

Public Abstract

First Name:Mary

Middle Name:McPherson

Last Name:Davis

Adviser's First Name:Nancy

Adviser's Last Name:West

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

Graduation Term:WS 2007

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Title:Feminist Applepieville: Architecture as Social Reform in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Fiction

Charlotte Perkins Gilman used her fiction to supplement, or "flesh-out," her theories on the necessity for women's economic independence and emancipation from householdwork. Women's place, she believed, was alongside men in making society peaceful, productive, and egalitarian. All domestic work would thereon be performed as a professionalized, commercialized service. This move would give both dignity to these laborious chores, and provide incomes for women who were previously dependent on their male family members. The redesign of the home and neighborhood was of primary importance in realizing this societal transformation. Thoughtful architecture and urban planning would create not only the stage for this new society, but the society itself.