



Cities on a Hill

Frances FitzGerald

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"We must consider that we shall be A City Upon a Hill, the eyes of all people upon us," John Winthrop told his Pilgrim community crossing the Atlantic to found the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Four centuries later, Americans are still building Cities Upon a Hill.

In *Cities on a Hill* Pulitzer Prize-winner Frances FitzGerald explores this often eccentric, sometimes prophetic inclination in America. With characteristic wit and insight she examines four radically different communities -- a fundamentalist church, a guru-inspired commune, a Sunbelt retirement city, and a gay activist community -- all embodying this visionary drive to shake the past and build anew.

Frances FitzGerald here gives eloquent voice and definition to a quintessentially American impulse. It is a resonant work of literary imagination and journalistic precision.

Cities on a Hill Details

Date : Published November 15th 1987 by Simon Schuster (first published 1986)

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Author : Frances FitzGerald

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From Reader Review Cities on a Hill for online ebook

Margie says

I've just re-read this book for the second or third time. In addition to having a great (though certainly not exhaustive) history of The Castro, this book examines community on a number of levels. Well-written, well-researched, and interesting to read.

Vicky Pinpin-Feinstein says

I first read this book back in the mid-1980s when I was a graduate student and it was required reading for one of my classes. I knew back then that someday I will read it again and read it I did. The second time around is no less satisfying. Fitzgerald has all the gifts required of a journalist and a writer. She communities she explored, observed, studied and then wrote about really provided an exploration of visionary communities vis-a-vis the American Dream. And for those who are not native born Americans, this book fulfills that yearning to learn about American culture and communities in far more subtle but profound ways, so different for how one would learn them in a civics class. I also read it this time not just for her journalistic technique but for her writing style. It would be interesting to find out what happened to these communities at present, excluding of course the demise of the Rajneesapuram community.

Tiffany says

When I was 18 this was one of the first non-fiction books I read for pleasure. How did I find this? Was it that I had read an article by Ms. Fitzgerald in Rolling Stone? Who knows.

It was a freaking page-turner! The section that discussed the Rashneesh Puram in Oregon was so fantastic I still remember much of it. She is such a smooth writer you don't have to be exceptionally smart or academic to enjoy it.

Kathleen says

A fascinating account of four groups in the US; each of which tries of be a community banding together binding that which they have in common. Though somewhat dated, Fitzgerald writes with a unique style. My favorite chapter was Castro Street. 3.5 stars

Emanuella says

Cults of all shapes and sizes! Who woulda thought a book about cults could be so boring. It had a really academic style.

Julian says

I read this book a long long time ago. All I can remember is that it's very good.

It is perhaps the best description of the “fall of Rajneeshpuram” that I have read.

FrankO says

Interesting, insightful depictions of communities in the in the 1970's and 80's. Particular good depictions of The Castro district in San Francisco and Rajneeshpuram in Oregon. The author formulates opinions that may have some bias, but I found myself generally in agreement with her. I have some friends who spent time at Rajneeshpuram - they clearly had a different experience than the overall chaos/insanity that Sheela and her gang generated.
