Items'. *Oneida Circular*, 28 June 1875: 204.
- Johnson, Paul E. *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815–1837*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978.
- Kinsley, Jessie Catherine, and Jessie Kinsley Rich. *Lasting Spring: Jessie Catherine Kinsley, Daughter of the Oneida Community*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1983.
- Klaw, Spencer. *Without Sin: The Life and Death of the Oneida Community*. New York: Penguin Books, 1993.
- 'Ledger Showing Settlement, Nov.–Dec. 1880'. Box 20, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'Letter from William Lawson'. *Circular*, 4 January 1869: 335.
- 'The Lower Deep'. *Oneida Circular*, 15 December 1873: 404.
- Margo, Robert A. 'Wages and Prices during the Antebellum Period: A Survey and New Evidence'. In *American Economic Growth and Standards of Living before the Civil War*, edited by Robert E. Gallman and John Joseph Wallis, 173–216. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Merrill, Michael. 'Cash is Good to Eat: Self-Sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States'. *Radical History Review* 13 (1977): 42–71. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Miller, Tirzah, and Robert S. Fogarty. *Desire and Duty at Oneida: Tirzah Miller's Intimate Memoir*. Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2000.
- 'Montgomery Ward & Co. Catalogue No. 13'. Chicago: Montgomery Ward, 1875.
- 'The Mop Wringer'. *Circular*, 16 November 1868: 275.
- 'The News'. *Oneida Circular*, 3 March 1873: 80.
- Ninth Census: Statistics of Wealth and Industry of the United States*. Washington, DC: Department of Interior, 1872.
- Noyes, George Washington. 'Government Jobs'. *Oneida Circular*, 29 July 1872: 242.

- Noyes, George Wallingford, and Lawrence Foster. *Free Love in Utopia: John Humphrey Noyes and the Origin of the Oneida Community*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. 'Bible a Banner of Reform'. *Oneida Circular*, 1 January 1872: 1.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. 'Bible Communism'. In *John Humphrey Noyes, The Putney Community*, edited by George Wallingford Noyes, 116–22. Oneida, NY: no publisher given, 1931.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. 'Finance'. *Circular*, 30 March 1868: 10.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. 'Financial Statement No. 2'. *Circular*, 20 February 1865: 388.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. 'God's Method of Business'. *Oneida Circular*, 4 November 1873: 353.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. *History of American Socialisms*. New York: Hillary House, 1961.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. *Mutual Criticism*. Oneida, NY: Office of the American Socialist, 1876.
- Noyes, John Humphrey. 'Watching'. *Circular*, 6 April 1868: 17.
- Noyes, John Humphrey, and George Wallingford Noyes. *John Humphrey Noyes, The Putney Community*. Oneida, NY, 1931.
- Noyes, Pierrepont B. *A Goodly Heritage*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958.
- Noyes, Pierrepont B. *My Father's House: An Oneida Boyhood*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1937.
- 'OC Cook-Book Just Published'. *Oneida Circular*, 15 September 1873: 304.
- 'O.C. Journal, Jan. 28, 1880'. Box 19, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'O.C. Journal, Jan. 30, 1880'. Box 19, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'The Oneida Community'. *Oneida Circular*, 8 February 1875: 43.
- 'An Oneida Journal'. *Circular*, 6 April 1868: 20.
- 'Oneida Perfectionists'. *New York Times*, 10 August 1878.
- 'Opening of Community Hall'. *Circular*, 26 June 1862: 77.
- 'Our Books'. *Oneida Circular*, 8 February 1869: 375.
- 'Our Muck Heap'. *Circular*, 26 October 1868: 252.
- 'Our Wallingford Letter'. *Circular*, 4 May 1868: 52.
- 'Outline of the Joint Stock Plan of Settlement, Aug. 20, 1880'. Box 19, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- Parker, Robert Allerton. *A Yankee Saint: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community*. Hamden CT: Archon, 1973.
- Pitt, Theodore. 'To Arms!'. *Oneida Circular*, 30 June 1873: 212–3.
- 'Preserved Fruits and Vegetables'. *Oneida Circular*, 23 September 1872: 312.
- 'Principles of the Association'. *Circular*, 28 December 1868: 322.
- 'Prospectus of a New Weekly'. *Oneida Circular*, 9 March 1876: 73.
- 'Rats and Traps'. *Oneida Circular*, 8 September 1873: 295.
- 'Reason of the Change'. *American Socialist*, 4 September 1879: 282.
- 'Receipts and Settlements with Seceders'. Box 19, Oneida Community Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- 'Refrigerators for Fruit Men'. *Oneida Circular*, 14 April 1873: 127–8.
- 'Review Notes'. *American Socialist*, 5 December 1878: 388.
- Robertson, Constance Noyes. *Oneida Community: An Autobiography, 1851–1876*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1970.
- Robertson, Constance Noyes. *Oneida Community: The Breakup, 1876–1881*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1972.
- Robertson, Constance Noyes. *Oneida Community Profiles*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1977.
- Rome, Adam Ward. 'American Farmers as Entrepreneurs, 1870–1900'. *Agricultural History* 56 (1982): 37–49.
- Schneirov, Richard. 'Thoughts on Periodizing the Gilded Age: Capital Accumulation, Society, and Politics, 1873–1898'. *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 5 (2006): 189–224.
- 'Scientific Notes'. *Oneida Circular*, 29 July 1872: 247.

- 'The Subjection of Women, IV'. *Oneida Circular*, 12 February 1872: 50–1.
- Swank, James M. *Statistical Abstract: A Collection of Statistics Relating to Iron and Steel*. Philadelphia PA: American Iron and Steel Association, 1888.
- Teepie, John B. *The Oneida Family: Genealogy of a 19th Century Perfectionist Commune*. Oneida, NY: Oneida Community Historical Committee, 1985.
- Tenth Census: Report on the Silk Manufacturing Industry of the United States*. Washington, DC: Department of Interior, 1883
- Tenth Census: Statistics of Manufacturers*. Washington, DC: Department of Interior, 1883.
- 'Things at Oneida'. *Circular*, 2 May 1864: 52.
- Towner, James. 'Experience with Positivism'. *Oneida Circular*, 14 July 1873: 227–8.
- 'The Trap Business'. *Circular*, 27 June 1864: 113–4.
- 'Value of Scientific Knowledge'. *Oneida Circular*, 3 March 1873: 79.
- Vickers, Jason. "'That Deep Kind of Discipline of Spirit': Freedom, Power, Family, Marriage, and Sexuality in the Story of John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community'. *American Nineteenth Century History* 14 (2013): 1–26. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Wayland-Smith, Ellen. *Oneida: From Free Love Utopia to the Well-Set Table*. New York: Picador, 2016.
- 'F. Wayland-Smith Meeting Notes, Feb. 1, 1879'. Box 76, Oneida Community Collections, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.
- Weiss, Thomas. 'U.S. Labor Force Estimates'. In *American Economic Growth and Standards of Living Before the Civil War*, edited by Robert E. Gallman and John J. Wallis, 19–78. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- 'Where to find one's cousins'. *Oneida Circular*, 7 March 1870: 402.
- 'Women's Work and Wages'. *Circular*, 20 April 1868: 38–9.
- Wonderley, Anthony. *Oneida Utopia: A Community Searching for Human Happiness and Prosperity*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017.
- 'Working Community'. *Circular*, 18 September 1865: cover page.
- Wyckoff, W. C. *Eighth Annual Report of Silk Association of America*. New York: Silk Association of America, 1880.