sciendo

Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies
32.1 (2026): 32-57
doi: 10.2478/hjeas/2026/32/1/3

THEMATIC BLOCK: UTOPIA AND DEMOCRACY

Josiah Warren's Utopia of Individual Sovereignty

Magdalena Modrzejewska
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0095-6630

ABSTRACT

This article examines Josiah Warren's social philosophy as a distinctive form of experimental, anti-statist utopianism grounded in the principle of individual sovereignty. Although Warren is most often remembered as the first American anarchist, this study argues that his thoughts should also be understood within the broader tradition of nineteenth-century American utopian experiments. Warren did not merely critique political authority and capitalist economic relations, but also developed and tested an alternative model of society based on voluntary association and equitable exchange. Drawing on his experiences in Robert Owen's New Harmony community, Warren rejected communal property and collective governance, concluding that social harmony could only emerge through the preservation of individual autonomy. His utopian project combined a radical anthropology of self-governing individuals with practical experiments such as time stores and equitable commerce, which sought to eliminate profit and ensure labor-based equality without coercion or state intervention. By analyzing Warren's theoretical writings and experimental communities, this article demonstrates how his utopianism integrated normative vision with institutional practice. At the same time, it highlights the structural limitations of his model, particularly regarding scale, economic sustainability, and conflict resolution. Warren's work ultimately represents a radical attempt to reconcile individual liberty with social order without recourse to authority, revealing both the emancipatory potential and inherent fragility of utopian projects grounded in absolute individual sovereignty. (MM)

KEYWORDS: Josiah Warren, individual sovereignty, utopianism, individualist anarchism, equitable commerce

© Author(s) 2026. This work is distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Introduction

Josiah Warren (1798–1874) is rarely characterized as a utopian thinker, with only a few exceptions (Kesten; Samuels; Schafer; Webber; Trahair). He has often been portrayed as the first American anarchist and, because of his strong emphasis on individual sovereignty, as a foundational figure of the American individualist anarchism movement (Schuster; Rocker; Martin; Reichert; Sartwell; Modrzejewska, *Josiah Warren*). This historiographical hesitation does not signify the absence of utopian elements in his work. Rather, it reflects the difficulty of categorizing a thinker whose ideas resist stable doctrinal classification.

This is particularly the case because Warren himself repudiated theoretical labels and rejected the language of "-isms" as antithetical to individuality (Warren, "As an Illustration" 77).[1] The difficulty of ascribing a fixed classification to Warren's philosophy was shaped by the conceptual fluidity of mid-nineteenth-century political terminology, in which categories such as anarchism, socialism, and communism were still in *statu nascendi* and employed with shifting, often inconsistent meanings (Claeys, "'Individualism,'"; Lukes). Moreover, Warren's philosophy was markedly eclectic, containing conceptual seedbeds for multiple currents of radical thought—ranging from individualist anarchism and mutualism to utopian socialism and libertarian economic experimentation (Sartwell; Weisbord; DeLeon; Carson)—making any single classificatory label reductive. Finally, Warren's reception primarily as an anarchist has often obscured the utopian and experimental dimensions of his intellectual project.

Yet this resistance to categorization did not prevent Warren from engaging directly in utopian practice. On the contrary, he consistently explored alternative social arrangements through concrete experimental communities and economic projects. From this perspective, he emerges as an eclectic thinker whose work integrates ambitious social visions with an anarchist critique of authority (Wright; Oved 311–13).

Warren did not merely criticize existing political and economic institutions; he sought to replace them with a radically different "system of society" or "true civilization" as he called it, grounded in three key elements: individual sovereignty, voluntary association, and equitable exchange. His ambition lay not in reforming but in reshaping the very foundations of society by demonstrating that social order could exist without the need for government, law, or coercion. By projecting an alternative social order as a comprehensive solution to humanity's moral, economic, and political problems (Warren, *Equitable Commerce: A New*

Development of Principles for the Harmonious 1–11), Warren articulated a radical utopian vision that can be situated within the tradition of nineteenth-century American utopianism.

Warren within a utopian context

As William J. Schafer has shown, early American radical and communitarian movements understood utopia not as a fixed or completed design, but as a practice of social experimentation rooted in Enlightenment ideals of progress, perfectibility, and the rational reorganization of society. These movements translated abstract principles into lived experiments, testing alternative forms of social life within the conditions of American modernity (Schafer). This corresponds to Donald E. Pitzer's concept of "developmental communalism" as well, where experiments are meant to evolve or dissolve (Pitzer 99–100). Warren emerged directly from this experimental milieu. His thought shares the communitarian conviction that society could be rationally reorganized, yet it departs from communal utopias by shifting toward radical individualism (Martin 12–14).

This reorientation took shape in 1827, just after the collapse of Robert Owen's New Harmony community, when Josiah Warren departed from it. Confronted with what he perceived as the coercive effects of communalism and the common property system, Warren did not abandon social experimentation but redirected it. He reconceived utopia as a form of social organization grounded in individual sovereignty rather than shared authority. From this shift emerged a system structured around three interrelated principles: radical individualism, a labor-based theory of value rejecting profit and speculation, and the rejection of imposed authority, including the state (Modrzejewska, "American Individualist" 13–15). These principles developed gradually: Warren's early writings of the 1820s and 1830s already contain the core elements of his system, though they appear in fragmentary and exploratory form, while their systematic interrelation becomes clearer in *Notebook D* in the early 1840s and is articulated most fully in *Equitable Commerce: A New Development of Principles for the Harmonious Adjustment and Regulation of the Pecuniary, Intellectual and Moral Intercourse of Mankind, Proposed as Elements of a New Society*, published in 1846.

Therefore, Warren's project should be situated within nineteenth-century American utopian thought, where social theories were often tested in practice. What distinguishes his approach is the sustained and reflexive integration of experimentation into his theoretical work. He sought to create conditions in which individuals could freely pursue their own lives

through voluntary interaction and equitable exchange. The experiments were not provisional trials, but demonstrations of principles Warren already believed to be correct. He had unwavering confidence in his solutions, using experiments to refine details rather than to revise his underlying theory. But Warren's attachment to testing his ideas in practice exemplify the experimental ethos identified by William J. Schafer.

This article argues that Warren developed a distinctive form of experimental, anti-statist utopianism. His rejection of the state followed from, rather than preceded, his social vision, emerging as a logical consequence of a system grounded in unlimited, nontransferable individual sovereignty and labor-based exchange. Unlike purely negative critics of political authority, Warren pursued sustained utopian experimentation through many trials, including the various time stores and "equitable villages" in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, in the mid-1830s, the settlement later known as Utopia, Ohio (originally the Clermont Phalanx) in 1847, and the more extensive experiment at Modern Times (now Brentwood), New York, founded on Long Island in 1851. Even in his final years, between 1864 and 1869, Warren continued to test these beliefs through attempts to organize another mutual settlement in Cliftondale, Massachusetts (Martin 13–31, 40–48, 59–62, 70–71, 86; Wunderlich 3–4, 20–21, 46–48; Sartwell 29, 41–42).

By tracing the transformation of his social vision from Owenite communalism to an individualist anthropology, examining its institutional expression in voluntary order and equitable commerce, and assessing its structural limits, this article situates Warren as a significant, even though unconventional, figure in utopian thought. It also draws attention to ongoing tensions in Warren's vision, particularly regarding scale, security, and social relations. It attempts to reveal both the attractiveness and the fragility of projects grounded in idealized conceptions of freedom and radical individual sovereignty.

From Owenite failure to individualist utopia

Josiah Warren's engagement with utopian thought began not with abstract theorizing but with a personal encounter that reshaped his life trajectory. A successful entrepreneur and inventor, Warren was drawn to Robert Owen's vision after hearing him speak in 1825, and decided to follow him to New Harmony, where he participated directly in one of the most prominent nineteenth-century experiments in secular utopianism aimed at establishing a cooperative community grounded in equality and communal living (G. Warren[2]; Lockwood 294–95; Bailie; Martin 6–7;

Harrison 66, 73; Kumar). His involvement in Robert Owen's New Harmony community proved decisive for the formation of his own social philosophy. Warren himself declared: "I owe it to him that my life is of any value to myself or others. No creature ever heard me utter one word that was disrespectful to Robert Owen and although it is with real pain that I undertake to disconnect his mistakes from that which was true in his glorious career" (Warren, *Notes*).

The collapse of New Harmony did not lead Warren to abandon the pursuit of alternative social arrangements; rather, it compelled him to rethink the very foundations upon which utopian projects had traditionally been constructed. At New Harmony, Warren initially embraced Owen's promise of cooperation, common property, and social harmony. As a participant in New Harmony, Warren observed the collapse of the community from within and later analyzed its causes. In 1827–1828, he published in the local Cincinnati newspaper *The Western Tiller* two cycles of articles, issued anonymously under the pen name "a late member of New Harmony," the first cycle under the collective title "Communicated. To the Friends of the Social System." Since the articles describe the time store as the author's own enterprise and articulate themes central to his development—the doctrines of individuality and labor-for-labor exchange—Warren's surmised authorship remains unchallenged.

Reflecting in these cycles on the collapse of New Harmony, Warren attributed its failure not to moral weakness but to structural uniformity imposed on irreducible difference. The community, he observed, was composed of individuals "from all parts of the earth so widely different from each other, without any previous preparation for business, or for domestic accommodations" ("Communicated No. 1" 2). Later he explained,

> Each one had his peculiar habits of thinking, which had been produced by his particular circumstances, so that we were continually crossing each other at all points. Mr. Owen . . . encouraged every trial of government, and every species of arrangement for which we exhibited any inclination, and I believe that a faithful trial has been made of almost all things of that nature. Laws and regulations were adopted which, at the time of making them appeared quite unexceptionable in every respect; but in practice we found that instead of facilitating they only retarded our progress. Each person constructed them according to his own peculiar ideas, which were effects of his own peculiar circumstances, and this difference gave rise to long and tedious controversies, which of course differ from the same cause. This generally ended in a revolution of government or change of

> laws, which was immediately followed by the same effects. So constant and unceasing was this state of things, that, confused, disappointed and discouraged many of our valuable friends left us with the impression that the system was impracticable, or inapplicable to the present age. (Warren, "Communicated No. 1" 2)

The attempt to organize social life through collective ownership and uniform rules, Warren argued, suppressed individuality and eroded personal involvement. Far from producing harmony, communal administration intensified conflict by forcing diverse individuals into identical social and economic arrangements. Warren concluded that "the common property system" was not merely impractical but structurally incapable of accommodating the irreducible differences among individuals. This observation would become the cornerstone of his later philosophical system. In his subsequent writings, Warren uses New Harmony as an empirical demonstration that universal rules and collective governance fail because individuals' circumstances and interests are irreducibly diverse. From this, he derives a consent-based doctrine of individual sovereignty, proposing cooperation built on voluntary, reciprocal assistance rather than law or power (Warren, "Communicated No. 1" 2; *Equitable . . . for the Harmonious* 1–2). He came to believe that any system premised on collective authority, even when animated by benevolent intentions, would inevitably reproduce coercion. The fundamental problem, as he later argued, lay not in insufficient moral commitment but in the assumption that individuals could or should be governed collectively. Utopia, if it were to exist, would have to be built on entirely different premises.

This shift from communal uniformity to individualization and separateness of persons represents a decisive reorientation within Warren's utopian project. Social order, in his view, should not be imposed from above or administered through shared institutions, but arise organically from voluntary arrangements among sovereign persons. In this sense, Warren's thought exemplifies a form of anti-collectivist utopianism, one that seeks social transformation not through shared governance, but through the dissolution of imposed authority altogether.

Warren's experience at New Harmony thus functioned as the negative foundation of his later project. He concluded the first article in this cycle with a brief "Essay," proposing an alternative "Constitution of a society of co-operation and mutual-happiness" (Warren, "Communicated No. 1" 2). Modeled formally on Owenite constitutional documents, it

nevertheless marked a decisive conceptual break. While Warren shared Owen's commitment to mutual happiness, he rejected communal means, insisting instead on the individual's right "in all cases, and in all situations, of dictating my own circumstances in every respect, and in every point of view" (2). The failure of communal property did not propel him toward resignation or mere critique, but toward the formulation of an alternative "system of society" grounded in radically different assumptions about human nature and social coordination. Convinced that social harmony could not be engineered through collective administration, Warren redefined reform as the creation of conditions under which autonomous individuals might cooperate voluntarily. This transition from communal governance to individual sovereignty shaped the subsequent development of his thought, including both his theoretical articulation of sovereignty and his practical experiments in equitable commerce (Warren, *Notebook D*).

Individual sovereignty as utopian anthropology

At the normative core of Josiah Warren's utopian thought lies the principle that he named the sovereignty of the individual. While this concept has often been interpreted as a purely political doctrine or as an extreme form of anarchist theory (Schuster; Martin; Wunderlich), it can be more productively understood as a form of utopian anthropology, a set of assumptions about human nature, agency, and social capacity that underwrites his vision of an alternative social order (Sartwell). For Warren, sovereignty was not merely a right to be defended against political intrusion but an inherent condition of human existence: each person was understood as a self-directing center of judgment, labor, and responsibility. Any just social order, therefore, had to be constructed in recognition of this irreducible individuality rather than through attempts to regulate, homogenize, or subordinate it.

Warren's conception of individual sovereignty rests on the claim that authority over one's person, labor, time, and judgment is inalienable. Sovereignty cannot be delegated to governments, representatives, or majorities without being fundamentally violated. As Warren argued in the article "Of Our State of Difficulties" published in his first newspaper called *Peaceful Revolutionist*, where he referred to his experience in Owenite community, collective systems sought to align "interests, fears, hopes, persuasion, fraud, and force" to make individuals "think, feel, decide, and act alike," thereby producing all possible calamities (Warren, "Of Our State" 6). Against this tendency, he insisted on "the individuality of character

observable throughout the human race . . . [which] no power within our knowledge can destroy or control" (6). For Warren, individual sovereignty thus entailed not merely political non-subjection, but the ethical and epistemological autonomy of the individual, whose judgments and actions could not legitimately be subsumed under collective authority (Warren, "Principles and Progress" 6).

Although the communalist system served as a negative exemplar that drove Warren toward individualism, tracing positive intellectual influences on his thought remains difficult. Warren's thought does not draw upon the classics of philosophy; his concepts predate the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, the classic nineteenth-century philosophers strongly associated with American individualism. As initially noted by Roger Wunderlich, the only traceable inspiration for Warren's adoption of individualism as the foundation of a philosophical system was the work of Alexander Bryan Johnson (1786–1867), a philosopher and linguist whose treatise, "Philosophy of Human Knowledge, or a Treatise on Language," was published in 1828 (Wunderlich, 19–20). In *Peaceful Revolutionist,* the journal published by Warren to disseminate his ideas, Warren wrote his first article on individualism. In this text, Warren specifically recalls Johnson's influence in the context of individualism, stating that the full piece devoted to this subject and published in that issue of the magazine was composed soon after Warren departed from New Harmony and shortly after reading Johnson's book (Warren, "Individuality" 13). This allows us to trace both negative and positive inspirations for Warren's individualism.

Individual sovereignty as the core principle

Having laid out Warren's path to radical individualism, it is essential to understand the central tenet of his political thought, the concept of individual sovereignty. In the early 1840s, Warren identified the key components of such sovereignty: self-ownership, control over time, property, and full responsibility. Therefore, his ideal social experiment aimed "to restore the natural liberty of the citizen or, to establish the sovereignty of every individual over her or his person, time, property and responsibilities" (Warren, *Gazette* 6). Since citizens would possess total liberty, limited only by the analogous liberty of others, there is no place for political authority.

Unlike liberal theorists who sought to reconcile individual freedom with political authority, Warren denied the legitimacy of such reconciliation

altogether. In his view, the very act of transferring decision-making power, even through democratic consent, constituted a form of coercion. This uncompromising position places Warren outside mainstream political theory, but it is precisely this absolutism that reveals the utopian dimension of his thought. His social vision presupposes a world in which individuals are capable of self-governance without recourse to external authority. Moreover, for Warren, the sovereignty of the individual is considered a total construct, and there is no possibility for its restriction, as he claimed that society is the end of freedom: "so that there is no security, no liberty for mankind, but through the abandonment of combinations as a basis of society" (Warren, *Equitable . . . for the Harmonious* 31). Only an atomistic, although not solipsistic, functioning with the other can provide freedom. In principle, such liberty is not constrained by extrinsic restriction: "Every one must feel that he is the supreme arbiter of his own; that no power on earth shall rise above him; that he is, and always shall be sovereign of himself, and all that constitute or is necessarily connected with his individuality" (23).

Warren's conception of individual sovereignty begins from the premise that individuals are shaped by shifting circumstances, yet he departed from Owen's paternalist approach by insisting that each person must retain the authority to shape and govern their own circumstances (Warren, "Principles and Progress"; Claeys, "Paternalism and Democracy"). Because no two individuals, and no single individual over time, are affected in the same way, any attempt to govern conduct through uniform rules necessarily produces coercion. From this observation, Warren derives a sweeping critique of laws, principles, and collective regulations (Butler 433–35). He argues that it is impossible to "construct any laws, rules, principles, or precepts, in such a manner that they would not lay the foundation of confusion, counteraction, and misery," since such abstractions inevitably override the particular conditions under which individuals act (Warren, "Communicated No. 1" 2). The problem is not moral failure or insufficient commitment to cooperation, but the structural mismatch between fixed rules and variable human lives. As a result, Warren rejects the very idea that authority can be exercised legitimately over individuals without their continuous and explicit consent.

On this basis, Warren articulates a doctrine of individual sovereignty that extends beyond formal liberty to encompass control over one's person, labor, time, and judgment. He insists that happiness requires the ability to shape the circumstances that affect one's life, declaring his desire "in all cases, and in all situations, of dictating my own circumstances in every

respect, and in every point of view" (Warren, "Communicated No. 1" 2). Crucially, this claim does not entail social withdrawal or atomism. Warren understands society not as a collective authority, but as "a collection of individuals assembled near each other . . . for the purpose of rendering and receiving assistance in case of need" (2). Cooperation thus emerges from reciprocity among sovereign individuals rather than from obligations enforced by law or governance. Social order, in Warren's view, can exist only insofar as it preserves the autonomy of its participants; once individuals are required to surrender sovereignty to a collective will, freedom dissolves into coercion (Warren, "Communicated No. 3" 2). In the revised version of his *Equitable Commerce*, published in 1852, he reaffirmed his ideas: "[o]ut of the indestructibility or inalienability of this Individuality grows the absolute right of its exercise, or the absolute sovereignty of every individual" (Warren, *Equitable . . . as Substitutes* 18).

Warren's claim that no individual can justly govern another implies a social order grounded in voluntary agreement among autonomous individuals rather than political authority. This vision rests on an idealized view of human rationality, assuming that individuals, once freed from coercion, would regulate their behavior responsibly. Warren devoted little attention to conflict, presuming that the absence of collective interests would reduce serious clashes and allow harmony to emerge through voluntary interaction. This utopian expectation that social reorganization could largely eliminate conflict and coercion reveals both the appeal and the fragility of his project. His limited engagement with persistent conflict thus exposes a key tension between utopian aspiration and social reality.

Warren's frequent analogies, particularly his comparison of society to an orchestra governed by voluntary subordination, further illustrate the utopian logic of his anthropology (Warren, *True Civilization: An Immediate Necessity* 18). In such analogies, coordination is achieved without coercion, hierarchy is functional rather than political, and participation remains revocable at all times. These models do not describe existing social realities but propose simplified representations of how complex cooperation might occur under ideal conditions. As such, they function as utopian thought-experiments, offering imaginative alternatives to state-centered forms of order while abstracting from historical constraints.

It is important to recognize that Warren's anthropology is both the strength and the vulnerability of his utopian project. By grounding social order entirely in individual sovereignty, he avoids the authoritarian tendencies that plagued many nineteenth-century utopias. At the same time,

his confidence in individual capacities raises questions about the viability of such a society under less favorable conditions. The assumption that all individuals, even children, can consistently act as sovereign moral agents, capable of negotiating their relations without recourse to collective authority, introduces a level of idealization characteristic of utopian thought. Warren's anthropology thus functions not as an empirical description of human behavior, but as a normative horizon against which existing social arrangements are measured and found wanting (Modrzejewska, *Josiah Warren* 69–70).

Seen in this light, individual sovereignty in Warren's work is not a rejection of social life but its radical reimagining. His utopian anthropology does not eliminate cooperation; it seeks to purify it of coercion. By insisting that social order must be built upon the absolute autonomy of individuals, Warren articulates a vision of society that challenges collectivist utopias and liberal compromises alike. This vision, grounded in idealized assumptions about human agency, provides the conceptual foundation for his experiments in voluntary association and equitable commerce, to which the following sections now turn.

Voluntary order without the state

If individual sovereignty constitutes the anthropological foundation of Warren's utopian thought, then voluntary order provides its institutional logic. Warren's position extended beyond mere negation of the legitimacy of government and law; he sought to demonstrate that the possibility of social coordination can exist independently of these institutions.

His rejection of the state was therefore inseparable from a constructive vision of how order, cooperation, and stability might arise in its absence. Far from advocating chaos or social withdrawal, Warren articulated a utopian model of social organization grounded in voluntary agreement, contextual judgment, and continual negotiation among sovereign individuals.

Central to Warren's critique of law was his insistence on the irreducible variability of human circumstances:

> Nothing is more common than such remarks as the following. "No two things are alike" "There can be no rules without exceptions" &c. yet, we are constantly called upon to conform to rules that do not suit our case, to acquiesce in numerous different opinions all at the same moment, and no laws in the world preserve the liberty of the governed to make exceptions

> to the rules which they are required to obey; but, to give others the power to construe laws and make exceptions, is equivalent to giving them the power to govern without laws. A little observation will disclose an Individuality in persons, times, and circumstances which has suggested the idea, that one of our most fatal errors has been the laying down rules, [sic] laws, and principles without preserving the liberty of each person to apply them according to the individuality of his views, and the circumstances of different cases: in other words, our error, like that of all the world that has gone before us has been, the violation of individual Liberty. (Warren, "Individuality" 13)

Laws, by their very nature, impose uniform rules upon fundamentally non-uniform situations, substituting abstract categories for concrete human experience. For Warren, this was not an accidental defect but a structural injustice: no general rule could be applied without harming individuals whose circumstances fell outside its assumed norm. In a social world constituted as a collection of sovereign individuals, there existed no common standpoint from which statutory norms could be equally recognized, interpreted, and accepted. As a result, positive law inevitably violates individual sovereignty by overriding personal judgment and situational differences. In place of legal regulation, Warren envisioned forms of interaction grounded in voluntary negotiation, reciprocity, and context-sensitive adjustment rather than fixed procedures, like when he presents a hypothetical process of bridge building (Warren, *Equitable . . . for the Harmonious* 28−29).

At the same time, Warren assumed that the removal of positive law and centralized authority would itself reduce conflict and enable harmonious coexistence among individuals. This assumption—characteristic of many utopian projects—rests on the belief that conflict, crime, and coercion are not enduring features of social life but products of defective institutional arrangements. Warren's confidence that disputes could be resolved through negotiation rather than enforcement, and that ethical conduct would arise from mutual recognition of limits, thus forms a central pillar of his social vision. Yet his limited engagement with the persistence of conflict also marks one of the most significant vulnerabilities of his system, exposing the tension between utopian aspiration and the complexities of social reality.

> All social arrangements should admit of this freedom of choice of every individual and all subordination should be voluntary. As for instance in the

> performance of a piece of music at a private party each one who takes a part subordinates himself voluntarily to the lead of one person, the necessity of this is so obvious that it controls the choice, but it is not persons that compel this subordination and here is the distinction. It is between the control or force of circumstances or necessity each being his own judge of it and the control or force of persons or authority that we must draw the great broad line which is to distinguish voluntary from involuntary subordination. The one is in perfect accordance with a natural personal liberty which constitutes the chief element of the happiness of human beings. (Warren, *Notebook D*)

Warren's alternative to law was not moral relativism but voluntarism. All social arrangements, he argued, should remain voluntary, revocable, and subject to renegotiation. Agreements derive legitimacy not from formal authority, but from the ongoing consent of the parties involved. The moment participation becomes compulsory, legitimacy dissolves (Warren, *True Civilization: An Immediate Necessity* 131). This insistence on revocability distinguishes Warren's utopian vision from both liberal constitutionalism and communitarian utopias, which presume the permanence of social obligations. Warren's society is deliberately fluid, allowing individuals to withdraw, revise, or dissolve arrangements without appealing to higher authority.

Importantly, Warren did not deny the need for organization, leadership, or coordination. What he rejected was their institutionalization as permanent structures of power. Temporary leadership, division of labor, and cooperative planning were not only compatible with his utopia, but necessary to it. The crucial distinction lay in whether such arrangements were imposed or chosen. In Warren's vision, order emerges not from enforcement but from reciprocal advantage: individuals cooperate because doing so serves their interests better than isolation or conflict, and this is the only way to achieve happiness (Warren, "Communicated No. 2" 2). Social stability, therefore, is not guaranteed by authority but continuously reproduced through consent.

This conception of voluntary order reveals the utopian ambition of Warren's project with particular clarity. A society without law, government, or coercive authority presupposes a high degree of moral and rational capacity among its members. Warren assumed that, once freed from imposed constraints, individuals would develop more precise and humane forms of regulation than any legal system could provide. This confidence in individual judgment was not empirically demonstrated but normatively

asserted, marking the shift from political critique to utopian projection. Voluntary order thus functioned simultaneously as a practical proposal and an aspirational horizon (Martin 36–37; Modrzejewska, *Josiah Warren* 38–39).

Yet the fragility of this model is implicit in its design. A social order grounded entirely in voluntary compliance must confront the persistent possibility of withdrawal, disagreement, and non-cooperation. Warren's refusal to formalize enforcement mechanisms leaves unresolved questions about conflict, wrongdoing, and collective vulnerability (Warren, *Practical Applications* 17–18; Codman 76; Modrzejewska, *Josiah Warren* 40–41).

By proposing voluntary order as an alternative to the state, Warren completed the conceptual architecture of his individualist utopia. Having rejected both communal administration and political authority, he envisioned a society sustained by choice and not by force. This framework underpinned Warren's economic experiments grounded in a labor theory of value. Equitable commerce was not merely a voluntary enterprise but a social arrangement in which individuals entered exchange while retaining full sovereignty over their persons, time, and property. Participation presupposed complete security of individual ownership and autonomy, so that no collective authority could override personal judgment or dispose of one's labor or possessions. In this way, Warren sought to preserve private property while simultaneously realizing a utopian ideal of equality: by restricting exchange to labor-equivalent cost and rejecting profit, interest, and speculative gain, equitable commerce aimed to equalize social relations without compromising individual sovereignty.

Equitable commerce and the time stores as utopian experiments

Warren's theories of individual sovereignty and voluntary order were not intended to remain abstract principles. They found their most concrete expression in a series of economic experiments designed to demonstrate that social coordination could occur without profit, coercion, or state regulation. It is evident that the practical core of Warren's utopianism is constituted by these experiments, most notably the time stores and the broader system of equitable commerce. Far from being peripheral to his thought, they functioned as utopian laboratories in which alternative principles of social and economic organization were tested under real conditions (Ecchia and Modrzejewska 148–49).

Warren formulated the theoretical foundations for the time store and equal exchange system shortly after leaving Owen's experiment and promoted it in *Western Tiller* in 1827, when he opened the first such venture

in Cincinnati (Warren, "Explanation" 1; Lawson 104). At the heart of Warren's economic vision lay the principle that cost should be the limit of price. By "cost," Warren did not mean market scarcity or subjective value, but the amount of labor required to produce a good or service (Warren, *Notebook D*). Profit, speculation, and interest were rejected as unjust forms of appropriation that distorted social relations and fostered dependency (Warren, *True Civilization: A Subject of Vital* 41). The economic system that was built on supply and demand was referred to by Warren as a "civilization of cannibalism", a term used to stigmatize the practice of profit maximization (42). In its place, Warren proposed an economy grounded in reciprocity, transparency, and equivalence. This was not merely an economic reform but a normative claim about justice: a just society, he argued, could not tolerate systematic advantage derived from unequal bargaining power or artificial scarcity.

The time stores were the most direct attempt to instantiate this principle. In these establishments, goods were exchanged using labor notes denominated in hours and minutes of work, allowing individuals to trade based on equivalent effort rather than monetary accumulation. Warren also introduced "labor notes," which were promissory notes obtained from customers that served as an alternative to traditional money. He believed that labor notes would become a new medium of exchange and replace traditional currency (Warren, "Explanation" 1). He emphasized that:

> in the Time System (as it is called) the labor, or services of every individual (male and female) is rewarded, equally, without any regard to their employments. In the equal exchange system, time is considered the real standard of value, in the place of money: And till labor or service is valued by the Time employed in it. And an hour of the labor of one individual in given for an hour of any other individual's labor . . ., without any regard to the money price of either; and without any regard to the amount power which some may have to take the advantage of others. (Warren, "Time Store" 20–21)

Disillusioned with Owenite principles, he became convinced that communal property could not secure justice if it submerged individual sovereignty, yet he also refused to abandon egalitarian aims. The solution was a private-property order that still guaranteed equality in exchange because individuals would be entitled to the whole product of their labor and would refuse non-labor incomes such as profit and interest (Ecchia and Modrzejewska 158). What distinguishes these experiments as utopian is

their idealistic, almost unrealistic, ambitions and normative claims. Warren did not regard equitable commerce as a niche alternative within an otherwise unchanged social framework. Rather, he envisioned it as the economic foundation of a comprehensive social order capable of superseding both capitalism and government. Hall's account clarifies the mechanism: by enforcing "cost the limit of price" and grounding exchange in a labor-cost metric, Warren aimed to eliminate the structural space in which surplus could be appropriated so equality would not be imposed politically but realized economically, through the voluntary renunciation of profit (Hall 97–99). In this sense, Warren's program was not merely a technical proposal about prices; it was a normative claim about justice: a just society could not tolerate systematic advantage derived from unequal bargaining power, informational asymmetry, or the capacity to leverage urgency and scarcity.

By eliminating profit and grounding exchange in labor equivalence, equitable commerce was intended to remove the structural sources of exploitation, poverty, and conflict. In this sense, the time stores were not isolated economic devices but integral components of a broader utopian vision in which economic justice would make political authority redundant (Ecchia and Modrzejewska). Unlike collectivist utopians, Warren did not seek to abolish individual ownership. Instead, his utopian vision aimed to preserve private property while eliminating structural inequality through the voluntary renunciation of surplus income. By restricting exchange to labor-equivalent cost and rejecting profit, interest, and speculation, equitable commerce was intended to equalize social relations without coercion or state intervention.

Warren did not systematically engage with the practical limitations of his experiments, and largely dismissed concerns about their broader feasibility. Both his writings and practice exhibit a striking confidence that equitable commerce was self-regulating, based on the assumption that once its justice was recognized, voluntary adoption would follow, and enforcement would be unnecessary. That confidence is precisely what marks the project as utopian in the strongest sense: it assumes that moral recognition and economic redesign can reliably transform social behavior without the mediating force of durable institutions.

Nevertheless, the significance of Warren's economic experiments lies less in their longevity—most of these projects were short-lived and lasted no more than three years, with the exception of Modern Times—than in their conceptual clarity and theoretical coherence. By treating

economic relations as the primary site of social injustice, and by attempting to reorganize them through voluntary, experimental means, Warren expanded the scope of utopian practice. The extent to which Warren's time store set a path for other cooperative magazines in Great Britain within the Owenite movement is a subject of debate. However, it is evident that Warren's experiment had a significant impact on the discourse within Owenite cooperative circles. This is due to Warren's direct connection with British Owenite newspapers (Claeys, *Machinery* 54).

Taken together, equitable commerce and the time stores demonstrate that Warren's utopianism was not confined to critique or aspiration. It was enacted, tested, and revised through practice. These experiments occupy a central place in his thought precisely because they embody his conviction that social order can be reconstructed from the ground up without coercion, without profit, and without the state.

The limits of Warren's utopianism

The coherence and originality of Warren's individualist utopia do not exempt it from significant limitations. On the contrary, the very principles that gave his vision its critical force—absolute individual sovereignty, voluntary association, and the rejection of coercive authority—also generated tensions that Warren never fully resolved.

The most immediate limitation of Warren's utopia concerns scale, but this issue is complicated by the uneven and fragmentary nature of the historical record. His experiments in equitable commerce and voluntary association appear to have functioned most effectively within small, relatively homogeneous communities characterized by interpersonal interaction and high levels of mutual trust. Warren himself considered the experiment a success. Hence, the exact reasons for which he later closed the first time store in Cincinnati in 1830 remain unclear (Martin 20). The second time store opened in New Harmony on March 22, 1842, and operated on a similar principle (Warren, *Equitable . . . for the Harmonious* 89–90). Labor-for-labor vouchers again became the applicable means of payment. As James J. Martin observed about the Cincinnati experiment, individuals determined the value of their own labor notes, operating under the expectation that the collective assessment of participants within the labor exchange would, over time, establish a standardized labor-based measure of value across diverse goods and services (Martin 43).

The prices offered by Warren were significantly more attractive than those of nearby vendors, contributing to the store's popularity. According

to Warren, he supplied residents within a 40-mile radius. He also claimed that customers as far as 100 miles from New Harmony also purchased from him. The store's success was such that Warren was unable to serve the crowd, and impatient customers were leaving after waiting for more than two hours (Warren, *Equitable . . . as Substitutes* 90–92). Eventually, when this second shop was closed in 1844, some inhabitants of New Harmony demanded its reopening (*Indiana Statesman*, 1845). On February 16, 1847, Warren made another attempt to put his idea into practice and opened a third time store in Utopia, a former Fourierist establishment in Clermont County, Ohio (Flatt and Hoehnle 21–23). Warren hoped to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first store's founding, which fell on May 1847, but this time he had to close his store after less than two months ("Clermont Phalanx" 271–72).

Warren offered no systematic explanation for the short-lived nature of these enterprises, even as he claimed they had a broader applicability than is often assumed. Yet the scarcity of contemporary primary sources and independent accounts makes it difficult to verify the extent and significance of this participation. Beyond these claims, Warren offered little explanation of how a society composed entirely of sovereign individuals could coordinate large-scale infrastructure, long-distance commerce, or complex industrial production, leaving unresolved the question of whether his model could operate beyond localized, face-to-face communities. While he assumed that voluntary cooperation would expand organically once just principles were recognized, this assumption remains largely untheorized. The absence of a clear account of how coordination would operate beyond the local level exposes a structural fragility at the heart of his utopian vision.

The most immediate limitation of Warren's utopian project concerns its lack of economic self-sustainability. In each of his experiments in equitable commerce and voluntary association, Warren issued labor-for-labor notes as a medium of exchange; however, these notes never displaced conventional money. Because the communities did not produce the full range of goods and services they required, they remained dependent on external markets, and monetary transactions continued both externally and internally. As Warren himself acknowledged, goods purchased with money were resold for money, while labor notes were used only in specific contexts, resulting in the coexistence of two parallel systems of exchange (Warren, "Explanation"). Rather than constituting a self-contained alternative to monetary capitalism, equitable commerce operated as a hybrid system in which labor-based exchange and conventional currency circulated

simultaneously. This structural dualism undermines Warren's claim that equitable commerce could function as a complete substitute for money and market relations, and it exposes a fundamental fragility in his utopian vision, which lacked a coherent strategy for achieving economic autonomy even at the experimental scale (Hall 106–07; Modrzejewska, *Josiah Warren* 57–62; Yuki 118–21).

Another problem in Warren's community related to security and conflict. Warren maintained that respect for individual sovereignty would minimize violence and injustice, yet he provided no robust mechanism for addressing persistent wrongdoing, collective threats, or external aggression. In practice, minor offenses did occur within his experimental communities like cases of theft and incidents involving public nudity, including a German settler who paraded naked in the streets and stole a neighbor's coat (Warren, *Practical Applications* 17–18). In such situations, Warren and other community members relied on informal sanctions, primarily social ostracism and the withdrawal of association, rather than coercive punishment. In one documented case, handbills were circulated identifying the offender and advising neighbors to reclaim missing property from his premises, a measure that effectively ended the theft and publicly individualized responsibility for the misconduct (Warren, *Practical Applications* 18).

These responses demonstrate how Warren's rejection of law and formal enforcement presupposed a social environment in which negotiation, persuasion, reputational pressure, and voluntary withdrawal were sufficient to manage conflict. While consistent with his utopian anthropology, this reliance on informal social regulation raises unresolved questions about the protection of vulnerable individuals and communities, and about how to address sustained violence, serious crimes, or collective security threats without reintroducing institutional authority. In this respect, Warren's vision relies heavily on moral self-regulation and social pressure.

A further limitation arises from Warren's treatment of economic complexity. Although equitable commerce offers a compelling critique of profit and exploitation, its application to large-scale investment, technological innovation, and collective risk remains unaddressed. Warren's insistence that cost alone should determine value leaves little room for uncertainty, future-oriented planning, or infrastructural development requiring sustained collective commitment. Moreover, he largely ignored the complexity of production processes involving multiple contributors. His framework provides no systematic account of how labor costs should be

calculated when commodities are produced cooperatively, through extended supply chains or within complex divisions of labor (Ecchia and Modrzejewska 148–56; Modrzejewska, *Josiah Warren* 17–22, 56). While Warren reflected on the mechanization of production and recognized that machines could reduce labor burdens, he did not integrate mechanized or collective production into a coherent theory of value and distribution (Ecchia and Modrzejewska 162–64). His utopia thus appears better suited to artisanal or small-scale economies than to the industrializing society in which he lived.

Equally significant are the implications of Warren's utopian anthropology for those unable to function as fully sovereign agents. Children, the elderly, the ill, and others dependent on sustained care occupy an ambiguous position within a system that presupposes autonomy as the normative condition of social life. Warren's commitment to individual sovereignty extended even to children: he famously drafted a contract with his six-year-old daughter, treating her as an autonomous contracting agent within the household (Warren, *Equitable . . . for the Harmonious* 80–81). While this gesture illustrates the radical consistency of his individualism, it also exposes the limits of his framework. Such contracts rest on profound asymmetries of power, knowledge, and dependency, calling into question whether formal voluntariness can meaningfully secure autonomy under conditions of structural inequality. Although Warren affirmed equality in principle, his refusal to theorize collective responsibility or durable social obligation leaves it unresolved how dependency, care, and vulnerability could be accommodated without reintroducing forms of authority he sought to abolish.

These limitations do not reduce Warren's work to naïveté or incoherence. Rather, they highlight the distinctive character of his utopian proposal, formulated in a period of rapid industrialization, expanding market relations, and the consolidation of capitalist social structures. Warren did not regard his system as merely provisional; he believed equitable commerce and voluntary order constituted a coherent and finalized model of a just social order. Yet the practical applicability of this model was constrained by its reliance on small-scale, trust-based social relations and its limited engagement with the complexities of industrial production and large-scale coordination.

At the same time, Warren's critique of the disconnection between cost and value, and of the legitimacy of unlimited profit, remains strikingly resonant. His insistence that price should reflect labor cost, and that profit

constituted a form of unjust appropriation, continues to illuminate structural tensions within capitalist economies. In this sense, the unresolved tensions in his thought reflect not only the historical limits of his experiments, but also the enduring critical force of his challenge to capitalist valuation and accumulation.

Seen in this light, Warren's utopia occupies a distinctive position within the history of utopian thought. It neither promises harmony through collective discipline nor retreats into purely negative critique. Instead, it stages a radical wager: that society can be organized without coercion if individuals are granted full sovereignty over their lives. The limits of this wager—its dependence on idealized human capacities, small-scale interaction, and moral restraint—do not negate its significance. They define its boundaries and invite precisely the kind of critical engagement that utopian thought exists to provoke.

Conclusion

Ezra Heywood consistently held Josiah Warren in exceptionally high regard and treated him as a foundational figure in modern libertarian and socialist thought. Heywood famously described Warren as the "Thomas Paine of coming Socialism," placing him in the following pantheon:

> [W]ith Adam Smith in "Wealth Nations," Proudhon in "What is Property?" Greene in "Mutual Banking," Warren stands as the clear-eyed irresistible prophet of Liberty in Right; more than any other book, issued here or in Europe since 1840, his "True Civilization" sways labor-social thought, & guides nations to Rational Felicity wherein men and women will not be able to defraud others by their legal power to lie or steal. (Heywood 2)

Such assessments reflect Warren's considerable prominence in nineteenth-century American intellectual life. He was the first to implement labor-for-labor exchange in practice, his experiments influenced British cooperative circles, and his concept of individual sovereignty anticipated themes later developed by John Stuart Mill (Mill 217).

Despite this historical prominence, Warren has largely faded from contemporary political and social theory, remembered primarily within specialized histories of anarchism. His significance as a utopian thinker lies not in the completeness or durability of his social models, but in the radical clarity with which he pursued the implications of individual sovereignty. By

rejecting government, law, and collective authority and attempting to replace them with voluntary coordination and equitable exchange, Warren articulated a utopian vision that was simultaneously practical and profoundly idealized.

At the same time, the limits of Warren's utopianism are inseparable from its defining principles. His confidence in human rationality, his reliance on voluntary cooperation in place of institutional authority, and his relative silence on questions of scale, security, and vulnerability reveal the tensions inherent in an uncompromising commitment to individual sovereignty. These unresolved problems do not diminish the significance of his project; rather, they situate it within a long tradition of utopian thought that exposes the distance between ethical aspiration and social complexity. Warren's work remains valuable not as a ready-made solution but as a provocation, a challenge to reconsider how deeply coercion is embedded in modern social arrangements and how far the principle of individual sovereignty can be extended before the demands of social coordination impose their own limits.

Magdalena Modrzejewska, PhD, is affiliated with the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Jagiellonian University, Krakow and specializes in intellectual history and political philosophy in a global context. Her research focuses on human rights in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and on radical social and intellectual movements of the nineteenth century, with particular emphasis on the labor theory of value and its role in critiques of capitalism, democracy, and social inequality. She is especially interested in the shared cultural, social, and political patterns of American, European, and Latin American political thought. She was a Fulbright Senior Scholar at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and has also taught and conducted research at Freie Universität Berlin, Boston University, the University of Toronto, and the University of Rochester.

Notes

1. Almost all of Josiah Warren's writings were self-printed, and Warren as a printer and inventor frequently experimented with typography as a means of emphasizing key concepts. Boldface, italics, capitalization, and variations in font size were often used to convey visual and rhetorical emphasis alongside the argument itself. In accordance with the journal's formatting policy, all quotations from Warren in this article are reproduced in plain text, without typographical emphasis. While this necessarily flattens some of the

visual features of the original publications, the wording of the quotations remains unchanged.

2. To differentiate between Josiah Warren and his son, George Warren, I used his initial for the latter. All other citations with only the surname Warren refer to the author Josiah Warren, the main subject of this paper.

Works Cited

Bailie, William. *Josiah Warren, the First American Anarchist*. Boston, 1906. Print.

Butler, Ann Caldwell. "Josiah Warren and the Sovereignty of the Individual." *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 4.4 (1980): 433–48. Print.

Carson, Kevin. "Anarchism and Markets." *Brill's Companion to Anarchism and Philosophy*. Leiden: Brill, 2018. 81–119. Print.

Claeys, Gregory. "'Individualism,' 'Socialism,' and 'Social Science': Further Notes on a Process of Conceptual Formation, 1800–1850." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47.1 (1986): 81–93. Print.

---. *Machinery, Money, and the Millennium: From Moral Economy to Socialism, 1815–1860*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1987.

---. "Paternalism and Democracy in the Politics of Robert Owen." *International Review of Social History* 27.2 (1982): 161–207.

"Clermont Phalanx," *Harbinger,* 5.17 (2 Oct. 1847): 271–72. Print.

Codman, Charles. *A Brief History of the City of Modern Times, Long Island, N.Y., and a Glorification of Some of Its Saints*. MS, Modern Times Collection, Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead, NY.

DeLeon, David. *The American as Anarchist: Reflections on Indigenous Radicalism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978. Print.

Ecchia, Stefania, and Magdalena Modrzejewska. "Josiah Warren's Anarchist Path between Individualism and Equitable Commerce." *Storia Economica* 24.1–2 (2021): 147–76.

Flatt, Cori L., and Peter A. Hoehnle. "Utopia, Ohio, 1844–1847: Seedbed for Three Experiments in Communal Living." *American Communal Societies Quarterly* 13.1 (2019): 3–31. Print.

Hall, Bowman N. "The Economic Ideas of Josiah Warren, First American Anarchist." *History of Political Economy* 6.1 (1974): 96–108. Print.

Harrison, J. F. C. *Robert Owen and the Owenites in Britain and America: The Quest for the New Moral World*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969. Print.

Heywood, Ezra. "Rights of the Living—Inheritance." *The Word* 17.7 (Jan. 1889): 2. Print.

The Indiana Statesman, New Harmony, 1 Feb. 1845. Print.

Kesten, Seymour R. *Utopian Episodes: Daily Life in Experimental Colonies Dedicated to Changing the World*. Syracuse N.Y.: Syracuse UP, 1993. Print.

Kumar, Krishan. "Utopian Thought and Communal Practice: Robert Owen and the Owenite Communities." *Theory and Society* 19.1 (1990): 1–35. Print.

Lawson, Donna. *Brothers and Sisters All over This Land: America's First Communes*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972. Print.

Lockwood, George Browning. *The New Harmony Movement*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1905.

Lukes Steven. "The Meanings of 'Individualism'." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32.1 (1971): 45–66.

Martin, James J. *Men against the State: The Expositors of Individualist Anarchism in America, 1827–1908*. Colorado Springs: Ralph Myles, 1970. Print.

Mill, John Stuart. *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill. Vol. 18, Essays on Politics and Society, 1*. Ed. John M. Robson. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1977. Print.

Modrzejewska, Magdalena. "American Individualist Anarchists' Critique of the Democratic State." *Horyzonty Polityki* 14.47 (2023): 11–28. Print.

---. *Josiah Warren, the First American Anarchist: The Remarkable American*. Krakow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2016. Print.

Pitzer, Donald E. "The Communal Studies Association at Forty: A Personal Retrospective." *Communal Societies* 35.1 (2015): 81–108. Print.

Reichert, William O. *Partisans of Freedom: A Study of American Anarchism*. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green U Popular P, 1976. Print.

Rocker, Rudolf, *Pioneers of American Freedom: Origin of Liberal and Radical Thought in America*. Trans. Arthur E. Briggs, Los Angeles: Rocker Publications Committee, 1949. Print.

Samuels, Warren J. "Utopian Economics." *A Companion to the History of Economic Thought*. Ed. Warren J. Samuels, Jeff E. Biddle, and John B. Davis. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. 201–214.

Sartwell, Crispin, ed. *The Practical Anarchist: Writings of Josiah Warren*. New York: Fordham UP, 2011. Print.

Schafer, William J. "Looking Backward: Early American Radicalism and Utopian Visions." *Minnesota Review* 11.1 (1978): 60–72. Print.

Schuster, Eunice Minette. *Native American Anarchism: A Study of Left-Wing American Individualism*. Northampton, MA: Dept. of History of Smith College, 1932. Print.

Trahair, Richard C. S., ed. *Utopias and Utopians: An Historical Dictionary of Attempts to Make the World a Better Place and Those Who Were Involved*. London: Routledge, 2013. Print.
Warren, George. "Biographical Note." *Single Vertical Files: Anarchism, Warren Josiah*. Labadie Collection, U of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor.
Warren, Josiah. "As an illustration . . .." *Periodical Letter on the Principles and Progress of the Equity Movement* 1.5 (Dec. 1854): 74–80. Print.
---. "Communicated. To the Friends of Social System, No. 1." *Western Tiller* 1.41 (1 June 1827): 2. Print.
---. "Communicated. To the Friends of Social System, No. 2." *Western Tiller* 1.42 (8 June 1827): 2.
---. "Communicated. To the Friends of Social System, No. 3." *Western Tiller* 1.43 (15 June 1827): 2.
---. "Curiosities of Liberty." *Periodical Letter on the Principles and Progress of the 'Equity Movement'* 1.7 (Feb. 1855): 101–04. Print.
---. *Equitable Commerce: A New Development of Principles for the Harmonious Adjustment and Regulation of the Pecuniary, Intellectual and Moral Intercourse of Mankind, Proposed as Elements of a New Society*. New Harmony, IN: Josiah Warren, 1846. Print.
---. *Equitable Commerce: A New Development of Principles as Substitutes for Laws and Governments . . . Proposed as Elements of New Society*. New York: Fowlers and Wells, 1852. Print.
---. "Essay." *Western Tiller* 1.41 (1 June 1827): 2. Print.
---. "Explanation of the Design and Arrangements of the Co-Operative Magazine, Which Has Recently Been Commenced in Cincinnati." *Mechanics' Free Press* 1. 31 (9 Aug. 1828): 1. Print
---. *Gazette of Equitable Commerce* 1.2 (Sept. 1842), New Harmony, Indiana. Print.
---. "Individuality." *Peaceful Revolutionist* 1.4 (5 Apr. 1833): 13. Print.
---. *Modern Government and Its True Mission: A Few Words for the American Crisis*. Working Men's Library, New Harmony, 1862. Print.
---. *Money: The Defects of Money Are the "Roots of All Evil."* Charlestown, MA, 1873. Print.
---. *Notebook D*. Working Men's Institute Archive, New Harmony, Working Men's Institute Library, New Harmony.
---. *Notes, Folder 13: Lecture and Notes, Box 1*. Josiah Warren Papers, Labadie Collection, Special Collections Library, U of Michigan.
---. "Of Our State of Difficulties." *Peaceful Revolutionist* 1.2 (5 Feb. 1833): 5–6. Print.

---. *Practical Applications of the Elementary Principles of True Civilization to the Minute Details of Everyday Life*. Princeton, MA: Published by the Author 1873. Print.
---. *Practical Details in Equitable Commerce, Showing the Workings in Actual Experiment, during a Series of Years, of the Social Principles Expounded in the Works Called "Equitable Commerce," by the Author of This, and "The Science of Society" by Stephen Pearl Andrews*. New York: Fowlers and Wells Publishers, 1852. Print.
---. "Principles and Progress of an Experiment of Rational Social Intercourse." *Peaceful Revolutionist* 1.2 (5 Feb. 1833): 6–7. Print.
---. "Time Store." *Western Tiller* 1.3 (12 Sept. 1828): 20–21. Print.
---. *True Civilization: An Immediate Necessity and the Last Hope for Mankind*. Boston: Published by the Author, 1863. Print.
---. *True Civilization: A Subject of Vital and Serious Interest to All People, But Most Immediately to Men and Women of Labor and Sorrow*. Ed. Stephen Pearl Andrews, Cliftondale, MA: Published by the Author 1869. Print.
Webber, Everett. *Escape to Utopia: The Communal Movement in America*. New York: Hastings House, 1959. Print.
Weisbord, Albert. *The Conquest of Power. Liberalism, Anarchism, Syndicalism, Socialism*. United States: Covici-Friede, 1937. Print.
Wright, Neil. "Josiah Warren Seen in the Light of Developmental Communalism, and Vice Versa." *Communal Societies* 44.1 (2024): 17–43.
Wunderlich, Roger. *Low Living and High Thinking at Modern Times, New York*. Syracuse NY: Syracuse UP, 1992. Print.
Yuki, Tsuyoshi. *Socialism, Markets, and the Critique of Money: The Theory of "Labor Notes."* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. Print.