

AMUSEMENT PARKS -  
A RELEVANT FORM OF PUBLIC RECREATION

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At every point in history there has been something which the enterprising American businessman could capitalize on, from the Puritan work ethic, the prudishness of the Victorian era, and the new industrial workers' quest for self education, to the increased nobility and the separation of home, work, and recreation created by the acceleration of the capitalist economy and the creation of the interstate highway system.

A few forms of commercial recreation have been dealt with in this thesis, concentrating on the development of amusement parks, from the first picnic parks built by the traction companies and others in order to increase the use of their particular means of transportation through the development of traditional amusement parks which we see today on the edges of metropolitan areas struggling against the forces of rising property prices and declining business, to the advent of Disneyland and the beginning of a new era in the history of amusement parks - the theme parks.

Disney World in Florida, being the ultimate in this new development has been analysed in depth, showing the degree of commercialism, racism, sexism, and imperialism in the theme parks, which mirrors the U.S. society at large.

The Swedish example of the Peoples Park has been used in terms of their political motivation, where the industrial workers themselves created their own amusement parks, contrary to the purely commercial motivation of the American parks.

Tivoli in Copenhagen was used to exemplify an integrated environment in the heart of a large city, catering to a wide variety of user groups. This stands in strong contrast to the American theme parks located hundreds of miles away from metropolitan areas and catering almost entirely to the middle class.

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## PREFACE

The background to my interest in amusement parks, aside from visiting them frequently, began when studying the Revere Beach amusement park in Revere, Massachusetts, for a design studio conducted by professor Tunney Lee, in the Fall of 1972. This one-time thriving amusement park was in a state of utter decay, for reasons similar to those which led to the decline of most of these establishments throughout the country.

In looking into the possibilities of restoring this valuable source of amusement for the groups of society which seem to appreciate them ( the lower class and the working class), it became clear that these parks were struggling against extremely powerful enemies, such as rising property prices and class segregation (attempts to keep the "riff-raff out).

My interest in the fate of Revere Beach amusement park led to further research into the historical development of amusement parks. Billboard, established in 1884 as a publication for the amusement park business (it is now called Amusement Business, and is mainly devoted to the record industry) provided an excellent indication of what the state of the business was at any particular time in history.

A business it was indeed, and how it developed into big business, I discovered later. It led me to recall the phenomenon of People's Park in Sweden, which had been one of the most frequent sources of amusement for me throughout my life. The People's Parks had been so ordinary to me, that I never had thought about how unique they were in providing amusements for the working class in particular.

During a visit in Sweden in the Summer of 1973, I studied a few of the People's Parks in the vicinity of Stockholm, in terms of what activities they provided, who the users were, how the parks were used, and the location of the parks in the urban context.

A wealth of information in form of publications, reports and pamphlets was supplied to me by the People's Parks Central Organization (Folkparkernas Centralorganisation) in Stockholm. Their source material enabled me to present a more thorough analysis of historical development, organization, and finances. The study resulted in a report on the People's Parks presented to professor Tunney Lee in the Spring of 1975. His guidance has been invaluable to me throughout this project.

By the time I finished the People's Parks study, my interest in amusement parks was even greater, and it became apparent to me that the development of amusement parks mirrored the values of the society at large. As a thesis project it seemed an intriguing venture to develop that idea further. The phenomenon of the American amusement park was put into a socio-economical framework, in order to present a critique of the commercial nature of amusements in the U.S.

There were many side issues to be dealt with, because many of the amusements existing in the amusement parks either existed or originated in other forms of public amusements. The world's fair was one of these side issues. However, the world's fairs are a separate phenomenon, developed for a different reason.

By visiting Florida and Disney World in January, 1976, my ideas were further developed on the issues I had been thinking about. The new theme parks could



indeed be looked upon as "ideal life styles" of the American middle class, their fantasies being stereotyped and capitalized on by large corporations.

The specialization of amusements, and the segregation both in terms of classes, races, and sexes which is present in the U.S. parks and in the U.S. society as a whole, made me recollect Tivoli in Copenhagen, which stands in strong rebuttal to the U.S. examples. Tivoli had been my favorite amusement park since my childhood, and it seemed to me a perfect example of a diverse and integrated environment.

The Swedish example of the People's Parks was used in this thesis to illustrate the different motivations in Sweden and in the U.S. of providing amusements for the workers. In Sweden there was a political motivation, while in the U.S. the motivation was purely commercial. In using these Scandinavian examples, I did not present a thorough socio-economical analysis of these countries, but only used them to illustrate some points.

BrittMari Wilund

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The amount of leisure time available to people today is more than twice that of society a hundred years ago. As part of the modern industrial society, leisure can be defined as time beyond the existence level (eating and sleeping) and the subsistence level (work).<sup>1</sup> With the industrial revolution, a distinct difference between work and leisure developed. For the industrial worker and for today's white collar worker as well, work became the means by which leisure could be enjoyed as an end. At the same time a change in the family structure took place, especially in the urban communities. This meant that the extended family of the rural or the small business oriented urban society was replaced by a nuclear type family structure. Work was no longer something that was shared by the family members, with the result that leisure time came to have great importance as the time which the family could spend together.

As the American capitalist system and technology developed further, increased automation and specialization resulted. The working pace became too exhausting for a person to withstand the 12 - 14 hour workday. The work efficiency went down, and as a matter of economy, a certain amount of leisure time was found to be necessary for peak performance of the workers. In addition the workers started to organize themselves into labor unions, and to demand shorter hours. As the number of working hours decreased, leisure spending increased 1,000 percent between 1909 and 1950, and has grown to be a major part of the economy.<sup>2</sup> In the pre-industrial society leisure time was mostly spent in the home. With the growing use of advertising and marketing, industry has determined our leisure consumption, by conditioning us to consume leisure activities in the same way as we consume commodities.

The government's attitude towards leisure can be illustrated by the example of the National Parks Service. It grew out of a conservation program with the task of saving exceptional peices of natural scenery from exploitation. This is a worthy cause, but has resulted in "nature museums," highly programmed, and ruled by an organization which is stiff and inflexible. The National Parks are definitely serving a recreational, educational and conservational purpose, but the lower classes are little represented as a user group. The local governments make attempts to provide parks and recreation in the cities, but there is not enough space and money available for that purpose. Real estate interests have historically taken precedence over people's need for open space. The local authorities' aspiration to create wholesome recreation for urban dwellers turns easily into the creation of boring spaces, which sometimes results in their destruction through vandalism. The architects, landscape architects and planners have invented formulas for open space requirements, but these professionals are easily manipulated by the system, and they are still only serving as advisors to politicians and big business interests. Their ideas of recreation are almost as wholesome as the government's, with provision of little beyond grass, benches, trees and childrens' playgrounds. Many community projects have been carried out by young, idealistic architects and landscape architects, by designing and building more creative and exiting playgrounds and parks, but many of these projects have turned into mudfields in a short time, because of the lack of maintenance, a problem which is seldom dealt with in a realistic way.

There is a need for danger (or the illusion of danger) and excitement present in all human beings, which cannot be satisfied by the provision of even the most creative and well designed and maintained city parks. This need for dan-

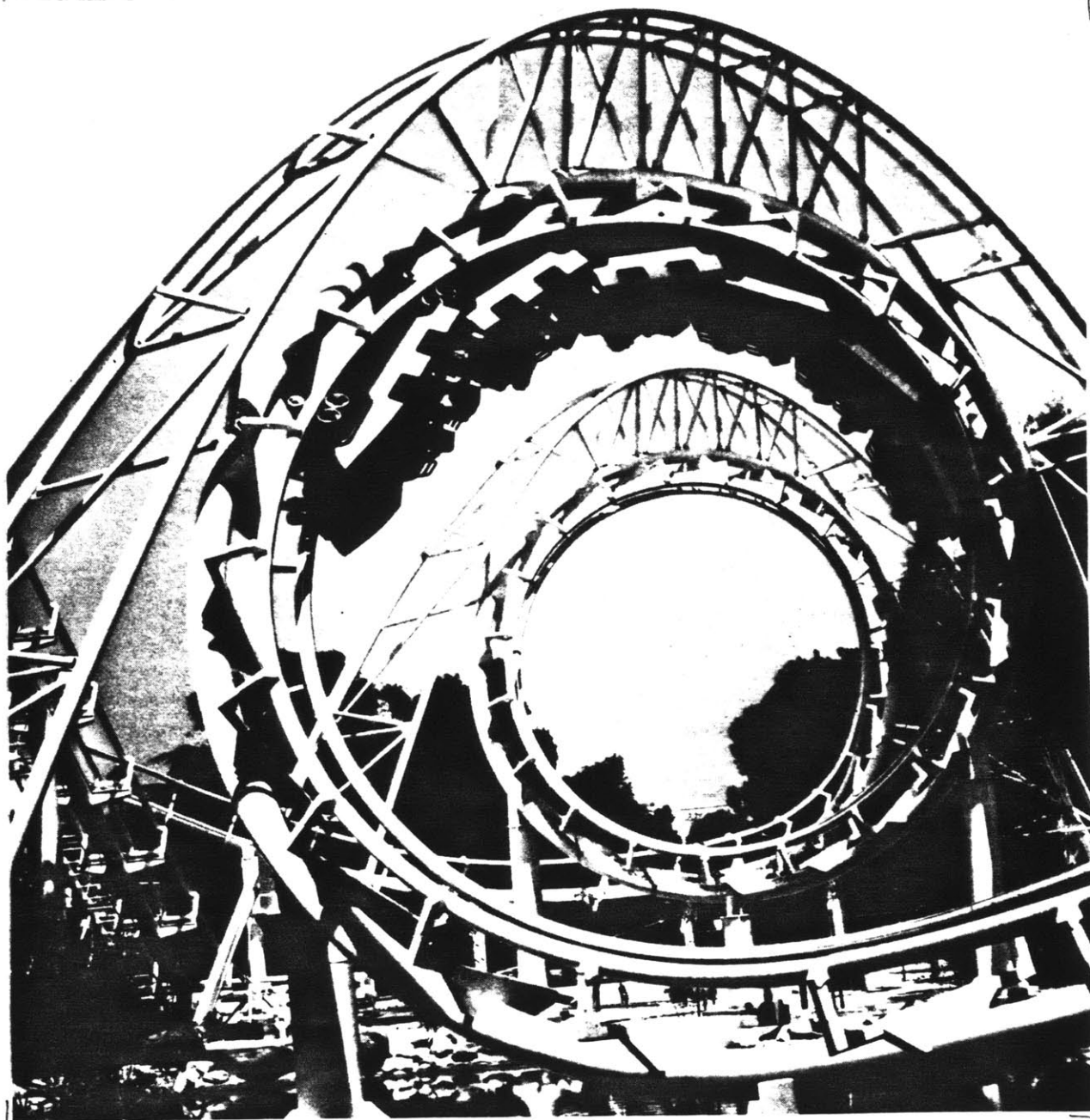


Figure 1.1  
"The Loop" by Arrow Company  
Source: Advertisement in IAAPA Manual and Guide

ger can sometimes look like a death wish, such as is present in race car drivers, sky divers and the like, but most people do not fall into this category. For the average person, the illusion of danger will satisfy this need. The amusement parks have traditionally provided an outlet for part of the need for danger. For the working class especially, this was a popular place for diversion, which, as we will see in the development in the U.S., became increasingly commercialized as the capitalist economy accelerated.

A brief analysis of recreation and amusement might be appropriate in order to explain their meaning in the context of this thesis. Defining leisure as time beyond the existence and subsistence levels, recreation and amusement lie within the realm of leisure. In the social sciences there seems to be a great deal of confusion as to the definition of the two<sup>3</sup>. The concept of recreation in modern usage is the wider of the two areas, maybe due to the change of the whole concept of leisure that took place during the industrial revolution. It came to mean the regaining of strength for the purpose of further work. Amusement in modern usage is closer to entertainment. There is a great deal of intermingling of the two areas, and for the purpose of simplification since the discussion of definitions is not a main concern in this thesis, the two words will be used in a rather loose way. In the amusement parks, as we will see, both the recreating and amusing elements are present.

As mentioned before, an increasingly large portion of people's lives are taken up by recreation and amusement, and therefore it seems necessary to pose the question of what they contribute or don't contribute to people's lives. Depending on the mood the individual is in, and other psychological

factors, they relax, or entertain, or do something which has true recreational values. For all people, but especially for the poor, the bored and the unhappy, they might help to distract, provide an escape from reality, pass the time, or exhilarate. However, these reliefs from the realities of life are only momentary.

If there were a perfect society where everybody had meaningful and fulfilling work, and all other social conditions were next to perfect, leisure time could be more devoted to self fulfillment and the betterment of the society, but the play instinct is such a basic need that it is impossible to suppress, and there would always be a need for play, only the play might be more spontaneous, creative and give a more lasting value. Therefore to strive to achieve such a society, where people's real needs are satisfied, is worth every effort, considering the commercial nature of amusements, especially in the U.S. The lack of many of the essential ingredients, such as creativity and understanding of other cultures. In addition, certain groups of the society are completely neglected, because the amusement industry aims at the more affluent market. The poor are being neglected and immobilized, in a society where money and mobility are such essential ingredients for being able to enjoy the wealth of amusements and recreation offered on the market.

The Swedish example of the People's Park provides an alternative to the purely commercial interests which has produced amusements for the Americans. Here the groups of the society which are neglected in the U.S. have been provided for in terms of cheap amusements of considerably high quality. This has been achieved by cooperation between the People's Parks and the government and the municipalities.

## CHAPTER ONE FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>James C. Charlesworth, ed., Leisure in America: Blessing or Curse?, (Philadelphia: The American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, 1964), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Max Kaplan, Leisure in America: A Social Inquiry, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.,) p.7.

<sup>3</sup>Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 15th ed. (1963), s.v. "Amusements, Public," by Ida Craven.

Public entertainment of the spectacle type - elaborate pageants, athletic contests, chariot races and gladiatorial combats - fostered by governments in classic times partly as means of allaying social unrest...

Under "Recreation" it reads:

The politicians of Rome soon realized that the periodic religious festivals are too infrequent to satisfy the restless city groups, and every victorious general takes the opportunity of his return to institute a new holiday with more elaborate processions and combats.

CHAPTER TWO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL AMUSEMENTS  
IN THE U.S.

2.1 CITY AMUSEMENTS - THE THEATRE AND THE AMUSEMENT CENTER

The "gospel of work", or the Puritan work ethic, has been one of the predominant factors in American life throughout the history of the Nation. The Puritans were characterized by the exact opposite of the joy of living. All play, except possibly that of infants, was sinful.<sup>1</sup> Through different measures play was forbidden, but apparently the play instinct was too strong to suppress, and when the capitalist economy found it advantageous to exploit it, an array of commercial amusements developed. With the early development of trade and industry within the capitalist economy, there was also a real justification for the "gospel of work," equal to the necessity of hard work, that prevailed during the first stages of colonialization. The obsession with making money, which had its roots in the Puritan religion, and the exploitive nature of the development of the continent, was closely connected with this "gospel of hard work." An observer of the society around 1800 wrote:

In no country that I know is there so much hard, toilsome, unremitting labor: in none so little of the recreation and enjoyment of life. Work and worry eat out the heart of people, and they die before their time....It is seldom that an American retires from business to enjoy his fortune in comfort. Money-making becomes a habit. He works because he has always worked, and knows of no other way.<sup>2</sup>

The church, influencing the state, did everything it could to suppress public amusements, such as theatre, circus, and concerts during the first half of the 19th century. This was advantageous to the development of the Nation in the sense that the workers were needed to devote their full en-



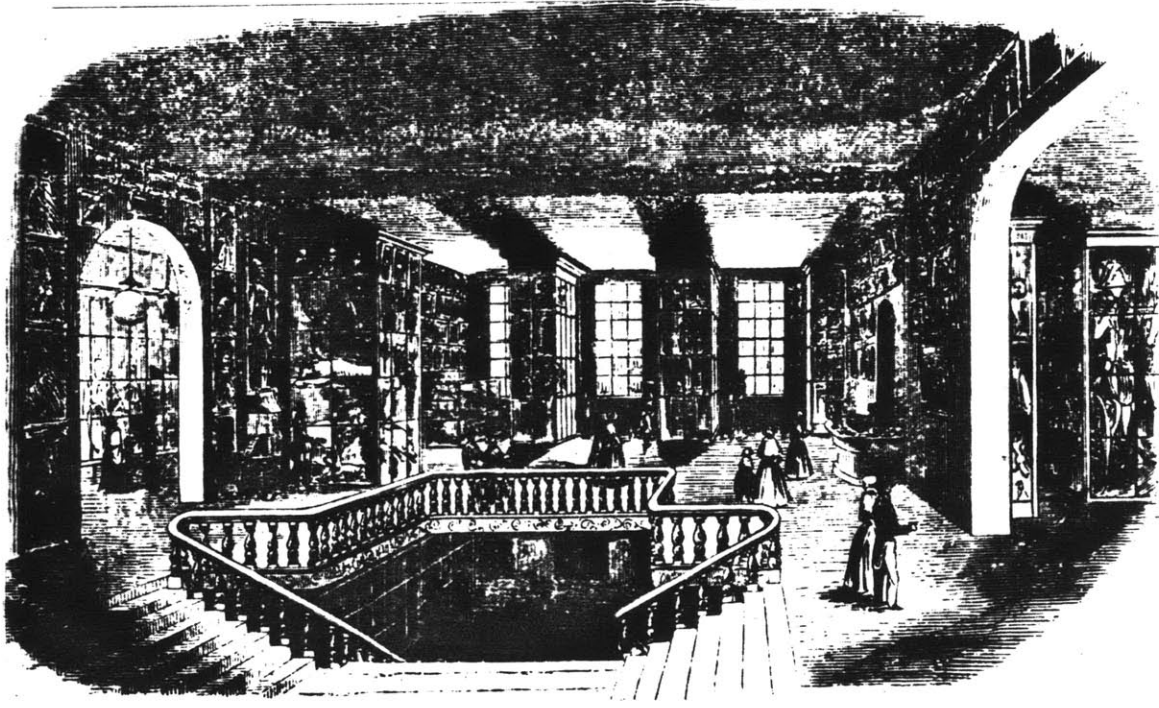
ergy to work and the development of industry. When labor urged the reduction of the working day from twelve and fourteen hours to ten, it did not assert any claim for time for play. The use of leisure was to be put aside for self improvement. There was a great interest in lectures in most mill towns due to the lyceum movement which provided platforms for speakers on every conceivable topic, and cultural pursuits were especially found in the cotton mills of Lowell, Massachusetts. The interest in intellectual activities was maybe partly due to the scarcity of other forms of amusements for the working class. George Combe, one of the many Europeans visiting the country, was lecturing on the popular fad of phrenology, and freely admitted that "entertainment and excitement, as much as instruction", drew the crowds to his lectures in Boston.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, a serious purpose lay behind this interest in lectures, and it reflected the idealistic belief that in a democracy all citizens should take an intelligent part in government.

The segregation of men and women in social life and the prudery of the Victorian era, produced a market for the development of the theatre into less cultural forms such as burlesque, musical travesty and tableau vivants as well as the development of variety shows which took place somewhat later. These shows were sometimes educational, satisfying a wide variety of tastes. Chemistry and astronomy were popular topics.<sup>4</sup>

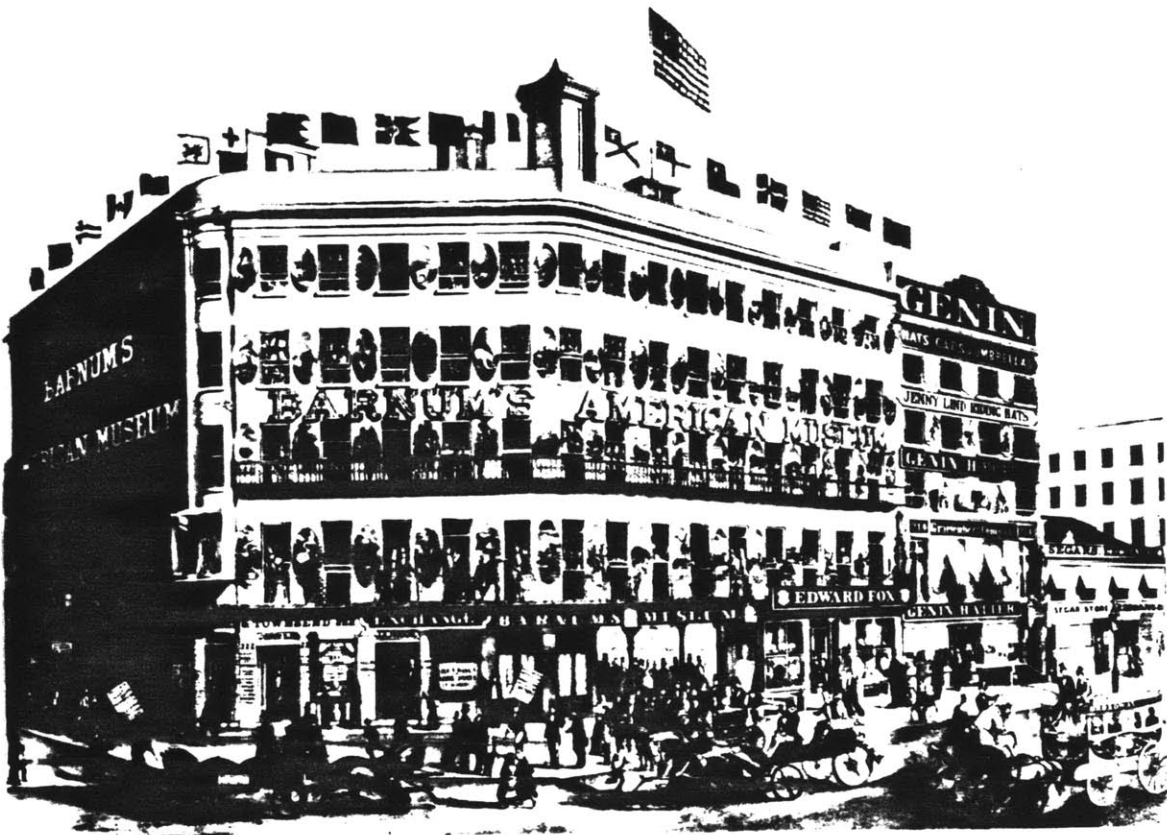
The commercial nature of the amusements offered to the urban population developed more and more as the century proceeded. A good example of this was P.T. Barnum, the showman, who discovered that there was a great potential in the restless urban masses. Mr. Barnum was out to make a profit on the common people. He was not the least interested in art, something that the

theatre ultimately aspired to, even if they had to modify the repertoire to suit the paying masses. By skilfully exploiting the prudery and prejudices of the Victorian time, he reached enormous success. Some people would have been horrified if they thought that they had been to the theatre, but in Mr. Barnum's "lecture room" in his American Museum in New York variety acts were shown, which were prudish enough not to embarrass anybody. They were staged for "all those who disapprove of the dissipations, debaucheries, profanity, vulgarity and other abominations which characterize modern life." This puritan in the entertainment business said with pride that "even Shakespeare's dramas were shorn of their objectionable features when shown on my stage."

The Puritan work ethic, the urge for self education, and religious disapproval of amusements were things of the times that he capitalized on. His American Museum in New York became a National Institution in the 1840's. Urban workers and country farmers were the major visitors, and they were spellbound by the wealth of curiosities and amusements on display. Among the 600,000 curiosities, many were genuine, but others were "humbug" as Mr. Barnum himself cheerfully admitted. Country people might have seen giants, dwarfs, jugglers, rope dancers and acrobats, because traveling showmen had toured the countryside since colonial days. In Mr. Barnum's American Museum they could in addition see things like models of new machines, a knitting machine run by a dog, an ever changing selection of panoramas, and "the three living serpents of enormous size" being given their noontime meal. There were also statues of scriptural characters, and wax figures showing the horrors of intemperance.



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE FIRST GRAND HALL OF THE MUSEUM.



The American Museum in its glory, 1851-52

Figure 2.1  
Source: Dulles, America Learns to Play.

A brilliant example of how shrewd marketing of a "product" can affect the public was his promotion of Jenny Lind, "the Swedish Nightingale". He dressed her up in a "package", that he knew would please the American public, and travelled about the country with his prima donna. No one had ever heard of her before she appeared in New York, but thanks to Mr. Barnum's promotion of her, she became a heroine of enormous proportions. "Lindomania" raged through the country by mid-eighteenth century, and Mr. Barnum had shown that amusements could be big business indeed.

From his American Museum, armadas of traveling exhibits invaded the country, and Mr. Barnum became famous nationwide. Some of the shows were authentic, and others were fake, as the "White Elephants of Siam". Not many people really cared, even when the whitewash started to fade.<sup>5</sup> The later assemblance of the American circus, being too extensive to be dealt with here, sprang out of Mr. Barnum's travelling exhibits, combined with the menageries and wild beast shows from colonial days, and the rings and riding acts, which had been performed in urban amphitheatres.<sup>6</sup> For the rural population Mr. Barnum's travelling exhibits were one of the few commercial amusements available, aside from the market fair common since colonial times. Horse races prize contests and travelling showmen were their distinctive features, in addition to the marketing of produce, livestock, crafts, etc.

## 2.2 COUNTRY AMUSEMENTS - THE AGRICULTURAL FAIR

The modern country fair as we know it more or less today was introduced early in the eighteenth century, when the Berkshire Agricultural Society started to experiment with an educational program for farmers. They met annually, and taught such things as crop rotation, proper use of fertilizer, seed se-

lection and animal breeding. The experiment was successful, and in 1811 the Berkshire County Fair in Pittsfield, Massachusetts was opened, followed by others throughout the country.

The amusement elements of the earlier market fairs crept in slowly, and before long, horse races, trotting matches and other less scientific amusements were introduced. After the Civil War, the more than a thousand agricultural fairs throughout the country all had their races. Here the commercial motivation took over, since the trotting matches were such an attraction to people that they supported the whole fair. The travelling showmen considered themselves a natural element of the fair, even though they were forced to stay on the outside. A report from an Ohio fair in 1838 states that:

There were any number of outside shows; learned pigs, fat women, snakes, monkeys, all jambling together in Biblical confusion, while lager beer, saloons, and melon stands supplied those in quest for such delicacies.<sup>7</sup>

After the Chicago World's Exposition in 1893, a new kind of exhibition became as common as the trotting match at every country fair throughout the country. That was the "shameless hootchy-kootchy belly dancing of Little Egypt."<sup>8</sup> Eventually the freak exhibits, dancing girls, shooting galleries and merry-go-rounds found their way inside the exhibit grounds. They too made their contribution to the running expenses of the fair.

Aside from the educational aspects, the fair had several other purposes. It also served as a farm-city meeting place; farmers were given a chance to exhibit their produce, and industry was given a chance to show its equipment for farm and home. For a short time each year the boredom of the country-

side was broken, and country people could enjoy the crowds, and thus get a taste of town life.

An accounting of fairs in Massachusetts in 1935 showed that there were twenty held throughout the state, attracting some 750,000 people. More than fifty percent of this attendance was at the two major fairs: the Brockton Fair and the Eastern States Exposition.<sup>9</sup> The Eastern States Exposition started in 1912, allegedly to help develop agriculture, industry and commerce. In 1916 it included the National Dairy Show, for which was built a coliseum to seat five thousand, an industrial building of 60,000 square feet, and barns for a thousand cattle. In 1917 an all purpose show was built around government food conservation programs, reflecting the priorities of the day. Development over the years included buildings for various state's exhibitions; Massachusetts in 1918, Maine in 1925, Vermont in 1929, and New Hampshire in 1930. It has become the largest cooperative fair in the United States, and is the official state fair for the six New England states. Contrary to most of the other fairs throughout the country there is no midway, sideshows, or games; it is known for its wholesome environment. Amusement features include the Springfield Horse Show, vaudeville acts, circus acts, fireworks displays, auto shows, harness races and famous bands.<sup>10</sup>

### 2.3 CLASS STRATIFICATION IN AMUSEMENTS

Class segregation in amusements developed in the city, and had less importance in rural communities. The amusements dealt with before were to some extent used by all classes of society, but the main users were the lower classes. An example of the segregation of classes in amusements was the development of the theatre, which from having been an affair for the upper

classes up until around the turn of the eighteenth century, was "democratized" and expanded to profiteer on the emerging masses of industrial workers. The business was conducted on the principle of volume production at a low cost. When the first Park Theatre in New York opened around the end of the eighteenth century, admission prices were \$2.00 in the boxes, \$1.50 in the pit, and \$1.00 in the gallery. Fifty years later most prices commonly were reduced to range from 50¢ to 12 1/2¢.<sup>11</sup>

In the beginning, classical plays were predominant, but as the audience changed, the variety of plays expanded, and finally the theatre's real repertoire included mostly second rate comedies, farces and burlesques. The theatre building changed drastically as well, both in larger size and worse quality. The fire hazard was great in these huge barnlike structures, lit by smoking gas lights and largely unheated. There were no comfortable seats anywhere in the house. The boxes were like "pens for beasts" reads a contemporary description of the Park Theatre in New York. The pit was worse, with backless benches, and frequented by men, who preoccupied themselves with spitting and drinking whiskey. The top gallery or "third tier", as it was commonly called contained the blacks, toughs and prostitutes. Their section was railed off, and there was usually an adjacent bar. The churchgoers and those who opposed the theatre were most concerned with the condition on the upper tier, and so was an editorial in the New York Herald, September 19, 1838, where it was reported that "eighty-three of the most profligate and abandoned women that ever disgraced humanity" had been mingling the night before with the "virtuous and respectable" at the Park Theatre. The solution proposed was to construct a separate entrance for the "abandoned of the sex" and other undesirables.<sup>12</sup>

It seems like the theatre became more and more oriented towards the lower classes, while the upper class' most characteristic amusements were centered around private gatherings, and the latter half of the nineteenth century saw the idle rich amuse themselves with elaborate dress balls, hunting and polo playing. At that time opera and the legitimate theatre got an upswing and became again oriented to the upper class.

With the improved transportation system, in form of new turnpikes and canals by the mid eighteenth century, the rich started to engage in pleasure travelling. Summer resorts developed in the old watering places, which shortly turned into bustling social centers, after having been quiet little havens for invalids. Saratoga in New York state, where the first hotel was built in 1812, was the most fashionable of them all, and it attracted the upper class from the South and West as well as the predominant New Englanders. Later on, a new fashion for ocean bathing drew the rich to the seacoast in the summer, with the resulting development of resorts, which by the end of the century extended from Maine to Florida, as the number of wealthy industrialists increased. Life in those resorts was leisurely indeed, the main activities being flirtation and socializing in different ways. Until the end of the century exercise was still unfashionable, especially for women, but dancing took place in the evening, and the new dances, the waltz and polka, shocked many. 13

At the end of the century, the middle class, aspiring to upper class living, started to invade the many sea resorts. Sea bathing became very popular, and newspapers listed many moderately priced hotels. The railroad excursion was also popular among the middle class.



At this time the cities doubled in population, and became more and more unbearable for the urban population, who had been drawn into manufacturing from the rural areas, working side by side with an increasing number of immigrants. Nothing was provided for them in terms of social welfare. There was no park system or municipal recreation program for decades to come. Their amusements were highly commercial and of low quality.

As Imperial Rome had sought to calm the restlessness of its laboring masses by providing free spectacles, and as we will see later, the Danish king in leasing land for Tivoli did so because "When people play, they do not think of politics." America had its amusement palace, saloons, and taverns which were the only places where the working class could find relief from the never ending toil in dirty factories. One difference was that the Danes and the Americans had to pay for their amusements.

## CHAPTER TWO FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Manfred n. Blake, A History of American Life and Thought, (new York: Mc Graw-Hill, 1963), P.64

<sup>2</sup>Foster R. Dulles, America Learns to Play, (Gloucester Mass: Peter Smith, 1959), pp.86-87.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp.92-93.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp.117-118.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp.122-135.

<sup>6</sup>Blake, A History of American Life and Thought, p.272.

<sup>7</sup>Dulles, America Learns to Play, p.280.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas S. Hines, Burnham of Chicago, (New York: Oxford University Press,1974), p.74.

<sup>9</sup>Federal Writers Project, Massachusetts: A Guide to its Places and People, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.,1937), p.xxiv

<sup>10</sup>A Brief History of the Eastern States Exposition, (Pamphlet issued by the Eastern States Exposition, Springfield, Mass, 1931)

<sup>11</sup>Dulles, America Learns to Play, p.103.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp.105-107.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp.148-151.

## CHAPTER THREE: AMUSEMENT PARKS IN THE U.S.

## 3.1 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The later decades of the nineteenth century saw a new development in commercial recreation - the amusement park. The international expositions, and the agricultural fairs had proven very popular, and enterprising investors turned to immobile, permanent parks as possible profitable ventures. The question centered on what features of the fair should be reproduced in the parks. The midway emerged as a major attraction. The noise, music, shouting, singing, and barbarious joyousness of the Midway would certainly attract the industrial working class.<sup>1</sup> They would have appeal to country people as well, in making available to them the joy of the agricultural fairs held annually, but on a more permanent basis.

It is almost certain that the first amusement parks developed as a result of the first streetcar lines. Steamboat and railroad excursions had long been common, mostly among the middle class, but the trolley provided easier and cheaper means of escape from the city. Shops had developed along the tracks when the middle class took to suburban living, but in order to utilize the electricity on Sundays, which was a matter of economics, since the electrical companies applied their rates to Sundays as well, the traction companies figured out a way to induce people use the streetcars, and thus collect fares on Sundays. Their solution was to build an attraction at the end of the line. This idea started in New England, and spread rapidly across the country.<sup>2</sup>

The amusement park became a holiday escape for large crowds of workers. A writer in Harpers Weekly called them "the great breathing places for millions of people in the city, who get little fresh air at home". Special "trolley

carnivals" were held in the evenings with illuminated cars and band music. Whalom Park in Massachusetts, built in the late eighteen nineties, is an example of one of the first amusement parks. It had in addition to merry-go-rounds, picnic facilities, etc., a dance hall and a 3,000 seat summer theatre where full scale theatre and opera performances were held.<sup>3</sup>

These parks became very popular, and as their popularity rose the stock holders in the traction companies made the decision to sell the parks to private operators, since their original purpose, namely to get the people to ride the trolleys on Sundays, was fulfilled.<sup>4</sup>

Another example of this early type of amusement park operator was Mr. Erasmus Wiman of St. George's, New York, who founded a "pleasure park" whose only access was by the Staten Island ferry, which Mr. Wiman owned. The park included an electrical geyser, flowers, shade trees, open air cages with bears, a theatre, river cruises, swings, bonbons, tinted drinks, peanuts, and "happy children."<sup>5</sup>

An equally wholesome park was the Euclid Beach Park in Cleveland, Ohio, which, according to a survey by the Cleveland Foundation Committee in 1920, was located in a middle class district. It was an ideal family park with high moral standards. No concessions, liquor, or cigarettes were allowed; but tobacco and cigars were permitted. Amusements included a moving picture show, roller coaster, athletic fields, roller rinks, and a dance hall. However the only dances allowed were the waltz, twostep and schottische.<sup>6</sup> Another park surveyed in the same city was a little more spicy. According to the survey:

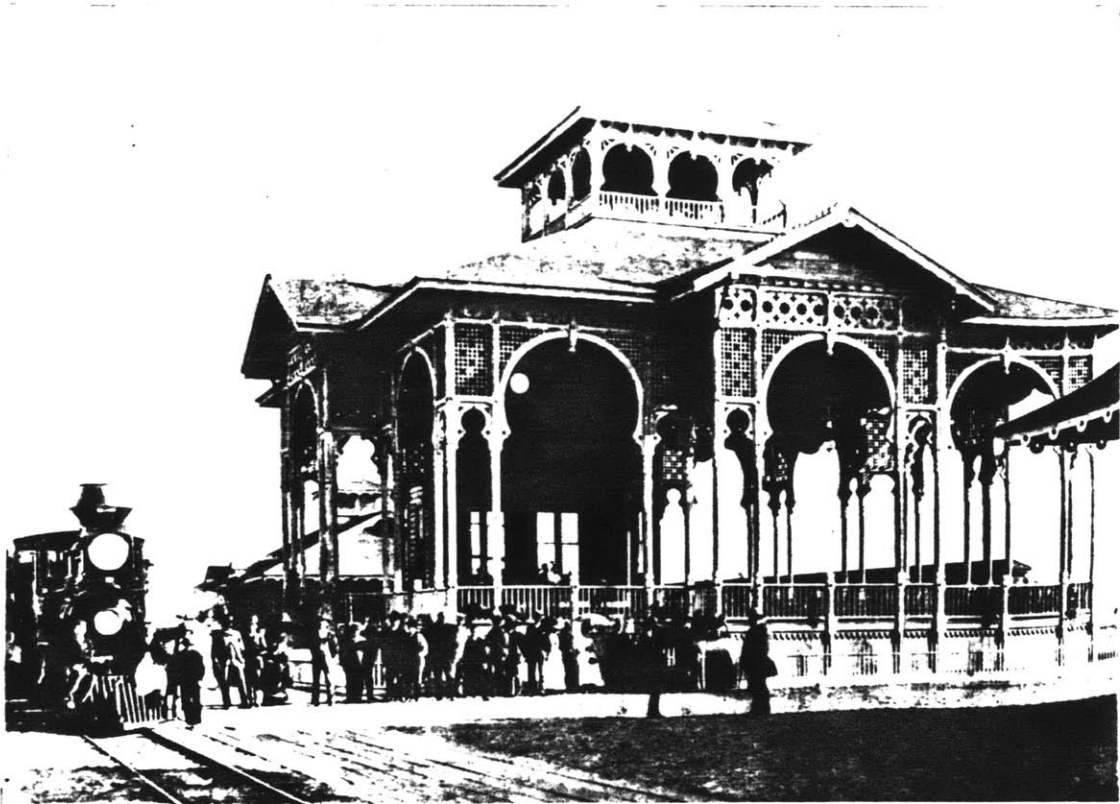


Figure 3.1  
Lagoon amusement park, Utah  
Source: Al Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks."

Modern industrial life has the effect of so influencing its workers that they require a more violent form of recreation. Industry has forced the habit of association on a larger and larger scale.<sup>7</sup>

True or not, the Luna Park did have, in any case, a little more spice than the Euclid Beach Park, with games of chance and lurid exhibitions. However even here it was kept physically and morally "clean", especially the dance hall, as new dances were not allowed.<sup>8</sup>

In many cases where the "trolley parks" were sold to private operators, maintenance started to lapse. This happened because in order to recover their investment as little money as possible was spent on upkeep. The prevailing attitude was "gettin it while the gettin's good", and the result was a physical and moral collapse of the one time family amusement parks in many areas. They became rundown, with dangerous equipment, low quality of attendants, fraudulent advertisement, larcenous games and short changing of the customers. Some parks are said to have sold exclusive franchises to professional pickpockets. The customers complained, since many of them were injured or even killed on rides, robbed and cheated. A common name of a patron among the operators was "sucker." Local officials tried to drive the parks out of town by stiff licensing laws, but the inspectors were easy to bribe. Many cities therefore bought the parks in order to gain more control, and sometimes when the municipalities were unable to pay the cost, county governments took over the establishments. Civic minded groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, the City Merchants Association, even Lions Club, Rotary and the American Legion became amusement park operators. New parks grew up and the old ones which had survived the neglect period, developed more in the early twentieth century. It was common to add new features, such as permanent restaurants and permanent rides.<sup>9</sup>

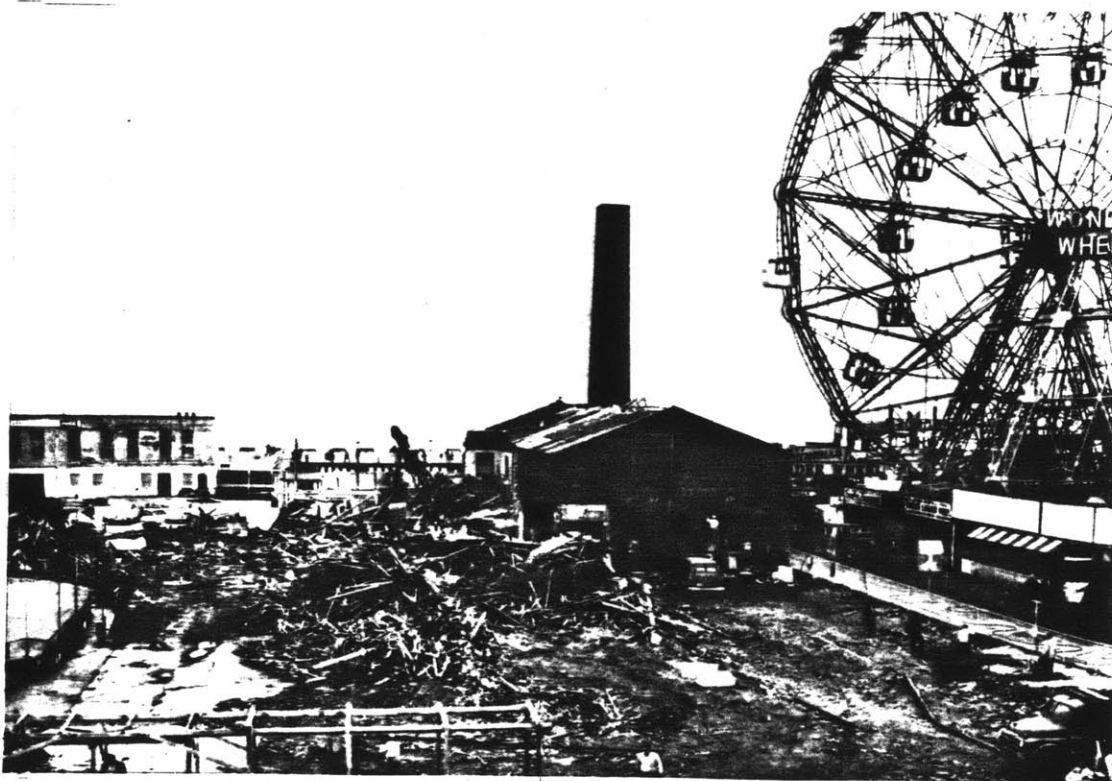


Figure 3.2  
Demolition on Coney Island  
Source: Al Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks."

The development of the "boardwalk" type of amusement parks, which are common on the Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida, evolved with the sea resorts and the fad for ocean bathing among masses of people, described in chapter two. The American resort before the trolley was, as mentioned, a place for the well-to-do. When these resorts could be reached by public transit, the rich fled to new resorts further away from the city.

On Coney Island near New York City, a midway was installed in the neoclassical style introduced at the World's Columbian Exposition. The park, called Luna Park, was an instant success when it opened in 1903.<sup>10</sup> In addition to Luna Park there were many other amusement companies on Coney Island. Dreamland Park, built in 1904, had the biggest ballroom in the world, built on an ocean pier, a common feature in the "boardwalk" parks. In addition it had a "Lilliputan Village," where 300 midgets lived, and an attraction called "Fighting Flames" where a six story building was ignited every night, and conquered by fire engines and fire men.<sup>11</sup>

Around this time the first parks built by companies, who used them as advertisement to promote business, were established. Hershey Chocolate Company's park in Pennsylvania was such a park. Most rides and attractions were designed to make patrons hungry for chocolate in a real sense. A large pool was built, in which there was a high slide, so that visitors using it would burn up energy, and therefore crave for Hershey's products. The Hershey Park also had high class performances and attractions, and they came to be the pioneers in "Kiddie Lands." Of course Hershey Company had many followers in today's amusement parks, built on a theme by breweries and other commercial outfits.<sup>12</sup>



After the second world war the public grew sophisticated through the increasing popularity of the movies and the increased mobility that the new highways and the mass production of cars provided. Many of the old amusement parks had to close, and others burnt down, due to poor maintenance and flimsy construction. These devastating fires made the Coney Island attraction of "Fighting Flames" an irony indeed. Coney Island has had their share of disastrous fires , and is now, like many of its followers, a shadow of its former self. There was little innovation and this stagnation led to decline.

A few parks kept expanding, with new rides, restaurants, etc., but commercialism in the form of paid advertisement was never widely accepted in the traditional parks, something that the newer theme parks seem to get away with. With an increasing crime rate in the larger cities, many dark rides had to close down, due to robberies and rapes, and the penny arcades were hard hit by vandalism.<sup>13</sup> Another factor that played an important role in the decline was the rising value of city property (many of the parks being located on the beach, such as the "boardwalk" parks) , and increasing parking and traffic problems. The land often became desirable for big developers, as at Revere Beach in Massachusetts, and today the traditional amusement parks in urban areas seem to be endangered by forces over which they have little or no control.

### 3.2 THE RIDES AND ATTRACTIONS

The need for the illusion of danger as a diversion, mentioned in chapter one has been expressed in the invention of several types of amusement rides throughout the ages, but the nineteenth century saw the development of most

of the amusement rides which are common today. The Industrial Revolution gave inspiration and a high degree of sophistication to the design of these rides. They can be derived from a few basic ideas: the spoked wheel, which inspired the merry-go-round (horizontal wheel) and the ferris wheel (vertical wheel), two basic designs which inspired a wealth of different rides. The ice slide inspired the development of the roller coaster and the swing has been used in different forms, often in combination with the horizontal wheel. Many rides were highly individual and reflected their time, such as the "Gravity Pleasure Railway", and the "Velocipede" merry-go-round, the latter being manually propelled.<sup>14</sup> In modern times we can see the reflections of our own times in new rides using ships and rockets as models.

#### THE FERRIS WHEEL

The "big wheel" and the merry-go-round were probably developed at the same time, even though it is not clear when the concept of joy riding emerged. The Ferris Wheel as we know it today became a star attraction after 1893 and the World's Columbian Exposition. It was the first giant observatory structure built, after the Eiffel Tower, and it was designed by George W. Ferris. It rose 250 feet in one revolution, and carried thirtysix pendulun cars, each with a capacity of carrying forty people. It is described in the Official Directory of the World's Columbian Exposition as a "Vertical Revolving Wheel"; and the ride cost 50 cents for two round trips.<sup>15</sup> After the closing of the Expo, it was moved to the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, but did not pay for the high cost of moving and assembling it. It was dynamited and sold for scrap metal after the fair was closed. J.W. Graydon, whose original design Mr. Ferris had used, built an even bigger wheel in London for



Figure 3.3

Big Wheel at Earl's Court Exhibition, London  
Source: Braithwaite, Fairground Architecture.

the Earl's Court Exhibition in 1894. The hollow axle was so big that people paid to walk through it from one tower to the other. It had three kinds of cars: first class furnished with velvet seats, special smoking cars and cars for the masses. The only other giant wheel built was "Riesenrad" at Prater amusement park in Vienna. It is the only one still in use, and has become somewhat of an institution and a symbol for the city.

These giant wheels have inspired many of the common features of the modern amusement park. The Space Needle, introduced at the Seattle World's Fair in 1962 and the Sky Ride, among others, are followers in the sense of serving as observation points. Among the many smaller derivatives and variations of the Ferris Wheel is the "Sky Diver", on which the cars align with the horizon only at the top and the bottom of the circle. Otherwise the ride is either diving towards the ground, or rising to the top.

The main concern about the Ferris Wheel, ever since the original one of 1893, has been that the amount of time that it takes to load the cars decreases the profits. This has been solved by the introduction of double-swiveling wheels, where each comes down to the ground flat, while the other rises to its apex.<sup>17</sup>

#### THE MERRY-GO-ROUND, CARROUSEL OR ROUNDABOUT

The word carrousel derives from an equestrian sport of Moorish origin from the twelfth century. Three hundred years later the sport was transformed into an elaborate spectacle in Germany and France. An important feature was the ring spearing tournament, in which the troops of cavalrymen rode their horses, while trying to spear a ring suspended from an arch, with their lances (note the catching of the brass rings in the modern merry-

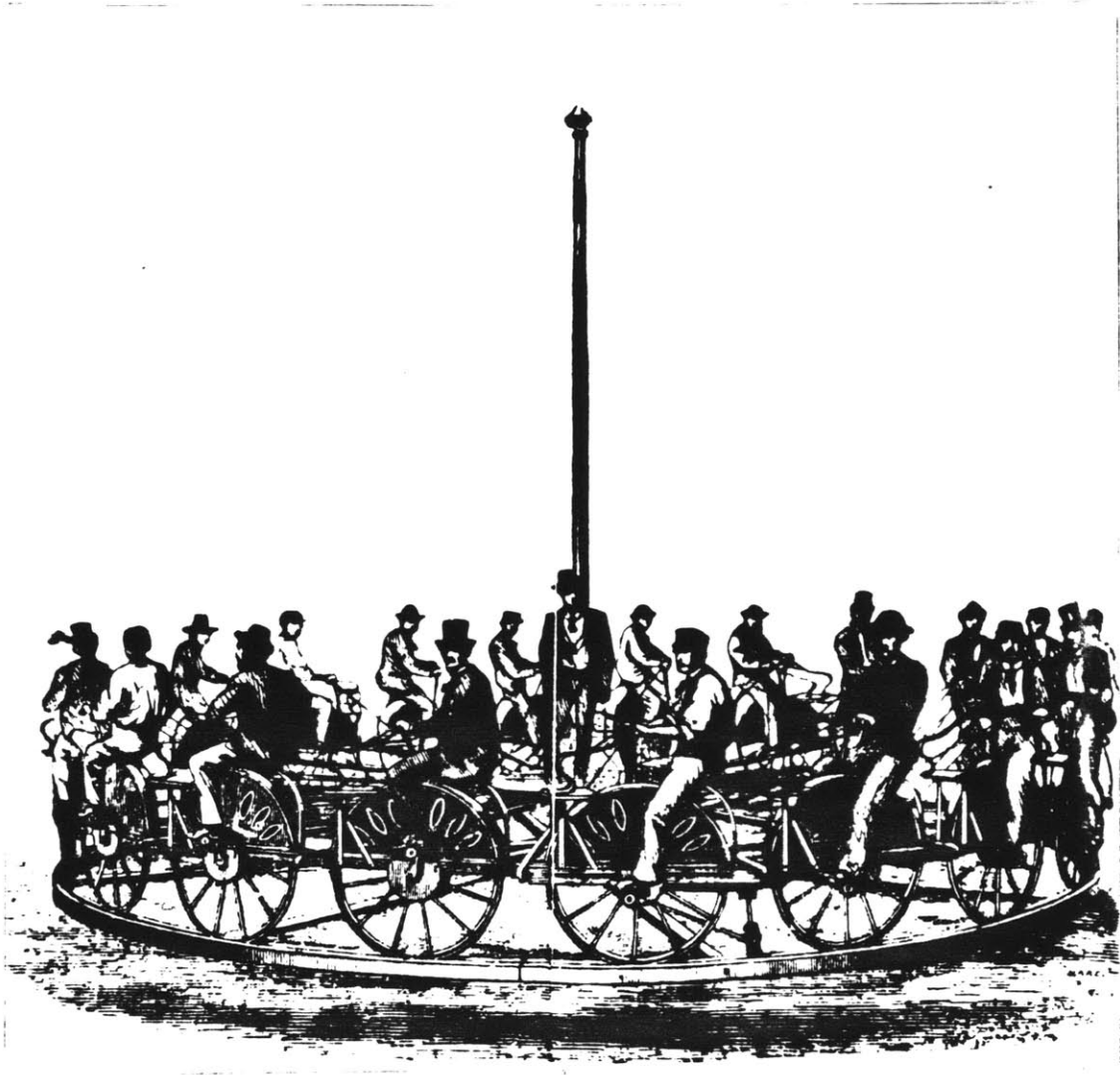


Figure 3.4

"Velocipede" merry-go-round

Source: Braithwaite, Fairground Architecture.

go-round). Louis XIV staged such a tournament in Paris, in 1662, which was so elaborate that the place where it was held got the name Place du Carrousel, a name which it still has. The Moorish origin of this contest together with a blending of history and mythology, inspired rich decoration, something that can be seen in the early manufactured merry-go-rounds.<sup>18</sup> El Dorado, built for Dreamland Park on Coney Island in 1911, is sixty feet in diameter and forty feet high, and the band organ has a mass of carved figures.<sup>19</sup> This famous merry-go-round is now displayed at Toshimaen amusement park in Tokyo.<sup>20</sup>

#### THE ROLLER COASTER

The roller coaster idea was brought to France from Russia in the eighteenth century, where the ice slide had been used for centuries. Since there was a scarcity of ice in France, rollers were put on the ramp on which the toboggans glided. In the United States the first roller coaster was built for Coney Island in 1884. The next year, another one was opened, using the loop design. It had a chain operated elevator, conveying the cars up to the initial incline, after which they operated on the principle of gravity. This is the type we see in amusement parks today.<sup>21</sup>

The principal idea behind the roller coaster ride is to create an illusion of danger and high speed. Suspense is built up by ominous clanking on the way up to the crest. In Paragon Park in Massachusetts, a turn is added as the cars top the crest, which gives the illusion of dropping off into space. By leaving the railing off at the crest, the illusion of danger is even more accentuated. High speed stretches of track close to other structures and letting the cars roar under some structure are also features which help give an illusion of high speed.<sup>22</sup>



Figure 3.5  
Roller coaster at Paragon Park, Mass.  
Source: Al Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks."

A great number of rides have evolved from the roller coaster. Shoot-the Chutes, a feature of the famous Luna Park on Coney Island, used boats which were pulled up to the crest and then rushed down into a pool beneath. This ride is common in a modern version, often called the Flume Ride. The Tunnel of Love, and other enclosed rides, likewise developed from the roller coaster idea. When electricity was a novelty, it was used to illuminate panoramas as the cars moved through the tunnel.<sup>23</sup> The scenes were sometimes spooky, and sometimes romantic, and this ride is widely used today even in Disney World, although more elaborate, and modified to fit the tastes of modern people.

#### THE GAMES

Other attractions in the traditional amusement park include the games, both skilled games such as throwing games and shooting galleries and unskilled games such as the Wheel of Fortune. The Hi-Striker is a game where male patrons are given a chance to show their strength, and maybe impress the ladies. The Wheel of Fortune has become one of the symbols of the amusement park, and the stuffed plush animals, which often make up the prizes, are symbols as well.

The Bozo Joint is a throwing game, which has now almost disappeared. Bozo the clown is sitting on a board over a tub of water, insulting the patrons as they go by, in order to make them buy baseballs to throw at a target. If the target is hit, Bozo falls into the water. Sometimes people would get so angry that they started throwing balls directly at him, so he is nowadays protected by a screen.



## THE FOOD

The food in amusement parks is supposed to be more fun than nourishment. Maybe the most common food is the hot dog. This "weird looking sausage muffled up in two halves of a roll"<sup>25</sup> was invented at Coney Island in 1870. Other common "strolling foods" are ice cream cones, invented at the St. Louis Fair, cotton candy, roasted peanuts and pop corn.

## OTHER ATTRACTIONS

The penny arcades have had trouble with the law in the U.S. since 1902, when stiff licensing laws and heavy taxation tried to prohibit them. In spite of all they have seemed to survive, and they are considered very profitable by amusement operators.<sup>26</sup>

The Fun House has different features, which are meant to confuse and amuse the patron. Moving discs on the floor, mirror mazes, and distorting mirrors are maybe the most common ones.

## CHAPTER THREE FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Rollin Lynde Hartt, The People at Play, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909) p.50.

<sup>2</sup>Al Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks." (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1974) p.1.

<sup>3</sup>Foster R. Dulles, America Learns to Play, (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1959) p.222.

<sup>4</sup>Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks." , p.2.

<sup>5</sup>Hartt, The People at Play, pp.46-48.

<sup>6</sup>The Cleveland Foundation Committee, Cleveland Recreation Survey - Commercial Recreation, (Philadelphia: W.F.Fells co., 1920) pp.112-114.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p.122

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p.118

<sup>9</sup>Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks.", p.3-6.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p.12.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p.13-17

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p.9.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p.24.

<sup>14</sup>David Braithwaite, Fairground Architecture, (London: Hugh Evelyn Ltd. 1968), p.39.

<sup>15</sup>Moses P. Handy, ed., The Official Directory of the World's Columbian Exposition, (Chicago: W.B. Gonkey Co., 1893)

<sup>16</sup>Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks.", p.50.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p.53-54.

<sup>20</sup>IAAPA Manual and Guide, 1976.

<sup>21</sup>Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks.", p.43.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p.41.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p.43.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p.90.

<sup>25</sup>Dulles, America Learns to Play, p.223.

<sup>26</sup>Griffin, "Step Right Up, Folks." p.99.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE THEME PARKS

## 4.1 DISNEYLAND LEADS A NEW DEVELOPMENT

The history of amusement parks reached a turning point in the nineteen-fifties, with the advent of Disneyland in 1953, and the beginning of the interstate highway system. In fact, amusement park development will probably be annotated in history books as Pre-Disney and post-Disney. Capitalizing on the easy access provided by the Los Angeles freeway system, Disneyland became the prototype for the new regional amusement park catering to the affluent post-war auto-oriented middle class.

Located just off Santa Ana freeway, one hour from the Los Angeles City Hall in an unchartable sea of suburbia, Walt Disney has created a way for people to respond to a public environment, something that Los Angeles, in particular, no longer has. Here everything works, the way it doesn't seem to any more in the outside world.<sup>1</sup>

Economics of scale allow Disneyland to provide a vast and diverse assortment of amusements. It is called a Kingdom, and is divided into four parts: Tomorrowland, Frontiersland, Adventureland and Fantasyland. It is an environment built on 5/8 scale, which makes it a kiddieland for adults as well as a scaling down of adult spaces to childrens' size.

The example of Disneyland seems especially relevant in the context of the city of Los Angeles. Here the development of a new transportation system - the freeway system - has lead to the almost total absense of a city center with a public environment, a function which Disneyland seems to provide. However it is a very exclusive public environment, which only those with means are free to enjoy. It is a city square with a pay gate. Los Angeles is a city

where home, work and recreation are ultimately separated, quite contrary to the idea depicted in Disneyland's Main Street, where the stageset is an "ideal" street with small shops at ground level and living space above. However nobody lives here and the curtains fluttering in the breeze are only part of the set design.

The development of the interstate highway system throughout the 1960's created the mobility leading to a variety of regional developments, accelerating the proliferation of the large, family oriented amusement park. Whereas amusement parks once hugged the edge of big cities, they are now situated miles from the metropolitan centers, but where superhighways can bring customers from a radius of one hundred miles or more.

The flow of activities away from the metropolitan centers is nothing new. The decay and attempted renewal of the central cities is a familiar subject of our times. But the regionally oriented amusement parks perhaps represent a somewhat new force rather than the drain of activities previously located in or near metropolitan centers. It might be argued that these new parks are a natural function supported by the affluent leisure oriented middle class. Mass accessibility, economies of scale and further specialization of society's activities are the natural conditions producing the large regional amusement park.

Recently many of this type of amusement park have opened or are in planning. With the opening of Disney's second amusement park, the Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, in 1971, the scheme of Disneyland was carried to its extreme, both in scale and elaborateness. It is so extreme in fact that it deserves a section of its own. The success of the Disney ventures has inspired

large corporations and others to invest in the market, and now the theme park idea is being exploited to the fullest throughout the country. Every conceivable theme is being elaborated on, ranging from religion and fantasy to history and, ironically, Old Coney Island.

Examples of this new kind of amusement parks are:

Kings Island, a \$30 million development by Taft Broadcasting Company, is built 20 miles outside Cincinnati. It has five different themes: International Street, which is a shopping center, selling goods from many countries; Old Coney Island, featuring rides taken from the old site; Oktober Fest, designed to appeal to Cincinnati's dominant ethnic group; Rivertown, based on area history; and Happy Land, featuring cartoon figures in various rides and attractions.

Opry Land, near Nashville, has a country music theme, along with rides and wild life. It is owned by National Life & Accident Insurance Company.<sup>2</sup>

Great Adventure, owned by the Hardwick Company, is located in Jackson, New Jersey. It offers among other attractions Super Teepee, the largest teepee in the world, and Yum Yum Palace, an ice cream sundae which measures sixty feet in height. Other attractions are: a mammoth Ferris wheel, the largest safari park outside Africa, the Great Arena featuring Ben Hur chariot races and Wild West shows, and Dream Street with shops, clowns and jugglers.<sup>3</sup>

Holy Land, in Mobile, Alabama, features a thirteen story fiberglass statue of Christ, gladiator fights and a ride through Noah's Ark.

In Dallas, Texas, a non-profit park is planned, featuring a thirty feet holograph of Jesus Christ, created by a laser beam.<sup>4</sup>

Marriott Corporation, owned by Marriott who is a Mormon, is opening in the Spring of 1976, two parks in Santa Clara, California, and Gurnee, Illinois. Both are \$40 - \$50 million investments. The theme - Great America - features five theme areas: Hometown Square, Yukon Territory, Yankee Harbor, Country Fair and Orleans Place.

Among the 980 listings in the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions' (IAAPA) catalogue, 25% of the parks were listed as theme parks, but the theme is sometimes incoherent or arbitrary, and many parks have difficulty in achieving a memorable image.

The exploitation of nostalgic feelings toward American history is predominant, as seen in the numerous Wild West and Frontier themes. Another popular and frequently used theme is the safari. This idea originated in South Africa, by Harry Shuster, who had discovered that the visitors to Kruger National Park in South Africa were mostly disappointed, since after having travelled about for days in the vast park, they had not seen a single lion. Modern vacations are mostly short, and modern people feel cheated, after having bought a commodity without actually being able to consume it. Capitalizing

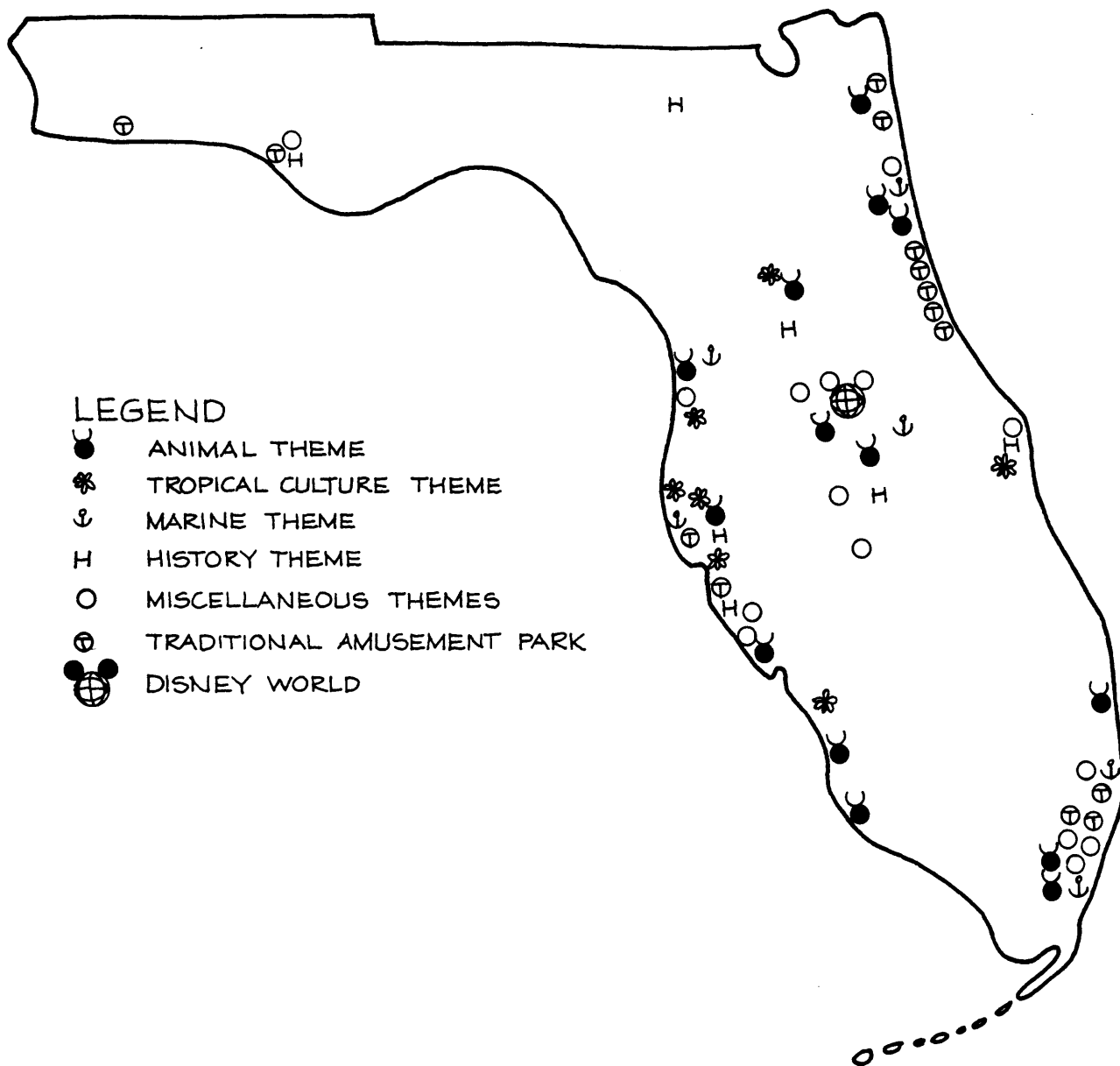


Figure 4.1  
 Florida amusement parks  
 Source: Misc. tourist pamphlets and the IAAPA Manual and Guide.



on this idea, Mr. Shuster decided to build an "instant safari" outside Johannesburg. Here lions were guaranteed to be seen by everybody, who had paid their admission. The project became a success, and Mr. Shuster transferred his idea to the United States. There are now three Lion Country Safari's, one in Laguna Hills, California, another one in Grand Praire, Texas, and a third one in Stockbridge, Georgia.

Sea worlds and Zoo Worlds are common in most states, but according to a representative of Sea World Inc., a corporation with several parks in operation, the dolphins and sea lions are too tame and friendly for the public. After the success of the movie "Jaws" people want to be frightened, so Sea World has added a stuffed White Shark, and is trying in vain to capture a live one.<sup>5</sup>

Every state is exploiting their particular fame. Some examples of this in California are: Movieland Wax Museum and Palace of Living and Trees of Mystery. Florida, a state almost entirely devoted to leisure, has exploited the jungle, sea and Disney World themes in parks such as: The Haunted House and Magic Castle, Ocean World, Passport to Fun World, Monkey Jungle, Parrot Jungle, Jungle Larry's African Safari, Marineland of Florida, and many more. Texas offers among others: Alamo Village, Amigoland and Astro-world.<sup>6</sup>

The basic fantasies as expressed in the themes of amusement parks are fantasies about European and tropical cultures, "the good old days", and a few others. Some of these fantasies exist in other cultures too, but here they have been stereotyped even further by the movie industry and other mass media.

There is a ruthless marketing and exploitation of every possible phenomena: American Indians, animals, nature, and last but not least, the American heritage. With the bicentennial celebration, the revenues in amusement parks are expected to reach a maximum. There is a mad scramble for all amusement parks, together with the rest of the tourist industry, to cash in on the national heritage, and to create patriotism in order to sell more products. Walt Disney Productions wants to make history "great fun." Chardon Walker, the president of the company, said: "To be educational, you have to be entertaining."<sup>7</sup> With this in mind Walt Disney Productions has produced a theme parade, America on Parade, for their two parks, consisting of fifty floats, and featuring personalities from American history, characterized by eight foot high mummies. The parade is led by a depiction of the "Spirit of '76" heroic painting, in which Mickey Mouse is the flag bearer, Donald Duck plays the fife and Goofy is the drummer.

Roger J. Shaheen, the IAAPA president, states clearly the commercial motivation of the amusement park business in his "message from the president" in the bicentennial issue of the IAAPA Manual and Guide:

We have progressed from picnic parks to traditional parks to multi-million dollar theme parks - and now we encompass them all. That speaks for free enterprise in a free country. That's what the bicentennial is all about - proof of what our way of life can produce.... The leisure market is a growth industry - healthy, stable, and profit oriented - an envious fact during these times.... Our business, the amusement business, represents a significant portion of one of the Nation's largest industries - tourism, ..... Travel means tourists - and tourists means patrons. Bicentennial 1976 promises to be a most progressive and prosperous year for us all.<sup>8</sup>

Whatever the physical theme of a park might be, the real theme is to maximize the profits. This is achieved by providing plenty of opportunities for patrons to buy all kinds of merchandise (mostly low quality and high



Figure 4.2  
Family shopping  
Source: Busch Garden tourist pamphlet

cost), and to spend as much money as possible on souvenirs, which in turn are advertisement for the company. Anheuser-Busch Brewery's Budwiser hats, T-shirts, mugs, etc., are even making a big market outside their parks. This means that in addition to paying the admission fee of seven to nine dollars, the visitors buy the right to advertise the company's products outside the parks as well as being bombarded with advertisements from sponsors operating in the park, such as Coca Cola, Exxon, 3M, Purina, etc. The market for their different products is also tested in the park. For instance, McDonalds offers a discount coupon on the admission ticket, and their efforts are then tracked down by monitoring the coupon returns. They also offer "bounce back" coupons to bring the customers back to their different outlets outside the park.<sup>9</sup> The number of people they can influence and reach this way is quite impressive, since about 75 million people visited the 40 major amusement parks in 1975, spending an average of \$10 each. This is a large market compared even to the market in spectator sports. Professional baseball, football, and basketball combined only drew 47 million visitors that year.<sup>10</sup>

As the competition became more intense between the different parks, the major parks have put an increasing amount of money into advertising themselves. The first company to use network television in their campaigns was Anheuser-Busch Company, who started a million dollar advertising campaign using NBC-TV and a large number of magazines to promote their new amusement park, Old Country, in Williamsburg, Virginia. Ads in Esquire, for example, read: "The best of Europe is only five minutes away from Williamsburg." "The best of Europe" includes Shakespearean Globe Playhouse, Three Musketeers Theatre, train and boat rides.<sup>11</sup> "The best of Europe" provides a neat and sterilized "package" of stereotype ideas about European Phenomena, all for consumption by the middle class who "take it all in" together with the ice cream

cones and pop corn.

Many of the parks represent large investments by a single corporation. The investments range from \$25 - \$65 million for larger parks, but there is a concensus between many operators that the market has been saturated. Only 52 metropolitan areas in the United States are judged capable of supporting a major theme park.<sup>12</sup> There are, however, markets for "mini-parks" of \$8 - \$10 million investments, or to invest in the all-children market for less than \$3 million.<sup>13</sup> Disney World cost about \$400 million to build, but takes in a major portion of the total profit, or about 50% of the revenues of the 40 major theme parks.<sup>14</sup>

Common in most parks is the schedule of events, which to a high degree programs the visitors' day, something that maybe can be attributed to the way that people's lives are scheduled in modern society (living by the clock). This is an example of activities "packaged for consumption", just like any other commodity that we buy. With the schedule of events in their hands, people are channeled through the day, taking pictures in specially assigned "posing areas" (areas with the proper background - advertisement for the company again), getting hungry for hot dogs, and having their buying impulses satisfied in the numerous souvenir shops.

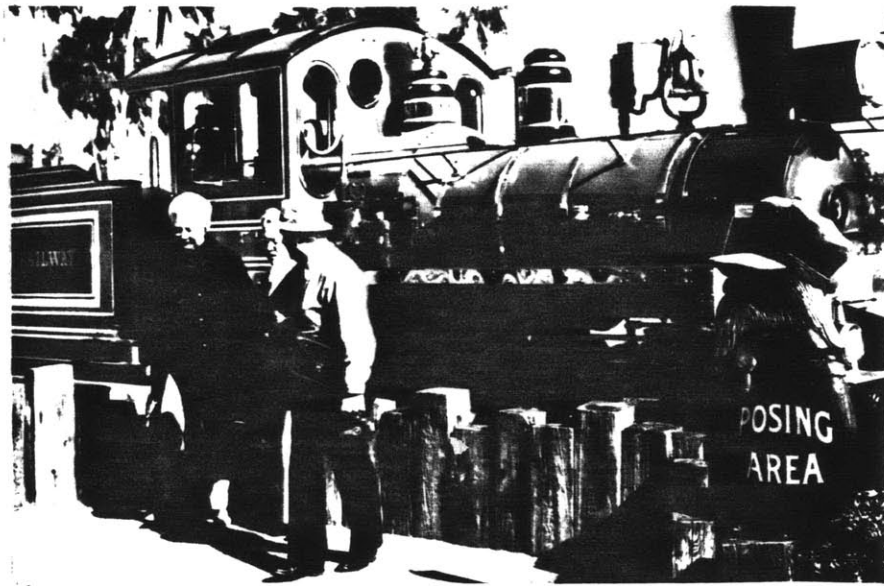


Figure 4.3  
Posing area at Busch Garden, Tampa, Fla.  
Photograph by author

## 4.2 WALT DISNEY WORLD

"Make no little plans, they have no magic to stir men's blood." Daniel Burnham's credo mirrored the ideology of the man who created "The Great White City" at the World's Columbian Exposition, which was meant to be a model for reforming urban America. For him and the other architects involved, the fair was a testing ground for ideas. It was a make-believe city in the midst of the urban blight which was a reality for most people living and working in Chicago at that time, and an attempt to create an entire environment. Thomas Hines said:

In its scientific, industrial and artistic displays, and in the picturesque exotica of its Midway Plaisance, the fair mirrored many of the values and accomplishments in the nineteenth century and suggested some of what might lie ahead in the twentieth century...

Incidentally one of the common laborers who worked at the building of the fair was Elias Disney, Walt's father.<sup>15</sup> Whatever the connection might be, if any, both Daniel Burnham and Walt Disney had big plans for building a total environment, but both failed to create an environment for living. However, their ideas had strong effects on the rest of the country for a long period of time, even though Walt Disney's influence was mainly as an artist.

Walt Disney became a legend of the twentieth century as a showman and pop artist. Through his company, the Walt Disney Productions, and the squeaks of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and the others, he has spread the message of the glory of free enterprise and the American way of life to many parts of the world.

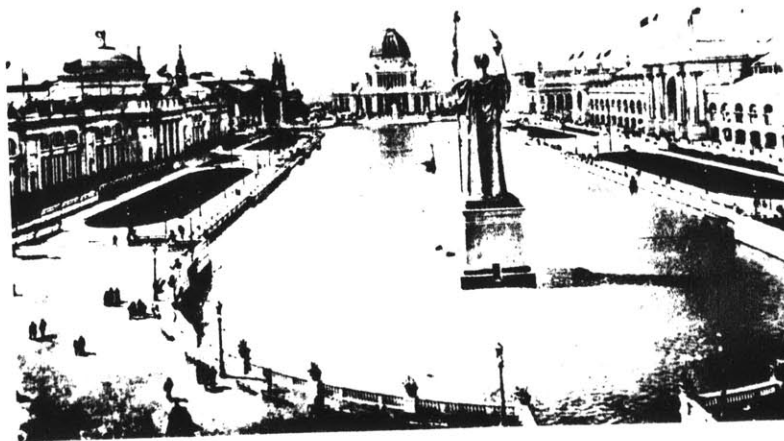


Figure 4.4  
World's Columbian Exposition  
Source: Scully, American Architecture and Urbanism.

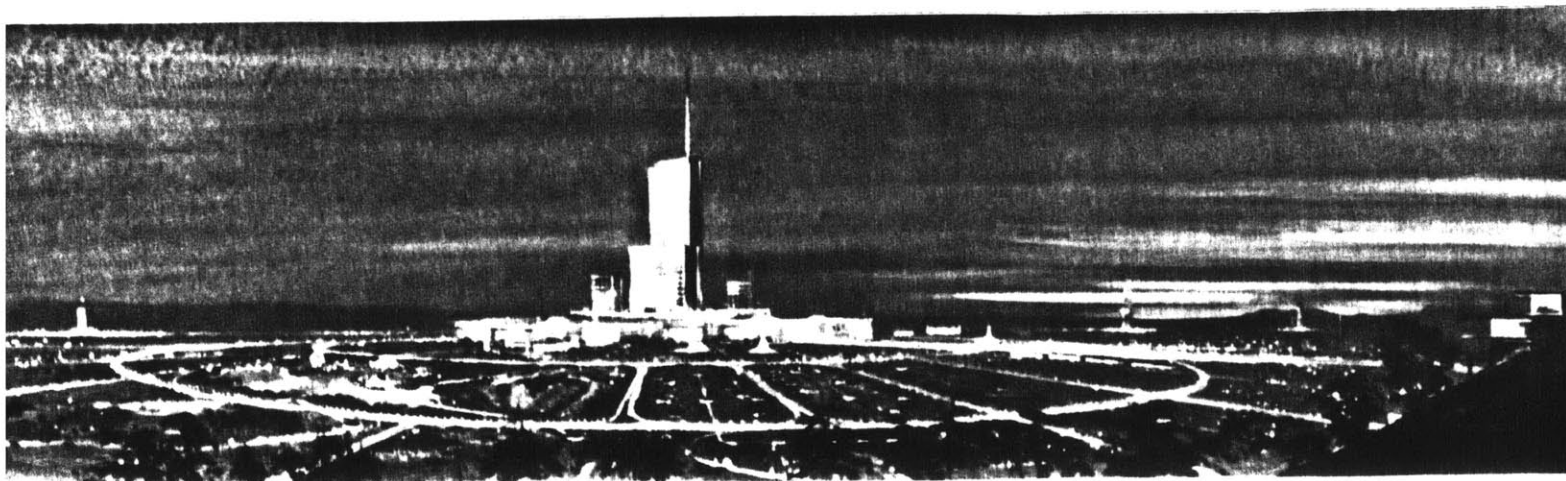


Figure 4.5  
EPCOT in Disney World  
Source: The Story of Walt Disney World.



In Walt Disney's personality there was an obsession to control, order, and keep clean any environment that he inhabited. This manifested itself in his films, for which he almost never relinquished any rights, in his television shows, and in his obsession with making Disneyland into a total environment. With the advent of Disney World, this principle has been taken to its extreme.

Here in central Florida, in the midst of the Orange Belt, Walt Disney has created "a testing ground for urban technology." This mammoth undertaking could probably never have been possible without the Disney organization's total control over the whole venture. Disney World has its own government passed through the Florida legislature in 1967. It is called the Reedy Creek Improvement District, and has the authority of a county, except for the police power. It sets its own standards for air and water pollution control and building codes, which incidentally are far in advance of the Florida codes. In addition Walt Disney World has its own power plant, transportation system, construction company, telephone company, and radio and TV stations.

Walt Disney had an almost religious belief that technology can solve any conceivable problem that we face today. His best known technological splurge, the monorail, was a carry over from Disneyland, and he had great hope for it as the answer to mass transit problems for big cities. This is what inspired the belief that the amusement park in Florida could serve as a testing ground for urban technology.<sup>16</sup>

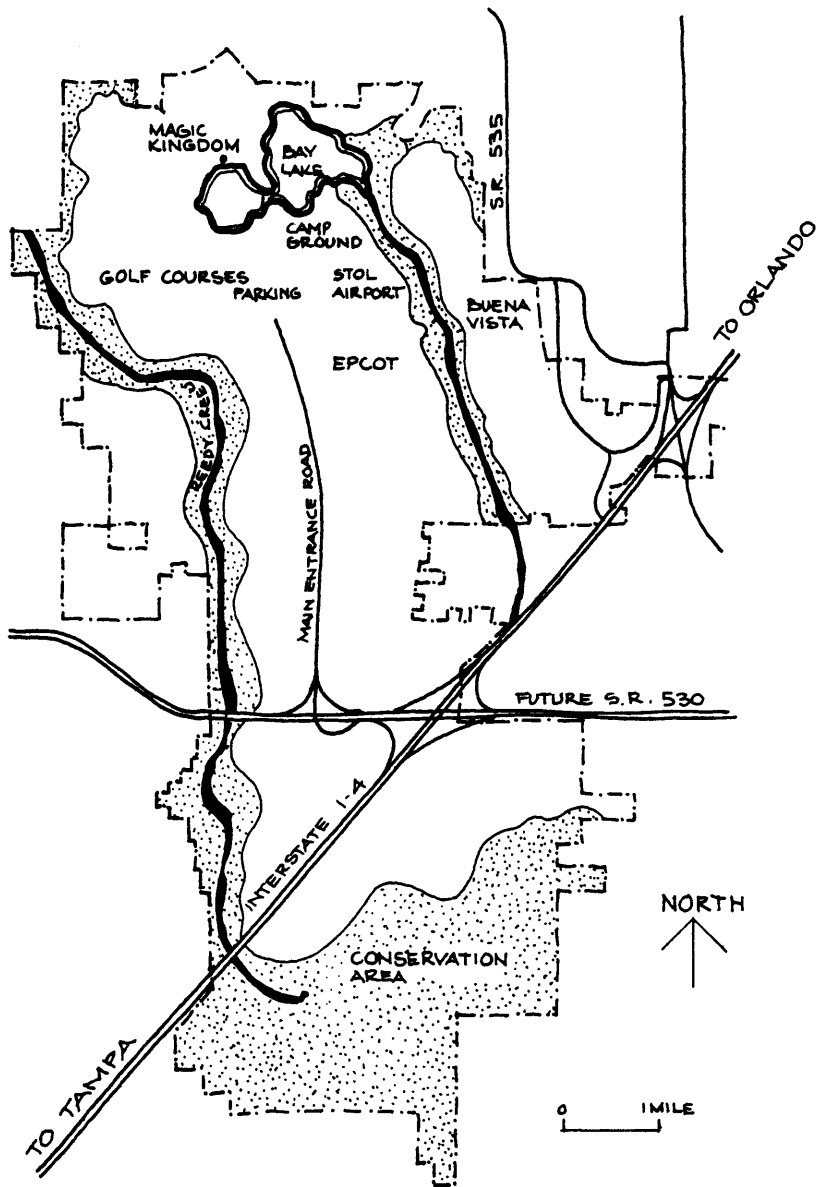
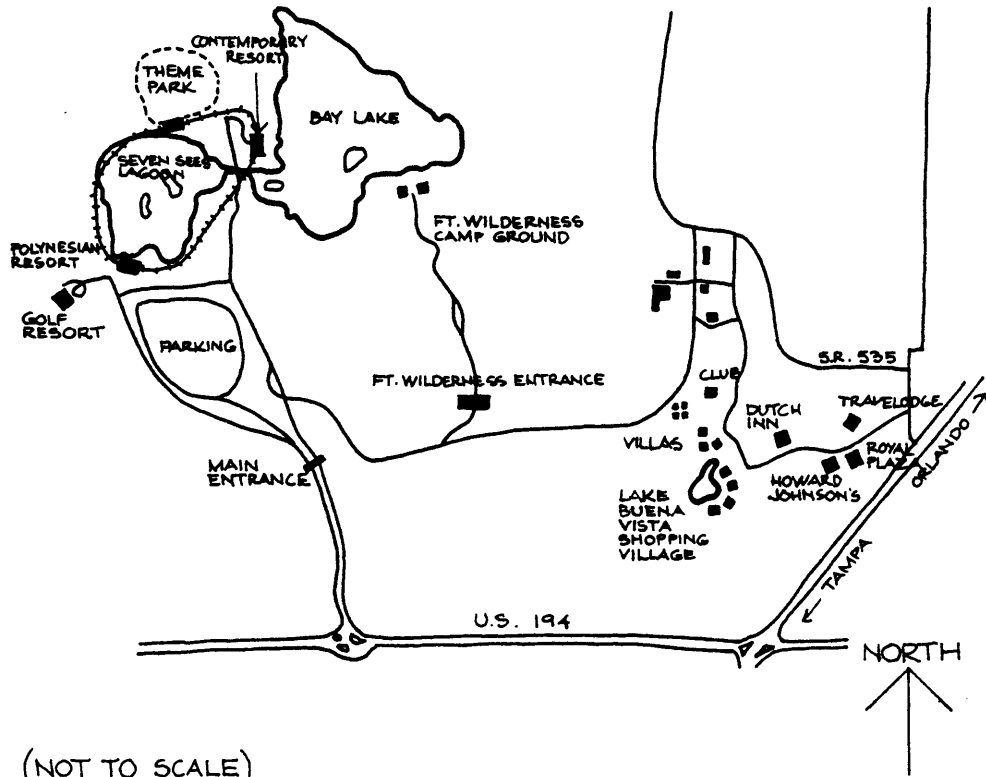


Figure 4.6  
Disney World - Entire project  
Source: Blake, The Architectural Forum, June 1972.



(NOT TO SCALE)

Figure 4.7  
Disney World - Phase 1  
Source: Blake, The Architectural Forum, June 1972.

Phase 1 of the ultimate development in Orlando, Florida, is now almost completed. It is called the Vacation Kingdom of the World, and consists of six theme hotels: the Polynesian Village Resort Hotel, the Contemporary Resort Hotel, the Golf Resort Hotel, the Asian Resort Hotel, the Venetian Resort Hotel, and the Persian Resort Hotel, (the first three have been built), plus a camp site with a variety of outdoor recreation facilities. These accommodations are linked together with the Magic Kingdom theme park (the amusement park, and the reason for being of the rest of the project) via a variety of transportation systems, the monorail being one of them.

Lake Buena Vista, located outside the Vacation Kingdom, consists of condominiums, motels and a shopping center. As it stands it is a second home community for wealthy senior citizens, much like the rest of Florida, but it is the Disney organization's prelude to Phase II, the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow (EPCOT) in an attempt to create, as Walt Disney said:

a community where people actually live a life they can't live anywhere else in the world today... It is to be a showcase to the world of the ingenuity and imagination in American free enterprise... When EPCOT has become a reality, it's our hope that it will stimulate American industry to develop new solutions that will meet the needs of people expressed right here in this experimental community.<sup>17</sup>

Since Walt Disney died without giving much detail aside from these words and a pie-in-the-sky conception of a city with an enormous megastructure surrounded by smaller buildings and monorail systems, a concept which looks similar to Le Corbusier's visionary schemes, the Disney organization has been trying to solve the EPCOT problem in a more realistic way, but within Walt Disney's framework. The loyalty and respect shown to his memory is

like the worship of a hero, and that will probably prevent any great deviations from his visionary scheme.

The first development within EPCOT is to be a World Showcase, a permanent international exposition, where many nations will participate by showing their national cultures and products. Connected to the exposition will be an International Village, a residential community where the several thousand people will live while working on their countries' pavillions. Meetings have been held with large American corporations, NASA, the National Science Foundation, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and diplomats from fourteen countries, and if the Disney organization manages to involve five to six nations, the project will start construction in 1977. World Showcase is, according to the president of Walt Disney Productions, to be non-profit, the reason being that "the company has a large number of employees, most of whom are young, with great pride in the company, and we want to keep that faith, and -- Walt Disney wanted it."<sup>18</sup> Other future satellites of EPCOT will relate to culture, education, seminars and conferences, health and medicine. More tangible projects will include an Airport of the Future, and an expanded transportation system to link the many different developments together.<sup>19</sup>

#### THE MAGIC KINGDOM THEME AMUSEMENT PARK

The one hundred acre amusement park, which is the main attraction for many millions of people visiting Disney World each year, is based on the idea of Disneyland, and here Walt Disney's technological fetish is carried out in terms of many inventions. The entire Kingdom rests on a service basement, where all utilities are neatly run in corridors. One of the few innovations which is not designed by the Disney organization is the Swedish AVAC sys-

tem, a garbage disposal system which pneumatically propels trash from fifteen stations within the park to a compacting plant hidden on the outskirts. In the "utilidors," as the service corridors are called, supplies are carried by electric vehicles to the different destinations, and so are the employees, an impressive army of well trained young people. The service basement also serves as a back stage for the stage above. Here is located the electronic control system for the Magic Kingdom, an enormous RCA designed computerized system which keeps the entire operation running. It is monitoring the fire detection system, the laundry, and all the rides and mechanical devices, automatically halting any malfunctioning equipment.<sup>20</sup> It seems almost an irony that all these technological wonders are operating a make-believe city - a fairy tale land inhabited by Walt Disney's Audio Animatronic robots who are the "actors" in the shows.

The Magic Kingdom, like Disneyland, is divided into theme areas: Main Street U.S.A., Adventureland, Frontiersland, Liberty Square, Fantasyland, and Tomorrowland. The main (and only) entrance to the Kingdom is reached by monorail, buses and ferries, taking people from the different hotels, parking lots, and the Fort Wilderness campground. Inside the paygate, a variety of transportation systems take over, such as horsedrawn streetcar (the only live animal exhibited in the park) old-fashioned firetrucks, steamdriven train which encircles the entire lot, gondola ride, WED peplemover (another of Disney's inventions in the area of mass transportation), and old-fashioned buses, aside from an enormous fleet of everything from weird looking submarines to Mississippi river stern wheelers.

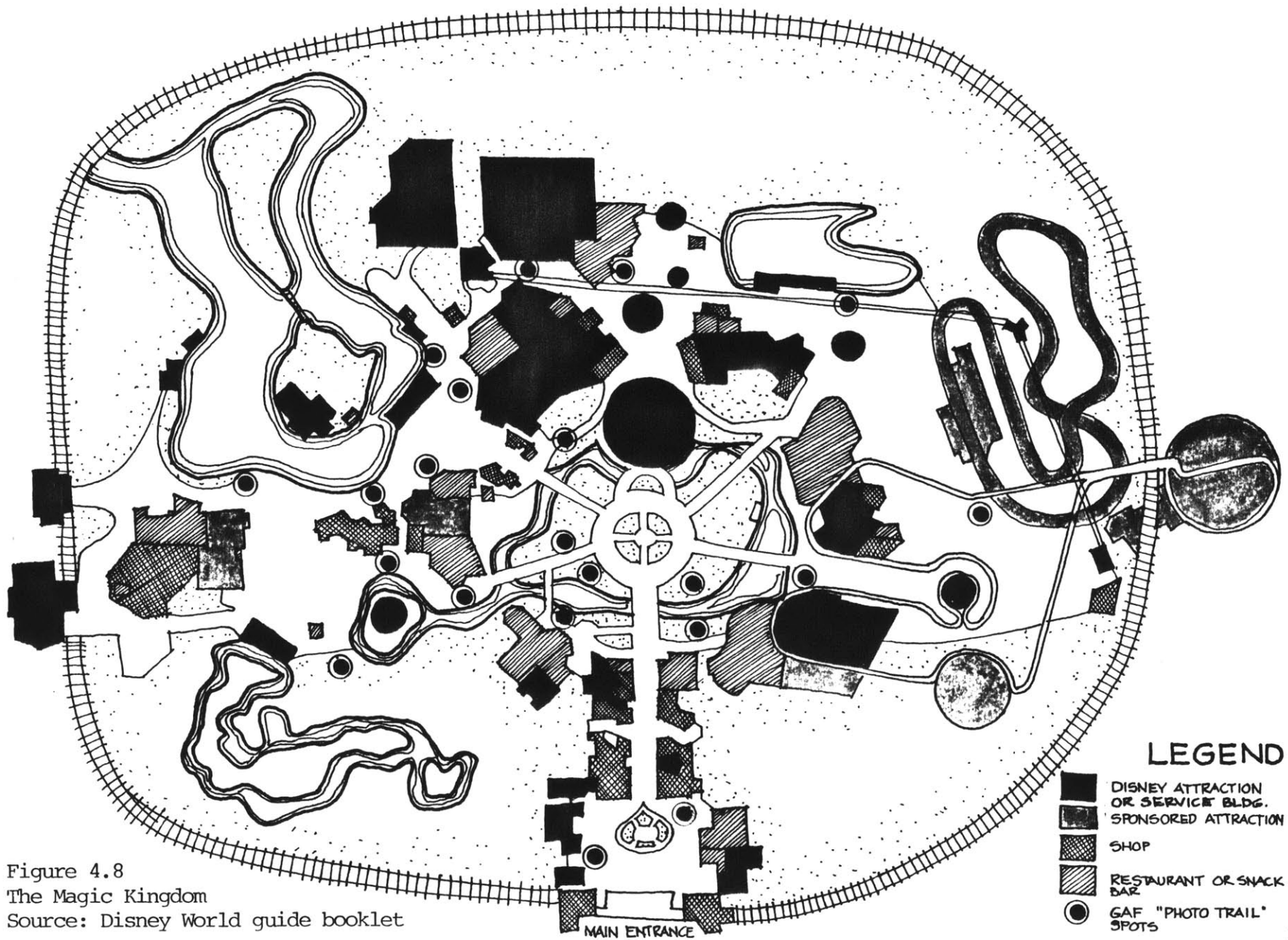


Figure 4.8  
 The Magic Kingdom  
 Source: Disney World guide booklet

Main Street U.S.A. is a shopping center, which is designed to make people feel happy, a well known fact being that when they are happy they buy more. It is a shopping mall made up by cute, 5/8 scale fiberglass buildings, of which mostly only the first floor is used, depicting an American main street as it exists in everybody's fantasy. It is built to reassure the throngs of middle class Americans that America is beautiful; there are no social problems, racial tension, rats, litter, crime, or nasty smells. Playacting is part of the game in this perfect city. Here people can relax in a way that they would never dare to in their own city square. The old-fashioned candy store is really more like a fairy tale candy store, with its white, pink and red wedding cake design. Main Street is a showcase which is designed to appeal to the large majority of middle class Americans and to fit into their fantasies. The familiarity and nostalgia appealing to Main Street's customers is aimed at giving them a sense of security. Robert Venturi said:

Disney World is nearer to what people really want than anything architects have ever given them.... It is a symbolic American utopia.<sup>21</sup>

As a public environment the Magic Kingdom is very successful. It is giving people what they really want, but it is given only to those who can afford it, and even then, only for a short period of time. The different theme areas are completely self contained, designed so as to shield the viewer from inappropriate sights. Each "land" has thus a total sense of place, something which the suburbs and most cities are missing, reinforced by its architecture, the employees' uniforms, the graphics, and even the trash bins. This is also true of the theme hotels and the campground. However, as a whole, the project comes off as a series of self contained, stereotyped theme environments, isolated in time and space, with nothing in between except a lake, and vast amounts of well groomed lawns.



If you are not a planner or an architect, the most popular attractions in Disney World would be the Audio Animatronic shows, invented by Walt Disney. It is basically a stage show where the "actors" are three dimensional cartoon figures or "robots." Walt Disney first experimented with this idea in Disneyland in 1963, and then at the New York World's Fair in 1964-65, where he ran four of the shows, using his invention. In the Magic Kingdom each show is completely computerized. The performance of an entire show is accomplished by simply pushing the button that starts the computer program. The computer exercises control and timing over a series of actions such as opening and closing doors, operating the lighting system, opening and closing curtains, in addition to giving voice and motion to "actors", ranging from Mickey Mouse to George Washington. Visitors are herded through the shows with amazing ease, considering the numbers (the park can take in 12,000 visitors per hour and 40,000 visitors a day is not uncommon). An elaborate waiting line system fakes the patrons into thinking that the line is shorter than it really is, and the unpleasant feelings that may arise, after having waited for twenty to thirty minutes, is eased by providing some form of entertainment "along the line" (which resembles a maze).

A large part of the enormous showcase that is the Magic Kingdom is taken up by commercial outfits of one kind or another. It might be a ride or a show sponsored by a large corporation, like the RCA Space Mountain (the only mountain in Florida),<sup>22</sup> or the Good Year Racetrack (seven out of the 35 ticket attractions are sponsored) or it might be a restaurant or snackbar sponsored by a food or soft drink company (Oscar Mayer, Borden, Coca Cola etc.). Ten of the 33 food outlets in the Kingdom are sponsored. Of the 47 shops, six are sponsored (GAF film, Coppertone etc.). Many of the commer-

cials are so skilfully done and so subtle, that Americans, who are bombarded with TV commercials and billboards everywhere they go, think that there is no advertisement at all. It is a "soft sell."

An example of how large companies advertise in Disney World is the RCA Space Mountain which opened in January 1975. The Space Mountain is a roller coaster type ride inside a dark dome, simulating a ride through space. RCA put eight million dollars into the venture, and therefore get the right to advertise. The Disney organization owns and operates the ride (they invested even more). RCA gets no proceeds from ticket sales, but executives in the company have no doubt about that the investment is a good one. When the lines of visitors get on the moving ramp spiraling up to the top where the ride starts, they are exposed to exhibit after exhibit on "future living." Everything they see involve RCA products - including the ride itself. An RCA official said: "When they leave they will think favourably about us, and what we make."<sup>23</sup> Eastern Airlines sponsors a ride which is free. It is called "If you had wings," and exhibits scenes of stereotyped environments in the places where Eastern flies. General Electric presents the "Carrousel of Progress," an Audio Animatronic show modelled after the one that was invented by Disney for the New York World's Fair. It is a circular theatre with six different stages, nostalgically dramatizing a review of "progress through electricity" in a typical middle class American home, from 1890 to the present. Aside from the show, the visitors are subjected to a cheery theme song, "Now is the best time of your life," and thinking of the tangle of cords cluttering up the house in the 1920's scene, they feel reassured that "this is the best time..." - thanks to General Electric.

Walt Disney World is programmed for a two-day's stay, and the following excerpts come from the guide booklet, which every visitor gets at the entrance gate.

1. Decide which attractions you want to see (extra tickets available in different areas of the park)
2. Begin in Tomorrowland on your first visit, and in Adventure land on your second day.
3. Visit the most popular attractions before twelve or after four.
4. Lunch before twelve or after two.
5. Shop early or mid afternoon.
6. Take your position for viewing the parade at 2:30 p.m.
7. At night relax with cocktails at one of the resort hotels or take a shopping tour to Lake Buena Vista shopping village.

GAF film, who is sponsoring the booklet gives advise about photography:

Follow the GAF photo trail for outstanding scenic pictures in the Magic Kingdom. The picture spots on this map have been carefully researched and selected as the best location for taking memorable pictures. Each spot ● has been marked by a photo trail sign providing useful information for colorful and exiting movies and still pictures. Blue photo trail spots have also been located at the hotels and other scenic areas around Walt Disney World.

## DISNEY WORLD NOTES

These are approximate expenses for a family consisting of two adults and two children, aged three to eleven, based on the recommended two-day's stay. (Figures are from January 1976 which has off-season rates)

2 adult ticket books (\$15 each).....	\$30
2 child ticket books (\$13 each).....	\$26
Accommodations for one night in a Disney Hotel (average)	\$52
Food for two days (based on observation of typical menus).....	\$100
Merchandise (average \$10 per person).....	\$40
Babysitter, extra rides etc.....	\$10
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES.....</b>	<b>\$258</b>

## Miscellaneous Information:

Total area..... 27,443 acres

Number of visitors in 1971..... 20 million

Number of employees in 1971..... 12,000

The Magic Kingdom is open year round from 9 a.m to 7 p.m. during off-season and 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. the rest of the year.

## CHAPTER FOUR FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Charles Moore, "You have to pay for the public life," Perspecta, The Yale University Journal, Vol. LX, Oct. 1964, p.82

<sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, "The profit in amusement parks," Business Week, June 24, 1972 p.116.

<sup>3</sup>Advertisement in New York Times, Spring, 1975.

<sup>4</sup>"The profit in amusement parks," Business Week, p.116

<sup>5</sup>David A. Loehwing, "Catch the brass rings - Amusement parks cash in on the bicentennial," Barrons, Oct. 13, 1975, p.3.

<sup>6</sup>IAAPA Manual and Guide, 1976.

<sup>7</sup>Loehwing, "Catch the brass rings," p.3.

<sup>8</sup>Roger J. Shaheen, "Message from the president," IAAPA Manual and Guide, 1976.

<sup>9</sup>Loehwing, "Catch the brass rings," p.3.

<sup>10</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, "Amusement parks can test products," Advertising Age, Nov.25, 1974, p.49.

<sup>11</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, "Bud's Old Country ads redied," Advertising Age, Nov. 25, 1974, p.49.

<sup>12</sup>Loehwing, "Catch the brass rings," p.3.

<sup>15</sup>Thomas Hines, Burnham of Chicago, (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 73-74.

<sup>16</sup>Paul Goldberger, "Mickey Mouse teaches the architects," New York Times Magazine, Oct. 22, 1972 p.40.

<sup>17</sup>Walt Disney Productions, The Story of Walt Disney World.

<sup>18</sup>Loehwing, "Catch the brass rings," p.3.

<sup>19</sup>Misc. publications and pamphlets issued by the Walt Disney Productions.

<sup>20</sup>Goldberger, "Mickey Mouse teaches the architects," p.40

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p.41.

<sup>22</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, "Why Florida has a Space Mountain," Nation's Business,  
March 1975, p.16.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER FIVE: AMUSEMENT PARKS IN SCANDINAVIA

## 5.1 SWEDEN - THE PEOPLE'S PARKS

The People's Park and People's House organizations were by-products of the labor movement, one of the popular movements which developed extensively during the last third of the nineteenth century. It is worth mentioning a few of the popular movements because they became strongly established political pressure groups in Swedish society.<sup>1</sup> Each movement advocated a specific program. The most common popular movements were the consumer cooperative movement, which sought to protect the low income families from exploitation by privately owned business; the labor movement, with its trade unions and political aims, seeking to strengthen the bargaining position of the industrial workers, to improve their living conditions and social status, and to assert their right to political participation; the nonconformist religious movements, which worked for greater freedom of worship; and the temperance movement, which preached the importance of abstaining from alcohol, to be thrifty and to be a good Christian. The temperance program read:

Every capable and healthy worker who follow these rules all through his life, will soon feel freedom from the suppression by the Capital... He shall feel happy and satisfied with his life.<sup>2</sup>

These various movements had many things in common, including the fact that the participants were mostly industrial workers and small businessmen, and that they were devoted to strictly practical tasks at the local level.

Parallel with these movements a whole collection of organizations evolved.

The labor movement, for instance, started its own temperance movement, since they did not agree with the religious orientation of the temperance movement.

They included religion when posing the questions:

Is not alcohol and religion the upper class' best weapon to hold the masses down as uneducated and apathetic? Is it not the best way to aquire obedient slaves and scab?<sup>3</sup>

The only political party to evolve out of the popular movements was the social democratic party, which was the political wing of the labor movement. As opposed to the other movements which only concentrated on specific issues, the social democrats provided a total alternative, which aimed at changing the entire society.

Freedom of speach, although agreed to in law, is dependent on space and time, like everything else in this world, and we have realized the importance of space in a very painful way. Therefore we have built our own house, where we can get together for meetings without being interrupted, and where we can discuss our common concerns, and where we are granted a safe place of refuge for our thoughts.

So spoke Axel Danielson, a leader of the labor movement. He had just finished a long prison term, due to his political belief. The historical occation was the dedication of the first People's House building in Malmoe, Sweden, in 1893.

The construction of their own meeting house became very important to members of the young labor movement. It inspired activity and creativity, and became a symbol of their belief in a better future. The building of their own house was an expression of a growing self-respect amongst the groups in society that were not given civil rights.

The background to the great moment of dedication of the first People's House was filled with which hunts, prison terms and rebellions against the



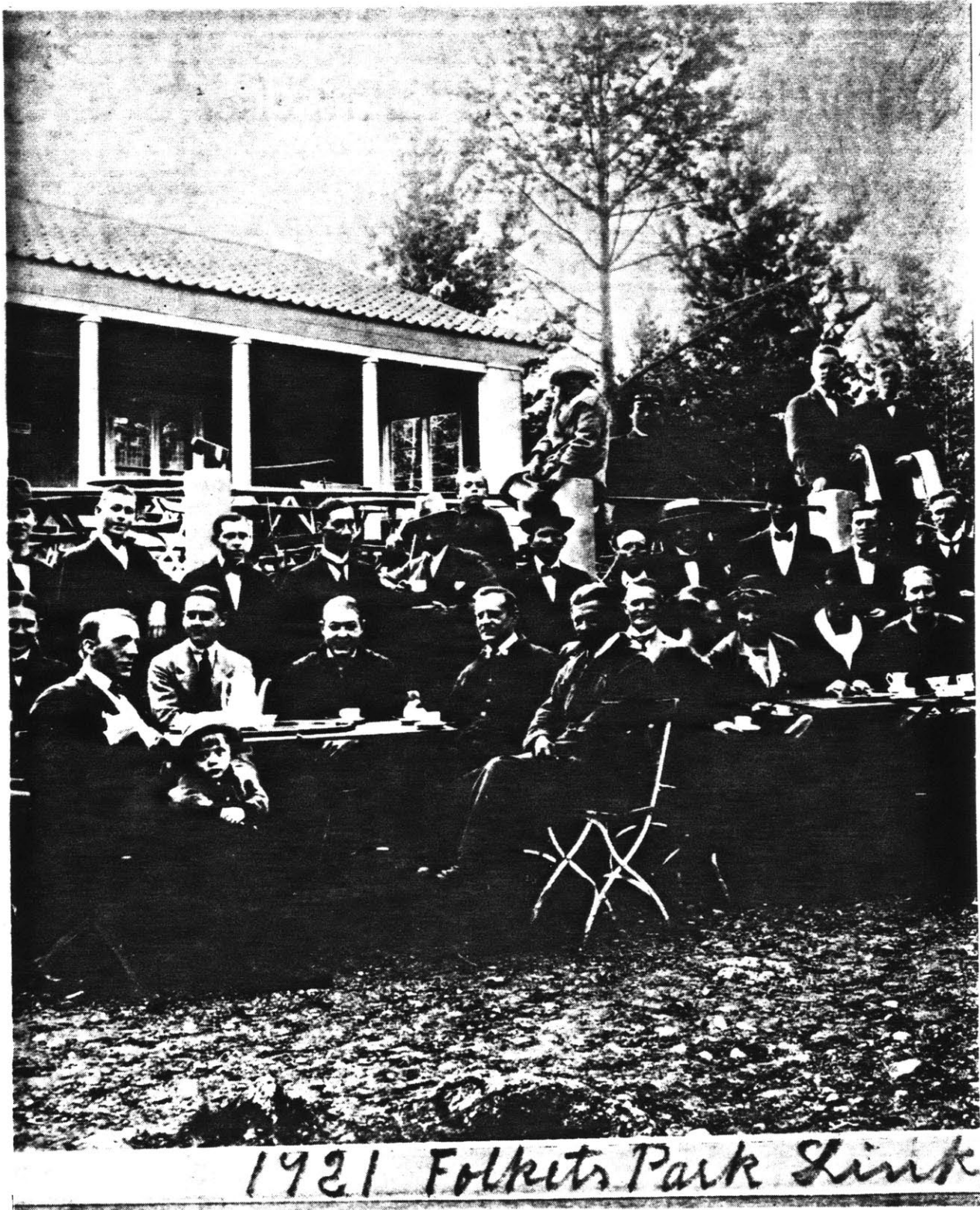
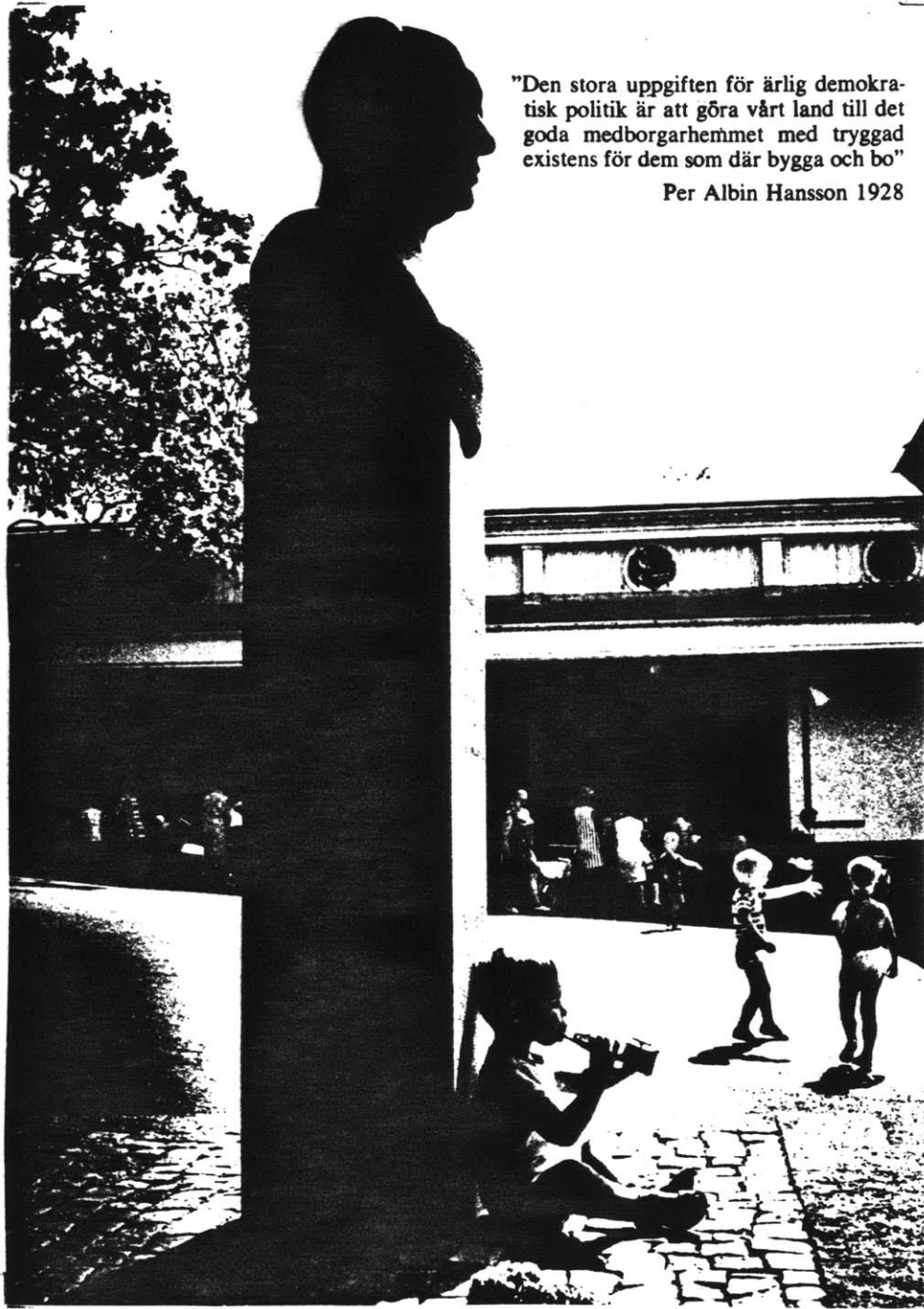


Figure 5.1  
People's Park, Linköping, 1921  
Source: People's Park pamphlet



"Den stora uppgiften för ärlig demokratiskt politik är att göra vårt land till det goda medborgarhemmet med tryggad existens för dem som där bygga och bo"  
Per Albin Hansson 1928

Figure 5.2  
Bust of labor leader in People's Park  
Source: People's Park pamphlet

ruling class. The workers were often denied the right to assemble out of doors and to rent a meeting space was nearly impossible. Most of the existing meeting spaces were owned by the nonconformist religious movements, the temperance movements or the municipalities. All of these organizations had enough meetings of their own scheduled during the few spare hours that a worker had in those days. Besides that, some of these popular movements were hostile to the labor movement. There was obviously a great need for the workers, not only to have their own meeting spaces, but also to have their own parks for mass meetings, amusement and recreation of a kind that fit their needs: a practical park with cheap amusements, playground and picnic facilities. In 1886 the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) proposed to acquire a house for their activities (office and meeting space). Each local branch would put away a sum of money each year into a House Fund. A few years later the labor unions in Malmö issued a proclamation of the selling of shares for People's House Building Corporation. This was the start of all their building activities, and between 1893 when the first People's House in Malmö was opened, and 1902, when the one in Stockholm was completed, there were about fifteen new buildings constructed throughout the country.

The name People's House originated from the French Maison du Peuple, the name of the socialistic labor party's building in Brussels, one of several such houses in Belgium, containing shops and other spaces suitable for leasing. The People's Palace in London was a gigantic building containing an array of activities such as concert hall, theatre, library, reading rooms, sports halls, swimming pools, shops and an extensive vocational training school. In France the municipalities contributed funds to their Maison du Peuple.

From the time of the first People's House radical cultural leaders were making energetic efforts to infiltrate the movement with their own values. One person worked out a complete program which dealt with building such houses in all towns and villages, open to all people. These ideas had been dealt with before. During the Renaissance in utopist planning there was almost always some refined cultural temple located in the center of the community, an idea which has again become popular in the form of community centers and "all-activity houses".<sup>4</sup>

The People's Park organization, besides serving as a place for mass meetings, provided summer recreation and entertainment, such as theatre and amusements, and thus complemented People's House. The first People's Park was built in Malmoe, in 1890. This was the workers' own park and it had facilities, that previously were not within the reach of the lower classes. The existing city parks were formal gardens where the upper classes promenaded on sunny afternoons. There were of course natural reasons why the People's Parks developed first in the larger cities. The main objective was to provide a park for meeting and recreation for the city workers who lived in crowded, unsanitary apartments. In the country, on the other hand, they were important for other reasons: to provide enlightening entertainment such as theatre, and also to provide a place where the people could meet for dancing. The Malmoe park contained cheap concessions, a beer garden, a coffee shop, picnic tables where people could eat and listen to music, and a playground with swings and a merry-go-round. There were also two dance floors and a burlesque theatre (simple outdoors facilities). In their general design these parks were similar to the American "trolley" parks. In 1891, the unions in Stockholm acquired a summer park for celebration and recreation. They bought Sickla Zoo Inc.,

which was an existing zoo on the outskirts of Stockholm, It was a park which was especially functional for the workers and the middle class. It had victory gardens, where small lots could be rented for \$2.50 per year.

By 1906 the number of facilities existing in the country was so large that the People's Park Central organization was established as a central organization to act as an address and information bureau and to collect statistics about the establishments. It also worked as a booking agency. In 1922 a ware procurement agency was founded to supply the facilities with common wares, such as chocolate, furniture, china, lighting etc., at low prices.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1930's when the movie industry was booming, People's House started converting their meeting halls into movie houses in order to take advantage of this new way to obtain income. The People's Parks engaged a great number of well known artists and theatre companies, and the quality of the parks was raised considerably. The period of growth and building activities ended with World War II, when many People's Houses and Parks got a new use, as military barracks. Other facilities were forced to close because of the black-outs, and the scarcity of fuel prevented people from moving about. After the end of the war and up to the early 1950's the People's Parks enjoyed great popularity. A large part of society became interested in the People's Park movement which resulted in more aid in the form of municipal money for many purposes. The size of the aid varied from \$150 as a contribution to theatre performances to \$15,000 for operating expenses (1955). As a result of the growing number of buildings and parks (in 1955 there were 1,000 People's Houses and probably as many Parks) the organization had to take into ac-

count the cultural and political content of the movement. Because of the broad selection of entertainment activities and recreation, the People's Parks and People's Houses appealed to groups outside the labor movement. There was an ideological pressure on the organizations to increase the number of quality movies, theatre, art, education and exhibits to be spread to the public.<sup>6</sup>

The building and maintenance costs were important issues for People's Parks as well as for other non-profit organizations. People's Park and People's House both had to be self supporting. The original starting capital consisted of share writings by the trade unions and private persons, but it was far from enough. To help the economy, profit making ventures were planned. There were six-penny meetings, ticket balls, masquerades, bazaars etc. In the buildings which were big enough, a small assembly hall was partitioned off to be rented out to different organizations and private persons.

In 1906 the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions had introduced new lending institutions, since the People's House and People's Park organizations were often denied credit in the regular banks and credit institutions. The early 1950s became the most intense as far as building activities were concerned.

Swedish television which started official broadcasting in 1954, had a stifling effect on the rest of the amusement industry in the later part of the 1950's. The theatre and the movie industry started to crumble and even dancing, which always has been the most popular activity, especially for the young, lost its popularity for a long period of time. The small People's Houses and Parks in the country were especially under severe economical strain and

many had to close. During the 50's and 60's when new legislation went into effect establishing longer vacations (four weeks) and a shorter work week a new interest in recreation made itself known at all levels of government. There was a great deal of interest in provision for public meeting, recreation, and adult education facilities. New loans were introduced by the government and money was channeled through the different organizations which worked for the public good. This meant hard competition for the People's Parks from all kinds of commercial and government enterprises. The People's Parks did not receive much help, with serious consequences for many parks, which had to close. A phenomenon that helped some of the People's Parks to survive the grim times of the unfaithful patrons was Bingo. The sports organizations have monopoly on Bingo, but they rented the required space from People's Park or People's House.

During the late 1960's the interest in TV subsided, a new interest in theatre appeared and in 1973 an active period started, with the construction of new buildings, redevelopments and additions. This had to do with the recent restructuring of the society. A new system was introduced, dividing up the country into larger districts, with a central city or town, with a result that the surrounding and supporting countryside (hinterland) became larger, and smaller towns had all their public facilities such as medical clinic, city hall etc. assimilated into the larger central city. This also affected People's Park and People's House, which, in the countryside, are now used mostly for Bingo and private parties. Even the trade unions were centralized so that several local unions merged, thus requiring no need for space in the small towns. The People's House and People's Park in the cities, as a result of that, and as a result of the increased mobility of the rural population, are now taking over the responsibilities both for amusements and

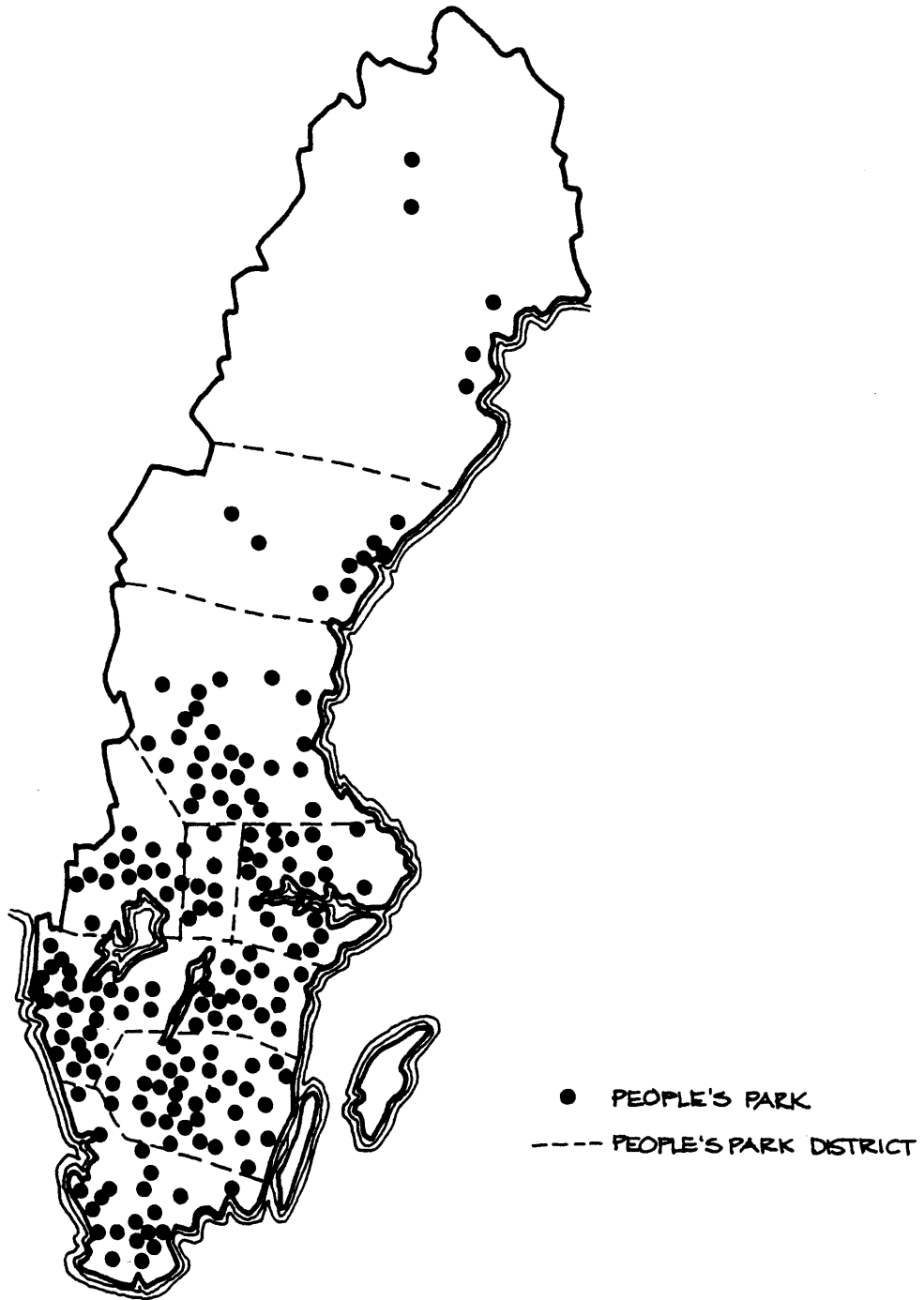


Figure 5.3  
People's Parks in Sweden  
Source: People's Parks Central organization pamphlet



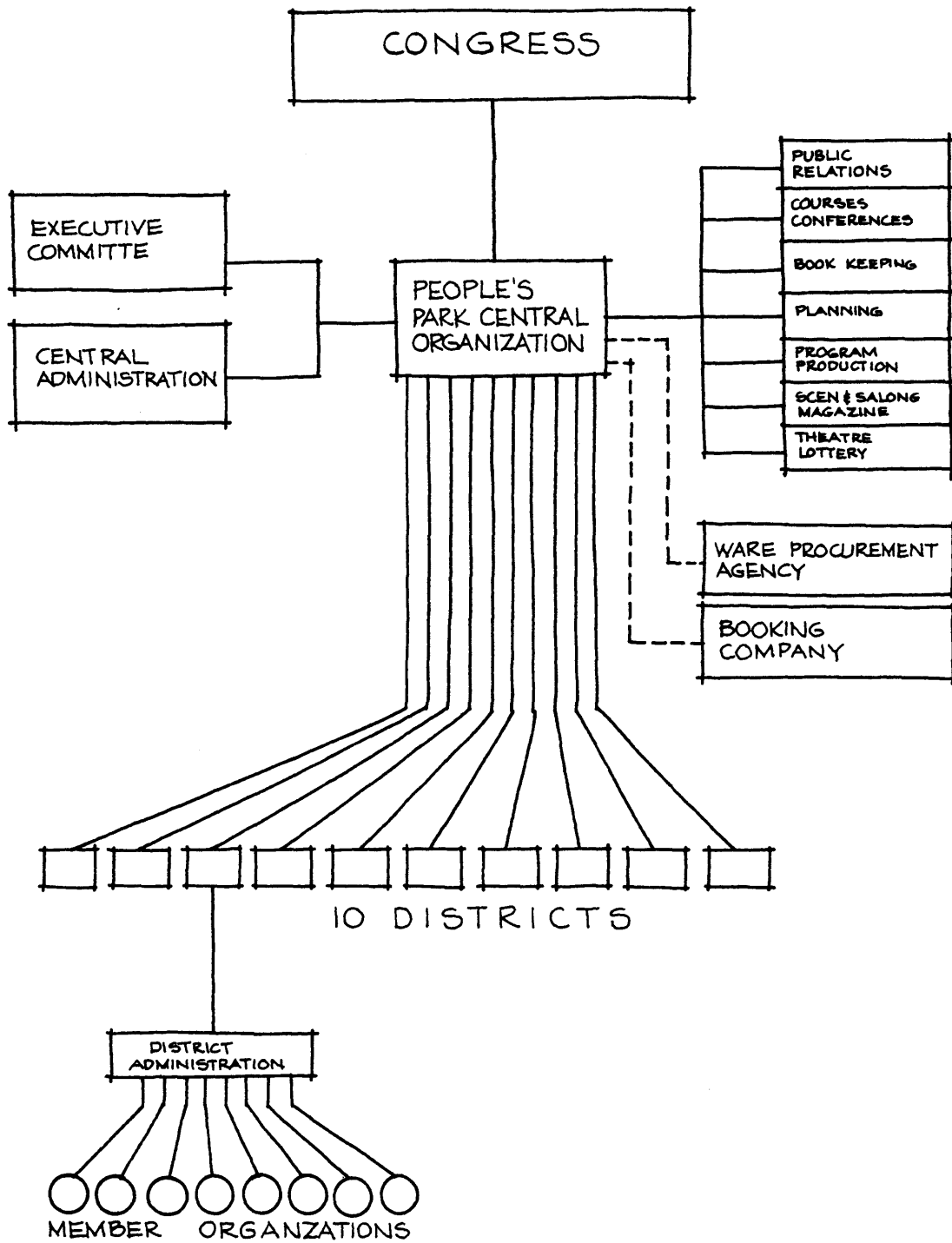


Figure 5.4  
 People's Park Central Organization - organization chart  
 Source: People's Park pamphlet

politics in the district.

The Parliament passed a bill in 1974, providing for increased support to public assembly facilities. Basically, this means that new premises would qualify for support in the form of grants and loans of up to fifty percent of the approved building cost. This implied a cooperation between People's House and the local authorities and, as a rule, direct involvement by the local authorities.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF PEOPLE'PARK

The Congress is the highest legislative body and meets every three years. The Congress consists of one representative from every member organization. It reviews the work of the Central Organization, and reacts to proposals suggested by member organizations.

The People's Park Central Organization is responsible for getting satisfactory service for member organizations and it aids them in negotiations and contracts with the government, municipalities, and county legislators.

The District Organization. There are ten districts, each one with a district administration. They hold district conferences to vote on administrative measures and to plan for activities within the district. The cost of their activities are covered by the member organizations.

The Member Organizations are organizations, municipalities or enterprises which work in conformance with the Central Organization's principles. Eighty percent of the member organizations are of a business form called an economic association, which means that they are registered by the county administration. The share holders in the economic association are the local unions (75%) and the rest is made up of non-profit organizations and private patrons. There

is a yearly meeting where the share holders vote for administration and other functions. In the larger organizations there is a full time manager who takes care of the facilities, hires people, etc. In the smaller parks the premises are often maintained by voluntary or very low paid workers on their free time. Every economic association is independent, and profits are used for maintenance and new construction. There is no private profit involved.

The People's Park Booking Agency engages artists, actors etc. of all kinds, domestic and international, for performances in the People's Parks and other amusement establishments throughout the country.

Scen & Salong Magazine is owned by the People's Park organization. It specializes in theatre and film reviews, and it also discusses the activities of the Parks. It gets government subsidies.

The Jenny Lind Stipend in cooperation with the Royal Academy of Music, gives stipends to young female vocalists.

The People's House and People's Park School of Management, is a one year program that trains managers for the facilities.

The Planning Department is working closely with the government and county authorities for development within the districts and counties. They also work with other recreation administrations, such as sports administrations, in the planning of bowling facilities, skating rinks, swimming pools, exercise loops, city parks etc. This cooperation is meant to achieve economical and functional solutions for land use, transportation, parking, sanitary facilities, etc. The planning department works in the interest of the People's Parks with anything from regional planning to the design and construction of facilities, and they employ their own architects and planners, except in the case of larger projects, for which there is usually a design competition which gives other architects the task of design.

The People's Park organization is cooperating with the other organizations which grew out of the labor movement. The trade unions and the labor movement were of course the "parents" of the organization, and they are naturally closely related even today.

The Workers Association for Adult Education (ABF) existed during the 20's and 30's and worked in close cooperation with the People's Park, a relationship that has grown weaker as the two movements grew and became more specialized. In those days, when the People's Park Theatre had just started to tour the countryside, ABF arranged study circles in connection with the plays, in order to stimulate interest. The study circles have 750,000 members now (1971/1972) as opposed to 1,000 in 1920.

The National Touring Theatre was founded in 1905, when the People's Park Theatre was the only theatre company providing shows for people outside the big cities. From having been originally owned and operated by the People's Park organization, it is now independent, but the Central Organization has one representative in its administration, and the two work together in the production of the ambulatory branch of the theatre.

The Art Association of the Popular Movements was founded in the 1940's in order to make quality art, mostly in the form of lithography or the other graphic arts, available to the masses at reasonable prices, and to give them quality art exhibits. The founders were a number of organizations (IO, the Cooperative Society, trade unions, etc.). The parks are now especially interested in outdoor exhibits of different kinds, such as sculpture and crafts as well as exhibits which demonstrate a process or a production which educates people about ecology, nature, etc. The conventional art exhibits also have a place, but they have to be combined with education, interviews, and debates in order to stimulate interest.

The People's Park Organization has increasingly enjoyed cooperation with the government cultural institutions described below, but the organization expresses a desire for even closer cooperation with both government and other organizations.

The National Touring Theatre, which was mentioned before, has mostly summer performances in the Parks, but the season (May to September) could be lengthened, in order to make use of their winter productions. Most of the Parks have indoor facilities, and in the areas which do not, great care has to be taken to change the production, if possible, to fit the outdoor facilities. More cooperation with the Royal Opera and the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm is desirable. Lately the operetta and the musical have been the dominating theatre forms, but in the future there will be an increase in the plays and ballet. More experimental theatre and productions by and for immigrants are also greatly needed.

Swedish Travelling Exhibitions. There has been cooperation with this institution since 1969. The exhibits are usually geared to the local history, local arts and crafts, and nature study. The art works are both exhibited and sold. More cooperation with the local libraries and museums is sought.

Foundation for Nationwide Concerts. The third government institution has seven regional offices, each staffed with a producer and other personnel. Music Weeks are produced in the parks each year, but even more cooperation and a broader spectrum of music, including jazz and pop concerts is needed.

These three National Institutions also have consulting functions in some fields, such as technical equipment, pedagogic teaching aids and questions about theatre space requirements.

The People's Park organization also has close cooperation with:

The County Cultural Institutions.

There is a county library and a county museum in every county. The National Theatre has performing groups in five counties. The Regional Music Organization has eight regional offices each with a conductor and an orchestra. In some regions with larger cities there are city theatres and symphony orchestras as well, which are financed by the government and the counties.

The municipalities.

Most municipalities have a city library and a city museum. City art galleries and exhibition space exist in many of them. No great amount of cooperation exists between these city facilities and the People's Park, a situation which is likely to change in the future.

Other Groups Within the Cultural Sector.

More cooperation is desired with musicians unions, domestic arts and crafts associations, folk dance organizations, amateur theatre groups, and many other non-profit organizations.

Other Countries.

On the international level many contracts have been established with countries in Africa, Asia and South America. Several times there has been exchange of artists and performances with the Soviet Union and China and exchange is made with the U.S. for the Jenny Lind Stipend. Because the Parks receive no subsidies from the government for their productions, most of the international performances have to be more commercially oriented than is desired. The circus art is kept alive by the Malmsten Troupe, founded in 1901, and the oldest variety group still touring. It contains artists from both the Eastern and the Western world.<sup>7</sup>

## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ON THE PEOPLE'S PARKS

Finances.

In a report from the ten year period, dated March 1975, the Central Organization states the economic situation as follows:

45 parks have experienced a better financial situation

Reasons: More municipal aid  
More folk dancing  
TV not so popular any more  
Upgraded facilities  
Rental from Bingo

2 parks were taken over by the municipalities because of economical strain

21 parks have experienced worse financial situation

Reasons: Higher costs  
Less patrons  
Not up to date facilities

13 parks get no municipal aid

73 parks get municipal aid to a total of \$2,300,200. This gives an average of \$31,510 per year. However, the fluctuations go between \$1,000 to \$250,000.

3 parks receive county aid of a total of \$20,000.

Municipal aid is given to cover typically:

Playgrounds  
Guards  
Theatre  
Rent for use of facilities  
Youth facilities  
Childrens activities  
Senior citizens' activities  
Zoo  
Landscape and other maintenance  
Interests and mortgages

The program set forth by the People's Parks Central organization divides up the different functions of the park of the 1970's thusly:<sup>9</sup>

### The Meeting Park

People's celebrations  
 Folk dancing  
 Political, union and religious meetings and congresses  
 Studies, debates, lectures, course, and conferences  
 Creative activities  
 Reading room with books, magazines and phonoteque  
 Chess room

### The Entertainment Park.

Dancing (pop, Folk dance and discoteque)  
 Popular artists, show, revue and variety shows  
 Amateur artist forum  
 Tivoli, raffle, pin-ball games and bingo  
 Restaurant

### The Day Park.

Flowers, fountains and paths  
 Playground and fairy tale village  
 Childrens' theatre and puppet theatre  
 Animal and bird park, aquarium and terrarium  
 Badminton, mini-golf and croquet  
 Swim and exercise facilities  
 Campground  
 Cafeteria

### The Cultural Park

Theatre, opera, operetta, musical and ballet  
 Concerts: jazz, folk music and pop music  
 Film, phonograph concerts and cassette TV programs  
 Exhibitions of all kinds  
 Cultural historical collections  
 Local history



## A TYPICAL PEOPLE'S PARK SHOW

There is a great deal of difference between the audience at an outdoor People's Park show, and the audience of the same show performed indoor. The People's Park audience on a typical Saturday night usually doesn't show much interest in the show, and some people do not even attend, even if they have paid for it with their admission fee. During my observations, I noticed that most people are more interested in dancing and meeting each other, and since the audience is about eighty percent youth on a Saturday night, the two sexes are more interested in meeting each other than attending the show, unless the show is exceptional with some big names in it.

A show is always thirty minutes long, which seems to be the ideal length. It has to be so loud and lively, that drunks have no chance to be heard. The beginning of the show, especially, has to be a loud and clear: "Here we are folks." With the youthful audience in mind, the best thing to continue with is some rock music, but whether it is rock or not, the show has to be quick and clear. A lot of things have to happen. The typical audience wants to have fun and laugh a lot, and they really seem to laugh at funny hats, false noses and kicks in the rear. The parodies are sure things, but the political satire, which had been appreciated in a restaurant show, doesn't usually fit in the People's Park. The Saturday night audience doesn't have much patience. The show should end in a beat that enables people to clap their hands and stomp their feet. The park changes faces from day to night, and from day to day. The show has to be quite different on a Sunday matinee, than on a Saturday dance and dating night.<sup>8</sup>

## CASE STUDIES

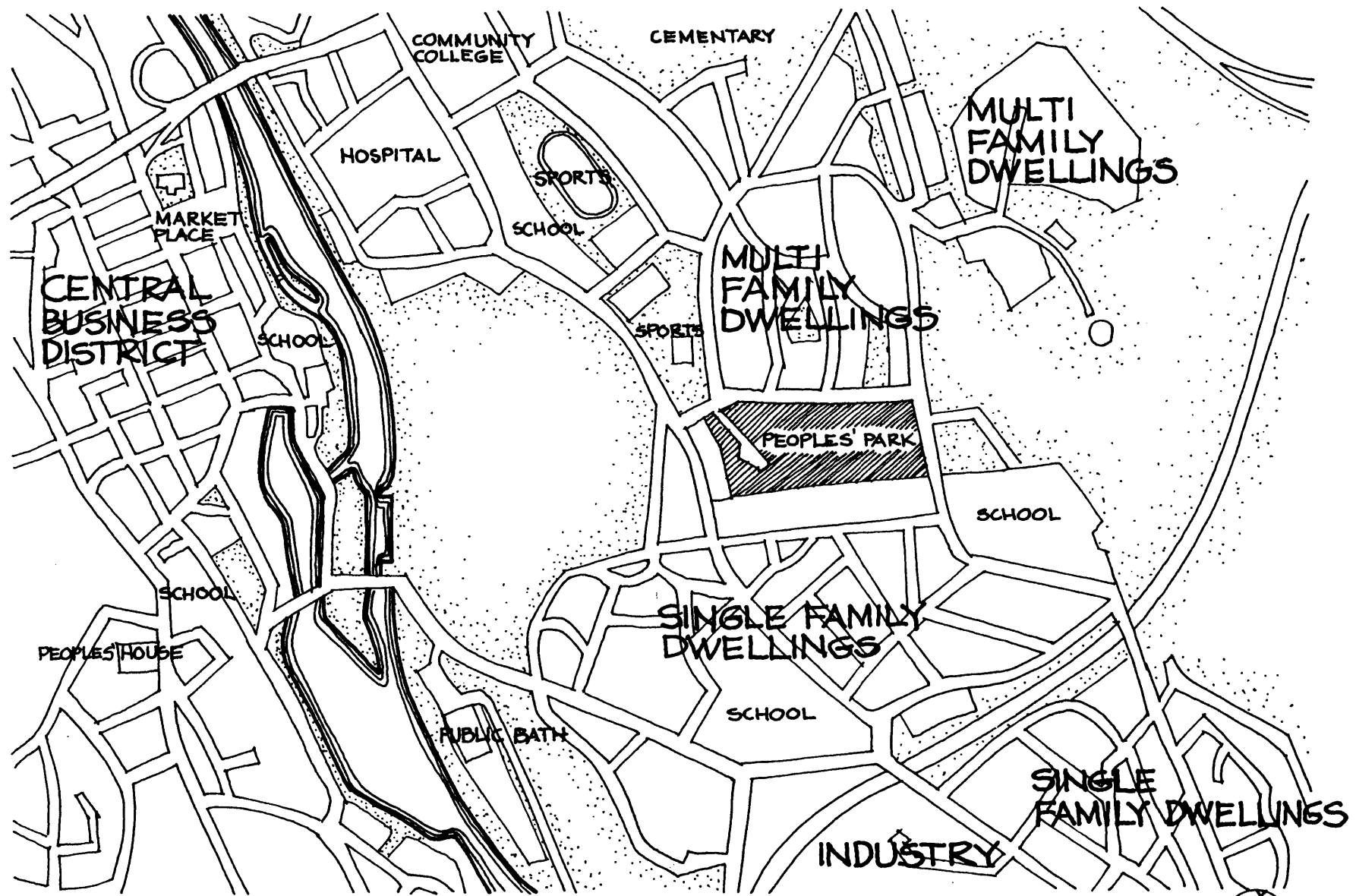
Södertälje People's Park.

The city of Södertälje is located within the Stockholm metropolitan area, about 20 kilometers southwest of the city. The park is located on a hill on the outskirts of the city. After parking the car in a large parking lot at the bottom of the hill, I started the circling path up towards the gaily colored and brightly lit entrance. Outside the park, in the woods, a few young people were acquiring some courage from a bottle. After paying the admission fee of about \$2.50, I entered through the main gate. This was a typical Saturday dance evening, and I arrived at about 8:30 p.m. There was a mixed audience, as far as ages go, but predominantly young. Many arrived after 10 p.m. There was a clear separation between the people under twentyfive and the ones over thirty. The older category was mostly couples, and they seem to indulge more in the folk dancing that was taking place in a dance pavillion at the rear of the park. It seemed apparent that most of the audience was made up of blue or white collar workers.

The place struck me as very lush and green. Bright colored lights were placed around the perimeters of most of the structures and along the perimeter of the park. There was an abundance of grass, birch trees and flower arrangements. In the rear of the park, there were some more intimate spaces with benches, and there was even a small pond with waterlillies. In front of the pond was a bust of one of the founders of the social

democratic party, towering and illuminated, as if reminding people of their commitment to the labor movement. The different concessions were all very standard for a park of this type, which is mostly open on Saturday and Sunday nights only. The other buildings included a shooting gallery, mostly used by older men, a candy booth, a raffle booth where a lady from the social democratic party's womens' organization was selling chances to win teddy bears and other stuffed animals. Connected to the shooting gallery there was a large hall, filled with one armed bandits and different kinds of pin-ball machines, which were mostly used by teens. A large, covered dance pavillion was the main feature of the park, located near the entrance. A rock band was playing the latest Swedish and American tunes, and people were either dancing or standing in front of the dance pavillion looking for somebody to dance with or just looking at the dancing people. Opposite the dance pavillion was the cafeteria on a veranda, where coffee, soft drinks and weak beer was sold. It was a nice place to sit and relax and still be part of the activities and see the different people drifting in and out of the park. There was also an old outdoor theatre made of wood, with open sides. It probably seated about 600 people.

There was a show at 10 p.m. featuring some Swedish rock group. Most people attended the show, which seemed to be appreciated. The stomping, shouting and hand clapping was either due to appreciation of the singers, or the amount of alcohol consumed before entering the park. After the performance, which lasted thirty minutes, there was increased activity on the dance floor, and at the end of the evening the benches at the rear of the park were heavily used. The park closed at 1 a.m.



SCALE 1:10 000  
 100 0 100 200 300 400 500 METERS

Figure 5.5

The City of Södertälje  
 Source: The City of Södertälje tourist map of 1975



### Västerås People's Park.

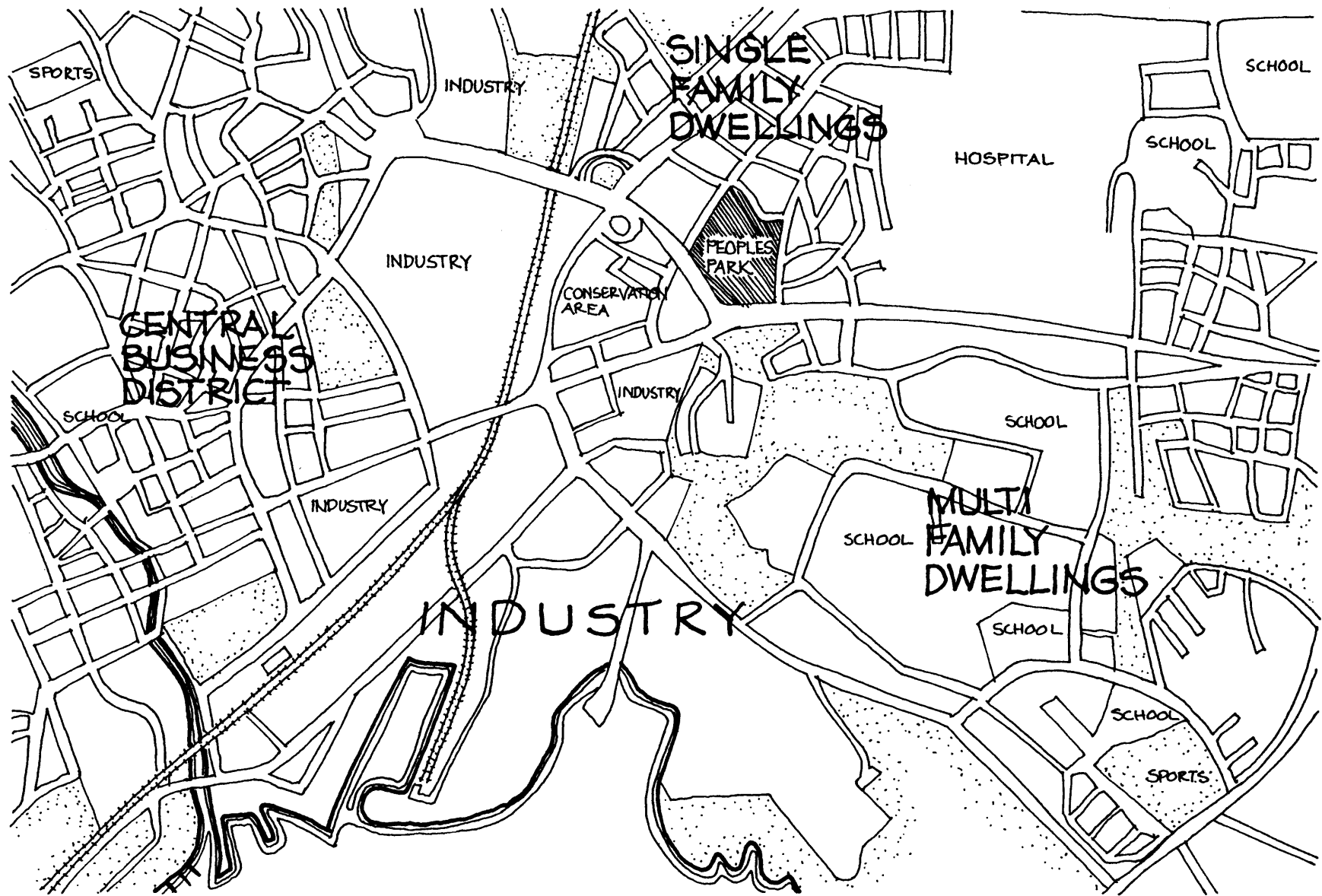
The city of Västerås is located 100 kilometer west of Stockholm on lake Mälaren. It is an industrial city, with about 100,000 inhabitants. The Vasteras People's Park is one of the oldest parks in the country, founded in 1899. The park is a typical day park, and much larger and more complex than the one in Södertälje. The large plant of ASEA is located in Vasteras, which gives it a large population of working class.

I was visiting on a sunny and warm Sunday afternoon. The visitors consisted mainly of families with small children, and senior citizens. When I arrived there was an informal performance by three members of a mime group from the National Touring Theatre. People were sitting on the grass or on benches watching the performance. Afterwards they went to the amusement part of the park or to the cafeteria.

The cafeteria was situated on a hill, overlooking the rest of the park. It was part of a building complex, containig a large celebration hall with a gallery, which at the moment was filled with tables and chairs, and seemed to have been used for a Christmas party, judging by the decorations. The name of the complex was Gasthaus, but its German connection was only present in the graphics. The outdoor cafeteria was very pleasing with its fountain and flowers everywhere. There was a small stage, where a group was singing and playing Swedish tunes from the 50's. They seemed to be moderately appreciated. The food and drinks were the usual: sandwiches, pastry, coffee, soft drinks and weak beer.

The amusement part of the park had a large, rather conventional playground situated near the entrance. There was also a pottery shop where one could watch pottery being made and even buy some. In conjunction with it there was a small cafeteria. A miniature railroad encircled a small, rocky hill. Hidden amongst the birch trees was a small dance pavillion, and behind a wooden fence, richly decorated with paintings of cowboys and Indians, was the nursery where the plant material needed on the premises was grown. There was an abundance of different kinds of raffle booths, shooting galleries, bumper cars, swings and rides of different kinds. In addition there were candy and ice cream stands, hot dog stands etc. In the middle of the park was a large pool, surrounded by brightly colored flowers, and benches which were all occupied by senior citizens.

The park gets subsidies from the city and is generally free of charge during the day, but charges an admission ranging from \$1.25 to \$3.75, when there is a show, which usually takes place in the evening. Amusement rides are 25 cents each.



SCALE: 1:15000  
 100 0 100 200 300 400 500

Figure 5.6  
 The City of Västerås  
 Source: The City of Västerås tourist map of 1975





Figure 5.7  
People's Park, Eskilstuna  
Photograph by author.



## 5.2 DENMARK - TIVOLI

In strong rebuttal to the specialization and segregation of amusements and amusement parks in the U.S., exists the well known example of Tivoli in Copenhagen. The history of this unique amusement park dates back to 1843, when the Danish king signed the lease for the grounds to a young author, soldier, and bon vivant named George Carstensen. Denmark was at that time in deep trouble economically and politically due to involvement in the Napoleonic wars and Carstensen's argument to the king was that "when people play, they do not think of politics." In addition to dissatisfaction with political issues, the Copenhageners lived a dreadful life inside the walled, overcrowded city.

The site which Carstensen had in mind for his venture was located on the peripheral defense berm and consisted of fifteen acres, encompassing three points of the star, and part of the moat. The idea of Tivoli originated in the seventeenth century English pleasure gardens and especially the Vauxhall garden which Carstensen admired. The project was financed as a corporation, since Carstensen was moneyless, and in 1843 Tivoli-Vauxhall opened, only a couple of months after that the lease was signed. It became an instant success with the people. The illuminations which were the main attraction, originated in a venture which Carstensen had staged a few years back, when publicizing his newspaper. These banquets with illuminations were very popular events taking place in the Rosenborg gardens or the Christiansborg riding school, and it is likely that they led to his idea about building a Tivoli as a possible profitable venture.

At the opening Tivoli had a promenade lined with trees, and amusement devices such as a roller coaster (the first one in Denmark), merry-go-round, rifle range and a skittle alley. The Concert Hall, the illuminations and the theatre were located at each point of the zigzagging promenade, which followed the moat, using the slopes as viewing areas. There were also a number of eating and drinking places with tables for those who brought picnic baskets, and there was an outdoor stage where circus acts were performed. From the beginning Tivoli had its own Concert Hall Orchestra, which had great appeal to the Copenhageners. The music was light at first, with Viennese waltzes, but during the course of a few years symphonies were slowly established as regular features, much thanks to Tivoli's own conductor and composer, H.C. Lumbye.

After a couple of years the public interest started to decline, the reason possibly being that the novelty started to wear off, and as times got worse for Tivoli economically, Carstensen was blamed for the condition, being a man with little respect for finances. He left the directorship and never returned to Tivoli again. After a few bad years Tivoli had established itself, and the evolution which brought it to what it is today started. Many outside forces contributed to this evolution - urban growth being one of them. In the 1860's Copenhagen suddenly expanded to the outside of the walls, and Tivoli found itself surrounded by the city. The City of Copenhagen bought the land where Tivoli stands from the crown in 1868, and this new ownership had a serious effect on the development of Tivoli, because now the location started to be shifted. The first transformation took place when the city announced plans that a new railroad station was being built in 1900, and consequently the street between Tivoli and the new railroad station had to be widened. To compensate for this loss of land, Tivoli got new land along the

south side, and the developments following that transformation came to create the Tivoli that we see today. The changes which took place during this time period include an expanded amusement area and a new, bigger concert hall in addition to the old one which was retained to serve as a place for lighter music performances. It was also during this time that an increasing degree of segregation of the different activities took place. This mirrored the increasing complexity of the world outside. There are now three general areas, maintained by the management to be different, but in practical life one is never aware of any borderlines between the different areas.

The quiet area has many trees and lush planting along the lagoon, hiding the buildings as much as possible. The amusement rides and games are concentrated into a relatively small space, in order to create an intense atmosphere of noise and flickering lights - it is a very high-energy place with a mish-mash of different activities. The central place is large in scale. It is a somewhat monumental place, suitable for parades and large audiences. It is also a very popular place to sit and watch the crowds, and it functions very much like a city square. Here is the monumental building, the concert hall, and here are also the open air theatre and the Tivoli Theatre.

Tivoli changed constantly up until 1910 and this building process makes one think of what Carstensen once said: "Tivoli will never, so to speak, be finished." Temporary exhibits had always been popular and from the beginning Tivoli was prohibited by the crown from erecting any permanent structures, because of its location on the defense berm. Any permanent structures located here could be used by foreign troops attacking the city, something

which was a real threat at that time. In 1910 when many of the buildings were permanent structures, and Tivoli was already established, there were attempts to create different atmospheres by adding different temporary exhibits. In 1909 Tivoli celebrated the Arctic explorers and there was a North Pole exhibit, and in 1912 a medieval town was created. Other exhibits included a City of the Future in 1917, and in 1934 country life was exhibited romantically in a series of scenes from rural Denmark. It could then happen that some of the exhibits became especially loved by the visitors, and were thus incorporated on a permanent basis. This happened with a little fisherman's cottage from the 1934 exhibit, and it is now used as a restaurant.

The public seem to have had a great influence on Tivoli's evolution and in response to the life of the citizens outside, Tivoli adopted new activities and added new buildings to fit their fancy. The dance hall was built in response to the great interest in ballroom dancing during the 1920's. The main characteristics of the evolution taking place in Tivoli was this responsive growing and changing process.

In 1944 during the Nazi occupation, several of the most important buildings were destroyed, but rebuilt later. Most of them were rebuilt in close resemblance to their predecessors. An exception was the concert hall, which was finished in 1956, and the new version had a completely different design with no regional or period motif, unlike most of the buildings at Tivoli, which were inspired by near of far Eastern architecture interpreted in a loose way. Examples of this are the Pantomime Theatre (Chinese) and the Bazaar (Turkish).

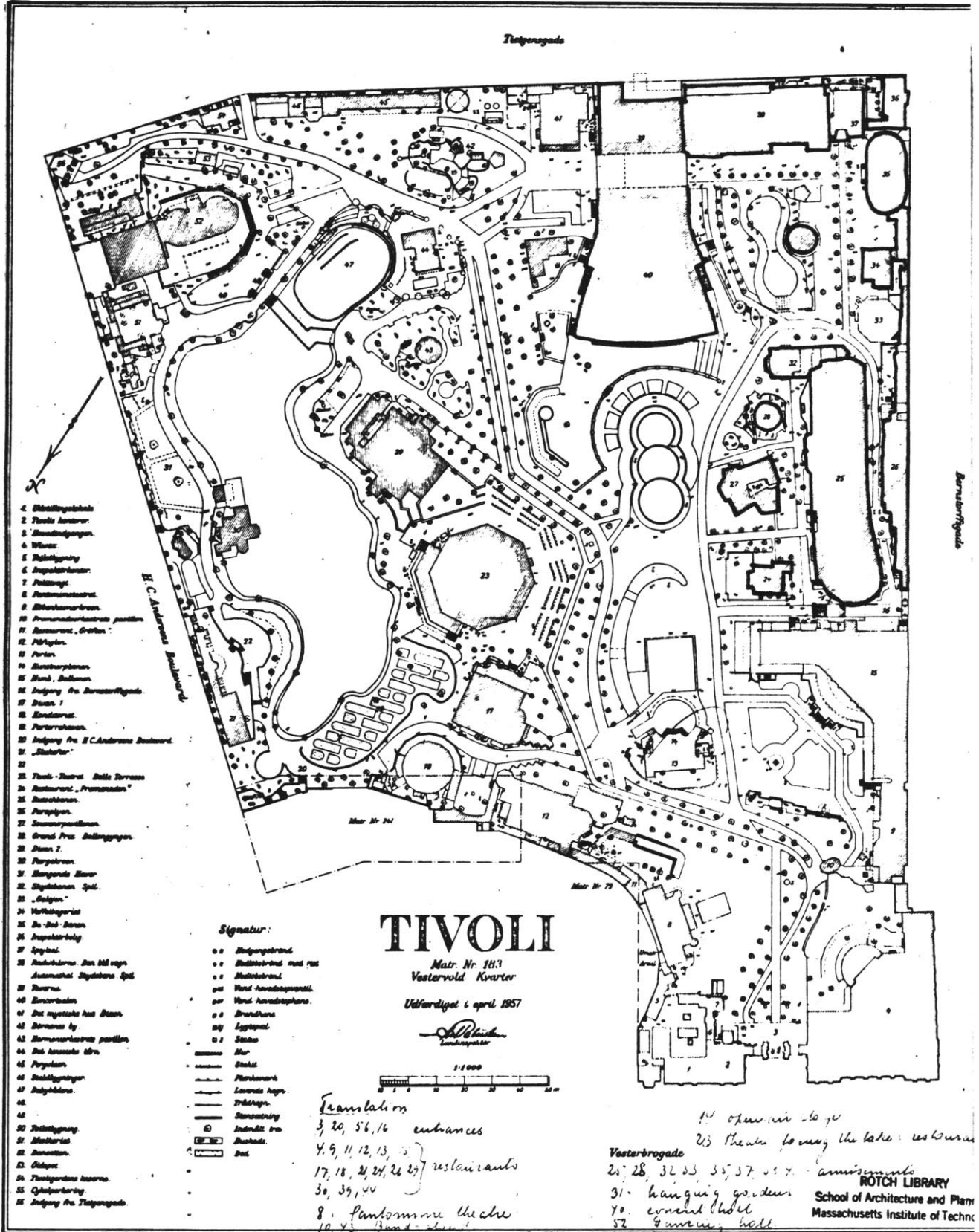


Figure 5.8  
Map of Tivoli

During the 1950's, the number of tourists increased considerably and now Tivoli had to make more efficient use of the entire grounds, since expansion was impossible, imbedded as Tivoli was in the heart of the city. An effort was made to distribute activities so that all parts of the park were efficiently used. During this time children's rides and a children's playground was established. Tivoli of the earlier years had not been a place for children, but reflecting the changing attitudes of the times, again Tivoli responded.<sup>10</sup> Now the children are quite numerous in Tivoli, making up about seventeen percent of the visitors (1957),<sup>11</sup> and a trip there, especially those arranged as public school trips, is something that almost every Swedish or Danish child has done at least once.

Among the attractions especially loved by the children are the free performances at the Pantomime Theatre, which take place every night. The act attracts 2,000 - 3,000 people nightly to the Peacock Theatre as it is commonly called due to the design of its stage curtain. The building dates back to 1874, but the act itself is as old as Tivoli, and it has its origin in the Italian commedia dell' arte, which in turn had its roots in ancient Greek farce. Translated by the Danes to fit into their culture, the characters from antiquity were transformed into much less frightening and slightly bourgeois forms, which the people could easily relate to. The mime acts have four main characters; Kassander, who in commedia dell' arte had the name Pantalone and was a greedy old master, has all the attributes of high morals and wholesomeness of the burgher in Danish eighteenth century. Mimus Albus - the white actor and a comedian, is translated into Danish in the form of Pjerrot, the fat and clumsy clown, who is Kassander's servant, and who always fumbles and does everything wrong. He has a special appeal to

the children. Harlekin and Kolumbine are the eternal lovers, and they also have a long story of evolution through history before they ended up in Tivoli. Kolumbine is here Kassander's daughter, but Harlekin is extremely elusive. Sometimes he is Kassander's servant and sometimes not, but he has connections with faires and magicians, and he loves Kolumbine, and even though Kassander and Pjerrot try to prevent them from seeing each other, the play always has a happy ending of the two lovers being brought together, a scene which is triumphantly accentuated by red blazes of old fashioned fire works. This mime art has been saved to our days by the unique establishment which is Tivoli, where it has been performed on summer nights since the opening in 1843. One of the reasons that it has survived might also be due to the fact that Tivoli has been taking over the economic responsibilities. Indeed if Tivoli is a landmark in Copenhagen, the Pantomime Theatre is a landmark in Tivoli, both as a popular piece of entertainment, and in its unique building with its stage curtain in the form of a large peacock with a brilliantly colored semi-circular fan which folds down on both sides to expose the stage.<sup>12</sup>

The most unique aspect of Tivoli which makes it different from other similar establishments is, aside from its location in the hart of Copenhagen, the enormously successful way in which it serves as a public environment, bringing all groups of the society together, with a variety of atmospheres and entertainment to fit all tastes. William Elroy Curtis in Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden says in a description from 1908:

The popular place of amusement is a garden called Tivoli where under the green trees, through all the summer months, from 4 o'clock in the afternoon until midnight, people of all ranks and ages meet. It is a democratic assembly, and all the comers are treated alike. The aristocracy and the middle classes sit at the beer tables side by side with workmen from the city and peasants from the country and

enjoy a programme that is equally varied... The peasant and the banker both lift their hats when their sovereign or one of the princes or a lady from the royal family passes by, but the heir to the throne rubs elbows with the servant girls and their soldier lovers when he watches the pantomime or the fire works. There is music from 4 o'clock in the afternoon until midnight, and on holidays the place is open until morning. 13

A contemporary widely read guide book, Europe on \$5 and \$10 a Day, by Arthur Frommer, describes Tivoli Thusly, aside from elaborations about "vivacious blondes" and "pretty secretaries:"

Step one foot inside and you'll want to camp here for life. A vast amusement park in the heart of Copenhagen, this is one of Europe's top attractions - the lightest, loveliest most refreshing area in the world, brimming with both good-hearted fun and culture.... I don't want to appear blunt, but if you come to Copenhagen and miss this place you are simply off your rocker. 14

There seem to be a consensus among tourists and Copenhageners alike that Tivoli is a very special place. Even if each of the parts that make up the whole exists somewhere else, Tivoli comes off as a tremendously diverse environment, where the different parts work together, enhancing and taking part in each other.

#### A TYPICAL DAY

A typical day at Tivoli starts at 9 a.m. when there are only a few visitors. The restaurants and many of the amusements open at 12 noon and then the crowd increases. Most of the visitors are elderly or office workers from the surrounding business district, strolling or eating their picnic lunches. The admissionfee is about 25 cents before 2 p.m. After 2 p.m. admission is about 60 cents on weekdays and \$1 on Saturdays and Sundays. The crowd increases during the rest of the day slowly and steadily, and after 5 p.m. the range of visitors change from predominately elderly to workers from the surroun-



ding city, who stop by for a drink or just a relaxing stroll before dinner. At 6 o'clock the Promenade Orchestra introduces the evening with a concert from the music pavillion at the entry. Now young families with children arrive, the rides and the Pantomime Theatre being the most attractive to them. At 7 o'clock there are performances by tight rope dancers and acrobats at the open air theatre, an activity which has been present since the opening. This is also free. At the same time the first concert in the concert hall takes place by the Tivoli Symphony Orchestra or guest performances. These are usually free, unless a special guest performance is taking place. Around sunset all the lights come on in the park, transforming it into a fairy tale land of light and color. John Lyle said:

Now the lights have come on and Tivoli undergoes a metamorphosis, the most complete and dramatic of the day, becoming a fantasy of colored lights - blue, green, red, and yellow points etching the outlines of the tallest buildings, glowing from the trees and shrubs.... This is the moment when Tivoli really comes into its own as an environmental medium with complete control over the visual field. Man and milieu are joined together - the outside no longer exists.<sup>15</sup>

The fire works start at midnight on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday nights, a tradition which has been kept in Tivoli since its opening carrying the tradition of Carstensen's illumination fetes. At midnight after the fire works the park closes.

## SOME NOTES ON TIVOLI

Tivoli is a private corporation (A/S Københavns Sommer-Tivoli)	16
Net profit in 1968.....	\$317,360 <sup>17</sup>
Total area.....	about 20 acres <sup>18</sup>
Number of tenants (1958).....	80 <sup>19</sup>
Number of restaurants (1958).....	23 <sup>20</sup>
Average number of visitors daily in 1968.....	30,890 <sup>21</sup>
Total number of visitors in Tivoli's history (-1968)	179,909,193 <sup>22</sup>

## CHAPTER FIVE FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The Swedish Institute, Profile of Sweden, (Stockholm: Alb. Bonniers boktryckeri, 1972), pp.25-27

<sup>2</sup>Dagens Nyheter, Sept. 23, 1973.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Bengt O.H. Johansson, "Folkets hus i folkhemmet," Arkitektur, July 1973, pp. 3-5.

<sup>5</sup>Misc. publications and pamphlets issued by Folkparkernas Centralorganisation, Stockholm.

<sup>6</sup>Johansson, "Folkets hus i folkhemmet," p.7.

<sup>7</sup>Misc. publications issued by Folkparkernas Centralorganisation.

<sup>8</sup>Dagens Nyheter, June 30, 1973

<sup>9</sup>Misc. publications issued by Folkparkernas Centralorganisation.

<sup>10</sup>John Lyle, "The relevance of Tivoli," Landscape, Spring-Summer 1969, pp.7-18

<sup>11</sup>Tivoli notes, July 1958.

<sup>12</sup>Dagens Nyheter, July 8, 1973.

<sup>13</sup>Lyle, "The relevance of Tivoli," p.13.

<sup>14</sup>Arthur Frommer, Europe on \$5 and \$10 a Day, (New York: Arthur Frommer Inc., 1973) p.221.

<sup>15</sup>Lyle, "The relevance of Tivoli," pp. 20-21.

<sup>16</sup>Tivoli notes, July 1958.

<sup>17</sup>Lyle, "The relevance of Tivoli," p.6

<sup>18</sup>Tivoli notes, July 1958.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Lyle, "The relevance of Tivoli," p.6.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

In order to put the different analyses into perspective, it seems necessary to discuss some of the cultural differences between the Swedish and the American societies. Many of them are obvious, and others are rather elusive and hard to define. However, I will not attempt to make a cultural analysis, but to bring out some aspects which, in particular, have affected the developments of amusements along two philosophically different lines.

As described in chapter five, the fact that the People's Park organization grew out of the labor movement, is the most significant factor in Sweden's development of amusements for the industrial workers. On the other hand, we have seen in the American development how amusements were provided for the workers as a profitable venture for the traction companies and others. Even though these first parks provided the workers with much needed fresh air and pleasant activities, this was not the concern of the producers, who were only out to make a profit, capitalizing on the horrible conditions in the industrial cities. How these traditional parks fared we have seen in the decline of these parks and in the new development of theme parks. Americans have, from the very beginnings of the industrial age, grown accustomed to think that they have to pay for amusements and recreation at the same rate as they have to pay for other commodities. We have seen how the amusement parks have developed into large corporations which in turn are sponsored by even larger corporations. We have seen that at every point in history there has been something which an enterprising businessman could make a profit on - from the Puritan work ethic to the workers quest for self education to the regional mobility created by the automobile which in turn led to the decline of a public environment in the Los Angeles example.

In Sweden, the workers quest for self education had much more favourable conditions under which to develop. In the creation of People's Parks, the establishment of an identity was taken care of by the workers themselves, by creating the amusement parks to fit their particular needs, and by maintaining complete control over the ventures.

The commercial involvement in the American amusement parks mirrored the system of free enterprise, which, as they grew and became more specialized, forced the consumers to pay more and more for their products, used the parks to advertise their products, and conducted market research.

In the Swedish example, the parks were originally based on political motivations, almost exclusively for the working class. Their main goal was to create political awareness and to provide education; entertainment was secondary. Today, however, the political image is almost gone, and the parks are almost entirely devoted to amusement and recreation. They are used by all classes in the society. Because the parks are non-profit, the funds can be used to extend the services to the more underprivileged groups, the elderly and the rural population. This makes possible a close and friendly alliance with both the local and the state governments. Their interests coincide to a large extent.

In the U.S., on the other hand, the various levels of the government and the private sector of the recreation and amusement industries seem to have completely different views, making cooperation extremely difficult. The educational and more cultural amusements, similar to the programs in the People's Parks, are therefore not possible. Instead of this, the Americans get bombarded with stupifying advertisements, and instead of a creative use of

their free time they get channeled through a program of scheduled activities.

The market aimed at in the two countries are, as a result, pointedly different. The "dollar vote" is the rule in the U.S., where the market is aimed at those who can afford to pay, leaving the poor with nothing provided for them. In Sweden, the aged make up a large percentage of the users, especially during the day, and special bus trips are arranged so that they can get together in People's Park for dancing, theatre or musical performances. The poor in Sweden can not quite be compared to the poor in the U.S., since the entire lower class group is practically missing in Sweden.

The segregation and specialization in American theme parks stands in strong contrast to the integration and diversity in Tivoli. The physical setting is, of course, a fundamental difference when comparing Disney World to Tivoli, but some aspects of how the park relate to the surroundings might be worth mentioning. As we have seen, Tivoli evolved slowly during more than a century in a very close relationship to its surroundings. It is in a real sense a public environment available to anybody, tourist or Copenhagener alike, who cares to use it, since cost is not a prohibitive factor. The city seems to in turn, have respected Tivoli by not threatening its existence to any large extent. This mutual understanding and respect between Tivoli, the city of Copenhagen and the public, has led to a very successful environment with a wide variety of activities. In contrast to Tivoli, Disney World is available only to those who are relatively affluent. It too, has a variety of amusements, but they are not as widely varied as in Tivoli. They are mostly variations of a certain kind of entertainment, designed for a special large group in the society, even though some of the fringe groups also are attracted.

Disney World which is isolated from any major city, is well protected from any infringement, and stands in strong contrast to Tivoli which is enclosed by the city. Instead of enhancing the environment, Disney World has created great ecological, economical and social problems. Even though Disney World did not directly produce many of the ecological problems, the hotel and restaurant establishments built by less conscientious developers along the edges of the Disney World property has caused serious threat to the Floridian aquifer, which provides a large part of the state with its water supply. The property prices and the cost of living have skyrocketed in the area, and many low income families have been forced to move. In addition, the large staff working in Disney World are paid very low wages (around \$5,600 per year), an income category whose taxes do not match the urban services they use.<sup>1</sup> Disney World being under its own jurisdiction, and therefore paying property taxes to itself, also has had an adverse effect on the surroundings. The public on the outside has to pay for new roads etc. to help solve the immense traffic problems created by Disney World's more than 20 million visitors every year.

Another fundamental difference is in how the users relate to the park. Tivoli is a place where people have freedom of choice of activities. They drop in at the time of the day that fits their schedules, unless going to a specific performance in one of the theatres. At night Tivoli transforms itself into an establishment designed for those who want to enjoy the summer night in a variety of different ways, and it has a place for the rowdy element with amusements to fit their fancy. The Magic Kingdom, or any other part of Disney World for that matter, does not have a place for this night crowd. It is a look-at environment, stimulating well-established fantasies, but like a scene from a Hollywood movie, it does not deal with the real world outside in the way in which Tivoli does.



Fantasies play an important role in the American theme parks as we have seen. These fantasies are mainly: fantasies about other cultures and the people in those cultures; American history about the Frontier; The "good old days" of the turn of the century small town life; tropical islands; and future living. The theme parks also suggest another common fantasy, often expressed in the name of the park. The fantasy about happiness is present in names such as Happy Land, Dream Street, Joyland, and Dreamland, and they illustrate the American quest for happiness, which might be another phenomenon created by advertising.

Of course all cultures have fantasies about other cultures, most of which is derived from fairy tales, novels, movies, tourist propaganda etc. In the case of the Americans, the concept of the "hyphenated Americans," discussed by Daniel Boorstin,<sup>2</sup> seems to have a great deal to do with the exaggerated fantasies about the different cultures, that prevail in the theme parks. Even the second or third generation seem to have nostalgic feelings about the cultures from which their ancestors came. Styles have been developed in architecture, furniture, household appliances etc. to depict Mediterranean, Spanish, or French Provincial styles, but they have little to do with the authentic styles, . are really fantasies about those styles, and are not necessarily used by the corresponding ethnic groups. The idealized design might also be an imitation of what the upper classes in respective country had, and here in the U.S. these styles become symbols of the reaching of higher social status in society.

In creating nostalgic fantasies about American history, Hollywood's movie industry, and the later development of TV, has played an important role

even though these media only stereotyped ideas which already existed. Even here architecture, furniture design, etc. are using the fantasy of American history in form of Early American and Colonial styles which have very little to do with the corresponding pieces one sees in museums. The theme parks using those themes fit well into everybody's fantasies. For example Frontierland symbolizes a glorified period; it is a free world where every man has an equal chance for success, if they work hard and act fairly. It is a fantasy about a highly individual society, where a man is brave, strong, fair, shoots fast, and can drink a bottle of whiskey in a swallow, without showing the slightest sign of drunkenness. Women are mostly bar girls, but also frequently appear as old, devoted mothers, and young beautiful wives. In the fantasies about the West and the Frontier, the American Indian fits in somewhere on the fringe. In the theme parks he represents an exotic, colorful creature. There are few parks where the Indian seem to have inspired theme - he is always present, sometimes in the company of his wife and children, as in Disney World, but never emphasized. Maybe he represents an element of danger, but the relationship to him is always that of "Missionary to barbarian."

The turn of the century "good old days," romantic little town is a fantasy elaborated on in the parks. As mentioned in the discussion of Main Street U.S.A. in Disney World, this is a fantasy which seems to inspire happiness. It gives people a sense of home, established life and security. This is one of the "ideal living situation" fantasies, in strong contrast to the world outside. Here on Happy Street everybody is friendly; there are no busing problems or racial tension. In addition there are no blacks. The fantasy about blacks is almost negligent. They are ignored unless they are happy servants or otherwise kept on safe distance or in roles of little importance.



Figure 6.1  
Disney World Parade  
Photograph by author.

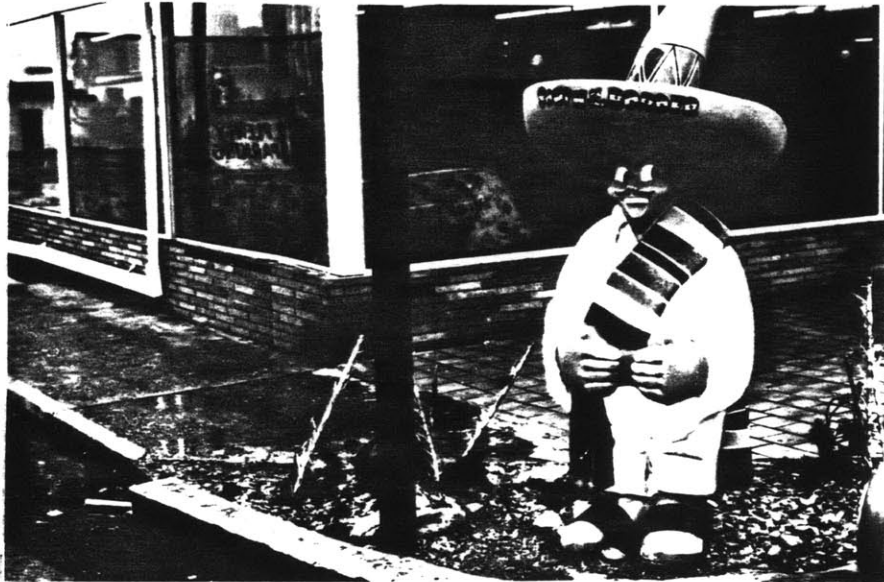


Figure 6.2  
"Pedro," South of the Border, Hamel, S.C.  
Photograph by author.

American black culture is limited to the life in the Old South. South American cultures are not fantasized about, but the Mexican is a popular figure. Pedro is not too thrustworthy, but mostly innocent; depicted as a white clad little figure with a thin moustache and a huge hat. These fantasies about the different races, are of course stereotyping them to fit into racism as it exists in the American culture.

Tropical South Seas islands are one of the most loved fantasies. Here, mixed with the notion of paradise, the element of danger lurks again, in form of strange Voo Doo worship and war drums in the background.

Fantasies about the future, as expressed in Disney World, are perhaps the most frightening of them all. They seem more like nightmares, but they fit into a science fiction artist's depiction of life of the year 2,000, exemplified by Walt Disney himself in his sketch of the EPCOT project. This white and chrome, slick and sterile environment shown in RCA's exhibit of Future Living sends chills down the spine. In this picture, technology has progressed, leaving no place for the human being.

These basic fantasies are common in Scandinavia also, but the form is different. While in America they tend to be very ornate, in Sweden the idea of creating a theme environment outside the furnishing of one's home is totally unknown. The People's Parks have hints of foreign cultures, but it mostly ends with the design of the graphics or the creation of a corner with a somewhat exotic flair. Tivoli has its exotic imagery but a specific theme is not present.

The danger element is imbedded in these fantasies. The need for danger is expressed in some primitive cultures in a physical way. It is probably a basic element in human nature to challenge the real natural forces, and the ability of the human body. It has been reduced in modern society to part of the fantasy world. In the traditional amusement parks, the illusion of danger was created by the various rides. This is a physical activity. The patrons are jostled and thrown about in different ways. In the theme parks the danger element has been reduced to a purely visual consumption, much like watching TV or a movie. There are still rides in these parks, but they are secondary, and are used almost exclusively by the children. The children and adults alike having watched TV shows all their lives, get satisfied by looking at a stuffed white shark or by safely sitting in their car and looking at lions and elephants, as exemplified by the "instant safaris." This is also an example of the effortless consumption which seem to appeal to Americans to a great extent. They have grown dependant on their cars, and are always reluctant to leave them even for the shortest walk. Examples of this are seen in the wealth of drive-ins of different forms. Has the computer age, "push-button" society become totally passive in its amusements? A parallel social argument was posed in the eighteenth century; that the industrial worker needed a violent form of recreation due to the noisy and hectic working conditions.

The programmed activities exemplified in the U.S. theme parks have something to do with the way people's lives are scheduled. The "instant" experiences provided by the instant safari, where one knows exactly where the lion is to be seen, and nobody has to worry about missing the experience, and the packaged vacation trip, where nothing is left to chance, are probably the most common ways of vacationing. A trip to the Old Country theme park is described

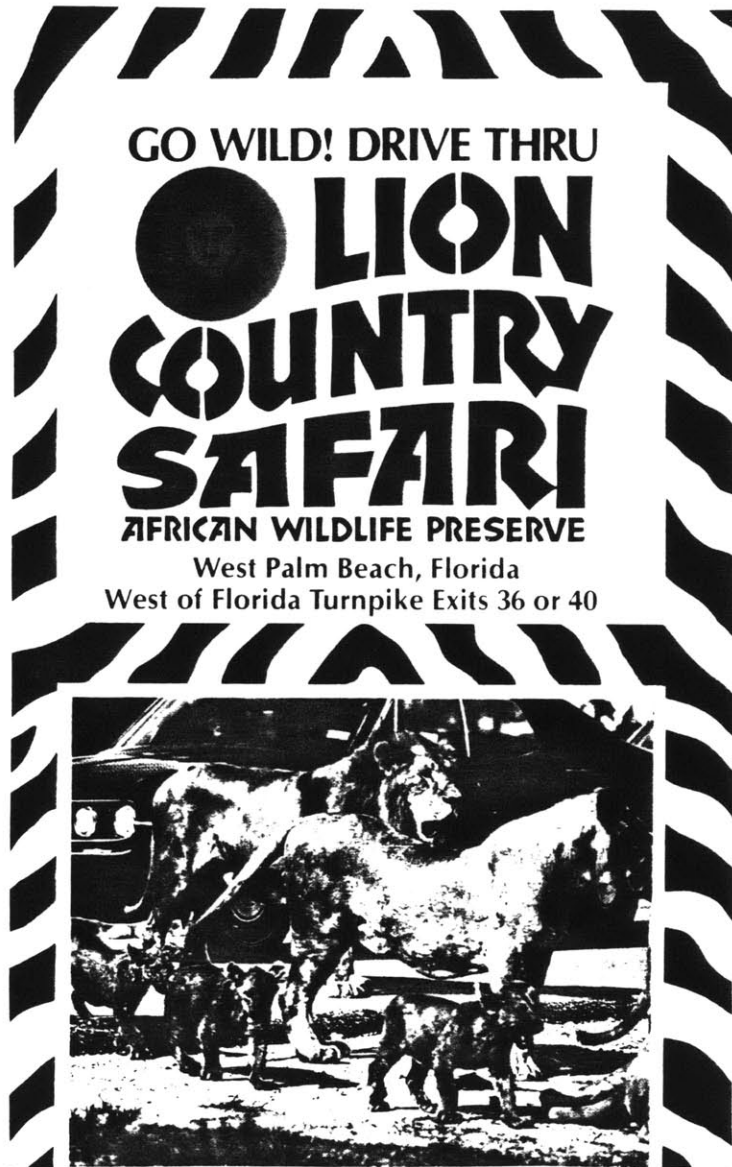


Figure 6.3  
Lion Country Safari advertisement  
Source: Tourist pamphlet

thusly: "Start planning for a Spring visit to the old country on this side of the Atlantic.... For less than \$7." Maybe the theme park also serves as an alternative to the packaged vacation trip, not only because it is cheaper, but also because it is less bothersome, and it can be done in a short period of time. Also it enables people to keep their fantasies, and the dangers that Americans anticipate on the other side of the Atlantic are avoided.

The computer programmed show, made famous in Disney World, is a development which can give the audience any kind of experience. Here the animals can sing and dance (Big Al in the Country Bear Jamboree can move twentyfour times per second) and unpredictable actors are done away with. In strong contrast to this form of show which completely alienates the audience are the shows at the Pantomime Theatre in Tivoli, where Pjerrot has a very special relationship with the audience, through audience participation. Big Al's audience applauds politely after the show, but this is mostly to show the appreciation for the progress of technology or for the great Walt Disney, who invented the plastic actor.

Walt Disney goes a step further than just promoting his products; he also promotes the American capitalist system, or "free enterprise", as it is called in his vocabulary. Innocent as his cartoon figures might seem, they have promoted the American system to a great portion of the world. In fact, Mickey Mouse and all his friends are public relations people, whose purpose is civilizing the rest of the world. For the average American, he is only reinforcing stereotype values, such as racism and sexism, already existing in the society. The EPCOT project, Walt Disney's flagship, has no cartoon figures in its showcase, but consists of the giant multi-national corporations which make up the main part of industry. They in turn are backed by the U.S. government, and





Figure 6.4  
Pjerrot at Tivoli  
Source: Dagens Nyheter, July 8, 1973



Figure 6.5  
"Bear Jamboree" at Disney World  
Source: The Story of Walt Disney World.

now , communication with foreign sympathetic governments is direct.

The progression of the development of amusement parks, from picnic grounds to traditional parks to multi-million dollar theme parks, as it was expressed by the IAAPA president is, as I see it, a regression in terms of providing meaningful recreation to all groups in the society. The early parks could be reached by trolley for a cheap fee, and even if their purpose was commercially motivated, it was a rewarding way to spend the Sunday for many people, some of whom now are completely neglected. For them the disappearance of amusement parks has created a vacuum, which has not been filled with an equivalent alternative. Present day amusement park visitors are "suckers" in an even stronger sense than the visitors who were cheated in the old parks, since they are not aware of being manipulated, or have accepted it as a fact of life. The consumer's habits and other characteristics are closely monitored to help the companies in their market research, while the patrons are paying for it. In the traditional parks, the wheel of fortune was often gaffed, but it seems rather innocent compared to the commercialism of the modern theme parks.

## CHAPTER SIX FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>William H. Galchutt and William J. Wallis, "Disney's other world-mickey mousing with Florida's water supplies?" Landscape Architecture, Oct. 1972, pp. 32-33.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel J. Boorstin, The Americans - The Democratic Experience, (New York: Random House, 1973), p.248.

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