

Articles

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Charles Sprague Sargent's vision for value of urban parks reflected some of guiding principles that shaped park development in middle of nineteenth century. He highlighted strong connection in American life between nature, quiet reflection, and civic virtue. Agrarian origins of nation meant that American leaders, most notably Thomas Jefferson, linked rural landscape with very foundations of republicanism and democracy. According to Jefferson, political autonomy and concern for public good emerged from process of working land and being independent landowner. Therefore, centralized agrarian nation composed of yeoman farmers represented best hope for fostering virtuous republic. Yet while these agrarian ideals often translated into anti-urban sensibility, they more often led to integration of natural elements into town and city development.¹

¹ The passage is an excerpt from Bachin, Robin. "Cultivating Unity: The Changing Role of Parks in America." *Places* 15, no. 3 (July 2002): 12.