230 W. 105th St.

New York, NY 10025

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Sara Bershtel

Hill & Wang

19 Union Square West

New York, NY 10003

Dear Sara,

Thanks for sending me the galleys of the fascinating Sorkin collection. I was engrossed by it, especially because I've been reading and writing about New York and will be teaching a course on the city next fall. Here's a comment you may want to use:

"Whether or not we agree that the theme park and the shopping mall have been the sorry models for a new American urbanism, we should find this a brilliantly provocative and sharply argued collection of critical reports on our changing cities and suburbs. Reacting against postmodern celebrations of streamlined high-tech consumerism, these essays document the destruction of public space--the loss of diversity and messy human vitality--in the substitution of a sanitized, simulated "analogous city" for the classic American city. Variations on a Theme Park aims to do for the 90's what Lewis Mumford, William H. Whyte, and Jane Jacobs did for the urban life of earlier decades."

I hope this is of some help. Let's get together when you have some time. Call me. I think I have a book for you if I can ever finish the ones I'm now writing. It's on popular culture, and it includes an essay on world's fairs, published two years ago, that overlaps with the theme of this book. I just can't let myself think about it right now. I'm glad to see you're thriving at Hill & Wang after the Pantheon debacle. I sat next to Arthur Rosenthal at lunch at NYU a few weeks ago and we had a nice talk.

All best,