

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future

****Pig and the Skyscraper Chicago: A History of Our Future****

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future – it's a phrase that might initially puzzle you, but it opens the door to a fascinating exploration of history, architecture, and the unexpected ways they intertwine in the city of Chicago. This phrase is not just a quirky title; it's a lens through which we can examine the evolution of urban spaces, the significance of skyscrapers in American culture, and how stories as unconventional as those involving pigs help us understand the future of our cities.

Chicago, often celebrated as the birthplace of the skyscraper, has a rich architectural history that tells a larger story about innovation, resilience, and transformation. But what does a pig have to do with any of this? As odd as it sounds, the connection highlights the quirky, human elements that give life and character to the steel and glass giants dominating city skylines.

The Origins of the Skyscraper in Chicago

Chicago's rise as a hub for skyscraper development began in the late 19th century. After the devastating Great Chicago Fire of 1871, the city was essentially forced to rebuild from scratch. This tragedy became a turning point, inspiring architects and engineers to think boldly and differently about urban construction.

Why Chicago Became the Skyscraper Capital

Several factors made Chicago the perfect incubator for the skyscraper:

- ****Technological Innovation:**** The introduction of steel-frame construction allowed buildings to rise higher than ever before without collapsing under their own weight.
- ****Economic Boom:**** Chicago's rapid industrialization created demand for office and commercial space.
- ****Transportation Hub:**** As a central railway and shipping hub, Chicago attracted businesses who needed centralized office buildings.
- ****Architectural Pioneers:**** Visionaries like Louis Sullivan and Daniel Burnham pushed the boundaries of design and engineering.

This combination of necessity, innovation, and ambition birthed the world's first true skyscrapers, setting the stage for the towering cityscape we recognize today.

Pig and the Skyscraper: A Symbolic Connection

You might wonder why “pig” features in this narrative. The “pig” here is emblematic, drawn from the cultural and historical layers that make Chicago unique. It harks back to the city’s agricultural roots and the livestock trade that was once a cornerstone of Chicago’s economy. In fact, Chicago was once known as the “hog butcher for the world,” a phrase immortalized by poet Carl Sandburg.

The Livestock Industry and Urban Growth

Before skyscrapers pierced the sky, Chicago’s stockyards and meatpacking plants shaped not just the economy but also the social fabric of the city. The massive stockyards employed thousands, and their presence created a dense urban environment where working-class neighborhoods thrived. This industrial base funded much of the city’s expansion and architectural experimentation.

The pig, in this context, becomes a metaphor for the raw materials and labor that built the city from the ground up. It’s a reminder that beneath the sleek facades of skyscrapers lies a history rooted in hard work, industry, and sometimes gritty realities.

Chicago’s Architectural Evolution and Its Future

The story of Chicago’s skyscrapers is not just about the past—it’s an ongoing saga that reflects how cities respond to changing social, economic, and environmental needs. From the iconic Willis Tower to the recently completed Vista Tower, Chicago’s skyline continues to evolve.

The Role of Sustainability in Modern Skyscrapers

Today, the future of skyscrapers in Chicago involves more than height and grandeur. Environmental sustainability is front and center:

- **Green Building Materials:** New designs prioritize materials that reduce environmental impact.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Skyscrapers now integrate advanced HVAC systems and renewable energy sources.
- **Urban Green Spaces:** Incorporating parks and vertical gardens helps combat urban heat and improve air quality.
- **Smart Technology:** Automated systems optimize lighting, temperature, and resource use.

These features are shaping a new era of skyscraper design, one that balances human needs with ecological responsibility.

How the Past Informs Future Urban Planning

Understanding Chicago's history—from its days as a meatpacking powerhouse to its status as a skyscraper pioneer—gives urban planners valuable insights. The city's past teaches us about the importance of adaptability, community engagement, and technological innovation.

For example, the transformation of former industrial zones into mixed-use developments demonstrates how cities can reinvent themselves while respecting their heritage. This approach creates vibrant, livable neighborhoods that connect people to their city's story.

The Cultural Impact of Chicago's Skyscrapers

Skyscrapers are more than just buildings; they are symbols of ambition, progress, and identity. In Chicago, these towering structures reflect the city's spirit—a blend of resilience, creativity, and sometimes, a touch of whimsy.

Art and Architecture: A Dynamic Relationship

Chicago's skyscrapers have inspired countless artists, writers, and filmmakers. The interplay between architecture and culture is evident in:

- **Public Art Installations:** Sculptures and murals that celebrate the city's history.
- **Literary References:** Works by Chicago authors that use the skyline as a metaphor for modern life.
- **Film and Photography:** Iconic images that capture the city's evolving urban landscape.

This cultural dimension enriches our understanding of skyscrapers not just as functional spaces, but as living parts of a city's soul.

Community Stories: Beyond the Glass and Steel

Every skyscraper has stories embedded within it—stories of the people who built them, worked in them, and lived around them. Community histories reveal how these buildings affect daily life, from shaping economic opportunities to influencing neighborhood dynamics.

For instance, the juxtaposition of luxury high-rises with longstanding working-class communities highlights ongoing challenges related to gentrification and urban equity. Recognizing these human elements is crucial in planning a future that is inclusive and just.

Lessons from “Pig and the Skyscraper Chicago: A History of Our Future”

This intriguing phrase encapsulates a broader lesson: the future of our cities depends on how well we understand and integrate their multifaceted histories. Chicago’s journey—from its livestock markets to its architectural marvels—teaches us that progress is never linear or isolated.

By embracing the complexity of urban life, including the unexpected symbols like the pig, we open ourselves to more creative and sustainable visions for city living. This mindset encourages us to honor the past, innovate in the present, and build a future that reflects the diverse needs and dreams of all urban residents.

Whether you’re an architecture enthusiast, a history buff, or simply curious about how cities shape our lives, exploring the story of pig and the skyscraper in Chicago offers a unique perspective. It’s a reminder that behind every towering structure lies a rich tapestry of human experience—one that continues to evolve and inspire.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Pig and the Skyscraper: Chicago, A History of Our Future' about?

It is a documentary that explores the intertwined histories of pigs, skyscrapers, and urban development in Chicago, highlighting how industrialization and architecture shaped the city's future.

Who directed 'Pig and the Skyscraper: Chicago, A History of Our Future'?

The documentary was directed by Aviva Kempner, known for her work on social and historical subjects.

Why does the documentary focus on pigs in relation to Chicago's skyscrapers?

Pigs symbolize the industrial and agricultural roots of Chicago, illustrating

the connection between the city's meatpacking industry and its architectural innovation.

How does 'Pig and the Skyscraper' link Chicago's history to modern urban development?

The film traces Chicago's transformation through its meatpacking industry and skyscraper construction, showing how these elements influenced contemporary urban planning and economic growth.

What role did the meatpacking industry play in Chicago's architectural history according to the documentary?

The meatpacking industry drove economic growth and urbanization, necessitating new building techniques and leading to the rise of skyscrapers in Chicago.

Is 'Pig and the Skyscraper' relevant to current discussions about sustainable urban futures?

Yes, the documentary encourages viewers to consider the environmental and social impacts of industrialization and urban growth, informing debates on sustainable city development.

Where can I watch 'Pig and the Skyscraper: Chicago, A History of Our Future'?

The documentary is available on several streaming platforms and may also be accessed through educational libraries or the filmmaker's official website.

What makes 'Pig and the Skyscraper' a unique take on Chicago's history?

It uniquely combines the story of Chicago's architectural achievements with the lesser-known history of its meatpacking industry, offering a multidimensional view of the city's past and future.

Additional Resources

****Pig and the Skyscraper Chicago: A History of Our Future****

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future is more than just an intriguing phrase; it encapsulates a thought-provoking exploration of urban development, architectural evolution, and socio-economic dynamics in one of America's most iconic cities. This phrase is closely associated with the

documentary **Pig and the Skyscraper**, which delves into the intricate interplay between Chicago's urban landscape and the forces shaping its future. By examining this narrative, we gain a deeper understanding of how Chicago's past and present inform the trajectory of urban growth, sustainability, and social change.

Understanding the Context: The Documentary's Core Themes

Pig and the Skyscraper Chicago a history of our future serves as a lens through which to view the tensions between industrial progress and urban sustainability. The documentary highlights how Chicago, historically known for its towering skyscrapers and booming industry, faces contemporary challenges that question traditional models of urban expansion. Central to this discussion is the symbolic use of the "pig" – representing industrial agriculture and its environmental footprint – juxtaposed against the iconic skyscraper, a symbol of architectural ambition and economic power.

In examining Chicago's history, the documentary reveals a city built on innovation but also marked by environmental and social costs. The skyscraper, a hallmark of Chicago's skyline, embodies the city's rise as a commercial and cultural hub. However, this progress often came at the expense of ecological balance and social equity, themes that resonate in today's urban planning debates.

Chicago's Architectural Legacy: The Rise of the Skyscraper

Chicago's identity is inseparable from its architectural advancements. The city is credited with pioneering the skyscraper, beginning with the Home Insurance Building in 1885, widely considered the world's first skyscraper. This innovation was driven by a need to maximize urban space and symbolize economic strength post the Great Chicago Fire.

The evolution of skyscrapers in Chicago reflects broader trends in urban development:

- **Technological innovation:** Use of steel-frame construction enabled taller, more resilient buildings.
- **Economic growth:** Skyscrapers became centers for commerce, finance, and culture.
- **Urban density challenges:** High-rise buildings addressed limited space but also introduced issues like congestion and resource management.

While skyscrapers symbolize progress, *Pig and the Skyscraper Chicago a history of our future* encourages viewers to consider the environmental and societal impacts of such growth.

The “Pig” as a Metaphor: Industrial Agriculture and Urban Sustainability

The metaphor of the “pig” in the phrase is critical, representing the industrial agriculture system that supports urban populations but often contributes to environmental degradation. Chicago has historically been a hub for meatpacking and agricultural processing, industries that have left a lasting imprint on the city’s economy and environment.

Industrial agriculture’s impact includes:

- **Resource consumption:** High water and energy usage linked to meat production.
- **Pollution:** Waste and emissions affecting urban and rural ecosystems.
- **Food supply chains:** Dependence on centralized, large-scale operations that pose risks for sustainability.

The documentary reveals how Chicago’s skyscraper-driven economic model is intertwined with these agricultural systems, prompting a reevaluation of urban food security and environmental responsibility.

The Intersection of Urban Development and Environmental Challenges

The phrase *pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future* draws attention to the complex relationship between urban growth and environmental stewardship. Chicago’s development trajectory raises important questions about balancing economic ambitions with ecological limits.

Urban Sprawl vs. Vertical Growth

Chicago’s skyline, dominated by skyscrapers, represents vertical growth as a solution to urban sprawl. Vertical growth can reduce land consumption and potentially lower transportation emissions by promoting denser living and

working environments. However, it also introduces new challenges:

- **Energy demands:** High-rise buildings often require significant energy for heating, cooling, and elevators.
- **Infrastructure strain:** Concentrated populations increase pressure on utilities and public services.
- **Social equity:** High-rise developments may exacerbate disparities if affordable housing is not prioritized.

The documentary invites reflection on how Chicago might innovate to create skyscraper designs that are both environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive.

Food Systems and Urban Resilience

Exploring the “pig” element highlights the importance of rethinking food systems within urban contexts. Chicago’s historical reliance on industrial meatpacking has shaped its economic landscape but also poses sustainability questions given global concerns about climate change and resource depletion.

Alternatives gaining traction include:

- **Urban agriculture:** Incorporating green roofs, community gardens, and vertical farms into the cityscape.
- **Local food networks:** Supporting farmers markets and reducing food miles.
- **Innovative technologies:** Development of lab-grown meat and plant-based alternatives to reduce environmental impact.

By connecting these food system shifts to urban planning, **Pig and the Skyscraper Chicago a history of our future** underscores the potential for cities to lead in sustainable innovation.

Historical Lessons Informing Chicago’s Urban Future

Chicago’s storied past serves as both inspiration and caution. The city’s economic booms, architectural milestones, and industrial heritage provide

valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of modern urbanization.

Economic Transformation and Social Implications

Historically, Chicago's skyscrapers symbolized prosperity and progress, attracting businesses and residents. Yet, this growth also revealed social inequities, including labor exploitation and segregation. Today's urban planners and policymakers grapple with these legacies, striving for inclusive development that benefits all citizens.

Environmental Policy and Urban Design Innovations

Chicago has made strides in environmental policy, with initiatives like the Chicago Climate Action Plan aiming to reduce carbon emissions and promote green infrastructure. The city's experiences illustrate how integrating environmental considerations into urban design can improve resilience and quality of life.

Looking Ahead: Chicago's Role in Shaping Urban Futures

Pig and the Skyscraper Chicago a history of our future is not simply a historical account; it's a prompt for forward-thinking strategies. Chicago's experience offers a blueprint for other cities facing similar challenges of balancing growth with sustainability.

Key areas of focus include:

1. **Innovative architecture:** Designing skyscrapers that incorporate renewable energy, efficient materials, and green spaces.
2. **Food system integration:** Linking urban agriculture with city planning to create resilient food networks.
3. **Community engagement:** Ensuring development projects address the needs and voices of diverse populations.

The interplay between the "pig" and the skyscraper serves as a powerful metaphor for reconciling industrial legacy with future sustainability.

The narrative encapsulated by **pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future** challenges us to rethink urban development in a holistic manner. Chicago's iconic skyline and industrial heritage offer lessons in innovation, resilience, and the imperative of sustainable growth. As cities worldwide confront similar crossroads, Chicago stands as a testament to the complex dance of history, economy, environment, and society shaping the cities of tomorrow.

Pig And The Skyscraper Chicago A History Of Our Future

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: *The Pig and the Skyscraper*

Marco d'Eramo, 2020-05-05 You expect the city of Al Capone and what you find are pleasant boulevards coursing up and down between the neo-classical buildings of the 1893 Universal Exhibition ... The city center unfolds before you, an architectural miracle that is to twentieth-century urban planning what Venice must have been for the fifteenth century. Like a cross between Philip Marlowe and Walter Benjamin, Marco d'Eramo stalks the streets of Chicago, leaving no myth unturned. Maintaining a European's detached gaze, he slowly comes to recognize the familiar stink of modernity that blows across the Windy City, the origins of whose greatness (the slaughterhouses, the railroads, the lumber and cereal-crop trades) are by now ancient history, and where what rears its head today is already scheduled for tomorrow's chopping block. Chicago has been the stage for some of modernity's key episodes: the birth of the skyscraper, the rise of urban sociology, the world's first atomic reactor, the hard-nosed monetarism of the Chicago School. Here in this postmodern Babel, where the contradictions of American society are writ large, d'Eramo bears witness to the revolutionary, subversive power of capitalism at its purest.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: *The Rise of Western Power*

Jonathan Daly, 2013-12-19 The West's history is one of extraordinary success; no other region, empire, culture, or civilization has left so powerful a mark upon the world. *The Rise of Western Power* charts the West's achievements-representative government, the free enterprise system, modern science, and the rule of law-as well as its misdeeds-two frighteningly destructive World Wars, the Holocaust, imperialistic domination, and the Atlantic slave trade. Adopting a global perspective, Jonathan Daly explores the contributions of other cultures and civilizations to the West's emergence. Historical, geographical, and cultural factors all unfold in the narrative. Adopting a thematic structure, the book traces the rise of Western power through a series of revolutions-social, political, technological, military, commercial, and industrial, among others. The result is a clear and engaging introduction to the history of Western civilization.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: *Johnny Cash and the Great American Contradiction: Christianity and the Battle for the Soul of a Nation* Rodney Clapp, 2008

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: *Popular Culture and the Enduring Myth of Chicago, 1871-1968* Lisa Krissoff Boehm, 2004-09-28 This book is an examination of the image of Chicago in American popular culture between the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and Chicago's 1968 Democratic National Convention.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: *On Location* D. Fairchild Ruggles, 2011-11-19 *On Location: Heritage Cities and Sites* merges the material and the social perspectives of preservation and historical interpretation in urban landscapes. The essays in this volume focus on the social life of historic cities and large-scale sites. They examine the ways that cities are dynamically changing as they are made and then remade by the people who inhabit or simply visit them, and concentrate on change, pluralism, and fragmentation. The strength of *On Location: Heritage Cities and Sites* is its comparative approach to both theory and grounded research. It

includes an introductory essay that explains the heritage principle under study--the challenges of scale in the environment of a city or large complex--and its development as seen in the policy instruments of ICOMOS, UNESCO, and other major heritage organizations. The combination of wide-ranging case studies (including essays on North America, South America, Central America, the Middle East, and Europe) and the theoretical background make this volume an invaluable asset for researchers in archaeology, urban studies, art and architecture, cultural heritage, public policy, and tourism.

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pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: Instruments in Art and Science Helmar Schramm, Ludger Schwarte, Jan Lazardzig, 2014-08-29 This volume presents a collection of original papers at the intersection of philosophy, the history of science, cultural and theatrical studies. Based on a series of case studies on the 17th century, it contributes to an understanding of the role played by instruments at the interface of science and art. The papers pursue the hypothesis that the development and construction of instruments make a substantive contribution to the opening of new fields of knowledge, the development of new cultural practices, but also to the delineation of particular genres, methods, and disciplines. This perspective leads the authors to reflect anew on what actually defines an instrument and to develop a series of basic questions to determine what an instrument is - which actions does the instrument incorporate? - which actions does the instrument make possible? - when do the objects of examination themselves become instruments? - what skills are required to use an instrument, which skills does it produce? With its combination of new theoretical models and historical case studies, its detailed demonstration of the mutual influence of art and science with the instrument as the point of intersection, this volume enters new territory. It is of great value for all those interested in the history of our perception of instruments. Besides the editors, the authors of the papers are: Jörg Jochen Berns, Olaf Breidbach, Georges Didi-Huberman, Peter Galison, Sybille Krämer, Dieter Mersch, Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, and Otto Sibum.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: Urban Space and Cityscapes Christoph Lindner, 2006-04-18 From the verticals of New York, Hong Kong and Singapore to the sprawls of London, Paris and Jakarta, this interdisciplinary volume of new writing examines constructions, representations, imaginations and theorizations of 'cityscapes' in modern and contemporary culture. With specially-commissioned essays from the fields of cultural theory, architecture, film, literature, visual art and urban geography, it offers fresh insight into the increasingly complex relationship between urban space, cultural production and everyday life. This volume draws on critical urban studies and moves beyond familiar cultural representations of the city by considering urban planning and architecture. Organized under three inter-related themes - image, text and form - essay topics range from the examination of cyberpunk skylines, pagan urbanism and the cinema of urban disaster, to the analysis of iconic city landmarks such as the twin towers, the London Eye and the Judisches Museum Berlin. Covering a diverse range of cities, including Berlin, Chicago, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, Paris, and Venice, this fantastic resource for students, scholars and researchers alike, works expertly at the intersections of visual, material, and literary culture.

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Twenty-First-Century Architecture Chicago Architecture Center, John Hill, 2021-06-08 Exploring a new century of architecture in the Windy City Chicago's wealth of architectural treasures makes it one of the world's majestic cityscapes. Published in collaboration with the Chicago Architecture Center, this easy-to-use guide invites you to discover the new era of twenty-first-century architecture in the Windy City via two hundred architecturally significant buildings and spaces in the city and suburbs. Features include: Entries organized by neighborhood Maps with easy-to-locate landmarks and mass transit options Background on each entry, including the design architect, name and address, description, and other essential information Sidebars on additional sites and projects A detailed supplemental section with a glossary, selected bibliography, and indexes by architect, building name, and building type Up-to-date and illustrated with almost four hundred color photos, the Guide to Chicago's Twenty-First-Century Architecture takes travelers and locals on a journey into an ever-changing architectural mecca.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: A Great Conspiracy against Our Race Peter G. Vellon, 2014-10-03 In *A Great Conspiracy against Our Race*, Peter Vellon explores how Italian immigrants, a once undesirable and “swarthy” race, assimilated into dominant white culture through the influential national and radical Italian language press in New York City. Racial history has always been the thorn in America’s side, with a swath of injustices—slavery, lynching, segregation, and many other ills—perpetrated against black people. This very history is complicated by, and also dependent on, what constitutes a white person in this country. Many of the European immigrant groups now considered white also had to struggle with their own racial identities. Examining the press as a cultural production of the Italian immigrant community, this book investigates how this immigrant press constructed race, class, and identity from 1886 through 1920. Their frequent coverage of racially charged events of the time, as well as other topics such as capitalism and religion, reveals how these papers constructed a racial identity as Italian, American, and white. *A Great Conspiracy against Our Race* vividly illustrates how the immigrant press was a site where socially constructed categories of race, color, civilization, and identity were reworked, created, contested, and negotiated. Vellon also uncovers how Italian immigrants filtered societal pressures and redefined the parameters of whiteness, constructing their own identity. This work is an important contribution to not only Italian American history, but America’s history of immigration and race.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: The Loop Patrick T. Reardon, 2020-11-26 The structure that anchors Chicago Every day Chicagoans rely on the loop of elevated train tracks to get to their jobs, classrooms, or homes in the city’s downtown. But how much do they know about the single most important structure in the history of the Windy City? In engagingly brisk prose, Patrick T. Reardon unfolds the fascinating story about how Chicago’s elevated Loop was built, gave its name to the downtown, helped unify the city, saved the city’s economy, and was itself saved from destruction in the 1970s. This unique volume combines urban history, biography, engineering, architecture, transportation, culture, and politics to explore the elevated Loop’s impact on the city’s development and economy and on the way Chicagoans see themselves. The Loop rooted Chicago’s downtown in a way unknown in other cities, and it protected that area—and the city itself—from the full effects of suburbanization during the second half of the twentieth century. Masses of data underlie new insights into what has made Chicago’s downtown, and the city as a whole, tick. The Loop features a cast of colorful Chicagoans, such as legendary lawyer Clarence Darrow, poet Edgar Lee Masters, mayor Richard J. Daley, and the notorious Gray Wolves of the Chicago City Council. Charles T. Yerkes, an often-demonized figure, is shown as a visionary urban planner, and engineer John Alexander Low Waddell, a world-renowned bridge creator, is introduced to Chicagoans as the designer of their urban railway. This fascinating exploration of how one human-built structure reshaped the social and economic landscape of Chicago is the definitive book on Chicago’s elevated Loop.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: exlibris Giovanni Corbellini, 2022-05-18 Architects write a lot, especially now when conceptual aspects have become central in

the advanced reflections and narrative forms increasingly intersect the quest of design practices far an ultimate legitimation. In the growing mass of the publishing offer, these keywords try to highlight recurrent issues, tracking synthetic paths of orientation between different critical positions, with particular attention to what happens in the neighbouring fields of the arts and sciences.

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pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: The Good Metropolis Alexander Eisenschmidt, 2019-01-29 The publication presents the first historical analysis of the tension between the city and architectural form. It introduces 20th century theories to construct a historical context from which a new architecture-city relationship emerged. The book provides a conceptual framework to understand this relationship and comes to the conclusion that urbanization may be filled with potential, i.e. be a Good Metropolis.

pig and the skyscraper chicago a history of our future: The Palgrave Handbook of Literature and the City Jeremy Tambling, 2017-02-17 This book is about the impact of literature upon cities world-wide, and cities upon literature. It examines why the city matters so much to contemporary critical theory, and why it has inspired so many forms of writing which have attempted to deal with its challenges to think about it and to represent it. Gathering together 40 contributors who look at different modes of writing and film-making in throughout the world, this handbook asks how the modern city has engendered so much theoretical consideration, and looks at cities and their literature from China to Peru, from New York to Paris, from London to Kinshasa. It looks at some of the ways in which modern cities – whether capitals, shanty-towns, industrial or 'rust-belt' – have forced themselves on people's ways of thinking and writing.

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