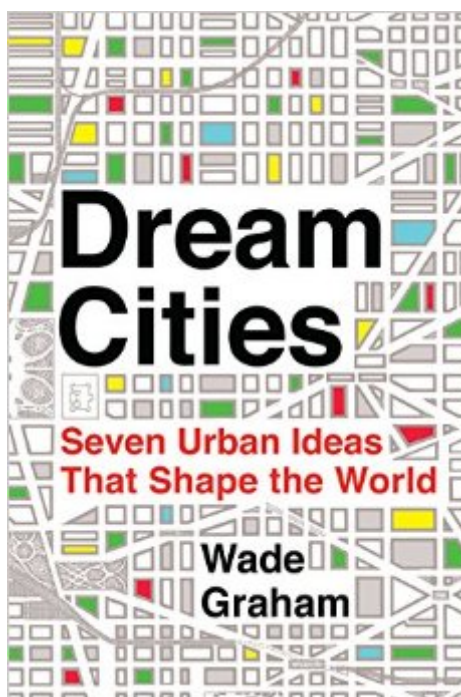


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# Dream Cities: Seven Urban Ideas That Shape The World



## Synopsis

From the acclaimed landscape designer, historian and author of *American Eden*, a lively, unique, and accessible cultural history of modern citiesâ””from suburbs, downtown districts, and exurban sprawl, to shopping malls and âœsustainableâ• developmentâ””that allows us to view them through the planning, design, architects, and movements that inspired, created, and shaped them. *Dream Cities* explores our cities in a new wayâ””as expressions of ideas, often conflicting, about how we should live, work, play, make, buy, and believe. It tells the stories of the real architects and thinkers whose imagined cities became the blueprints for the world we live in. From the nineteenth century to today, what began as visionary conceptsâ””sometimes utopian, sometimes outlandish, always controversialâ””were gradually adopted and constructed on a massive scale in cities around the world, from Dubai to Ulan Bator to London to Los Angeles. Wade Graham uses the lives of the pivotal dreamers behind these concepts, as well as their acolytes and antagonists, to deconstruct our urban landscapesâ””the houses, towers, civic centers, condominiums, shopping malls, boulevards, highways, and spaces in betweenâ””exposing the ideals and ideas embodied in each. From the baroque fantasy villages of Bertram Goodhue to the superblocs of Le Corbusierâ”™s Radiant City to the pseudo-agrarian dispersal of Frank Lloyd Wrightâ”™s Broadacre City, our upscale leafy suburbs, downtown skyscraper districts, infotainment-driven shopping malls, and âœsustainableâ• eco-developments are seen as never before. In this elegantly designed and illustrated book, Graham uncovers the original plans of brilliant, obsessed, and sometimes megalomaniacal designers, revealing the foundations of todayâ”™s varied municipalities. *Dream Cities* is nothing less than a field guide to our modern urban world. Illustrated with 59 black-and-white photos throughout the text.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Dream Cities: Seven Urban Ideas That Shape The World", by Wade Graham, is a dream book for armchair urbanists. The book is not long, but Graham covers the seven architectural concepts that he claims have influenced the development of cities over the years. His seven, "Castles", "Monuments", "Slabs", "Homesteads", "Corals", "Malls", and "Habitats", are fleshed out by giving the prime architects who either conceived the ideas or were leading practitioners of them. Let's take "Slabs". These are those rows of tall buildings designed to house people on masse. Think Robert Moses - city planner of New York City - who proposed these buildings as both offices and apartments. As Wade Graham writes, "Building slabs has been a collective exercise, or at least a widespread one...Many tens of thousands of different agents - architects, planners, developers, governments - have built them to supply new housing for growing populations, and to accommodate new modes of transportation, especially cars. In this sense, slabs were a "rational" choice made by many people in many places, in response to actual modern conditions". The reader might ask, "what WERE these conditions that required these soulless pieces of concrete? Well, in the 1930's and on, when Robert Moses was charged with modernising the city of New York and the boroughs, he proposed these building to house the growing population. They were to house people whose neighborhoods had been destroyed by both urban blight and the roads and highways Moses was proposing to slash through the city.

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