

HIS 295
History of North American Cities & Suburbs

Satisfies: SBS, USA

Thematic Categories: "Health, Science & Environmental Change,"
"Law, Politics & Social Justice," "Race, Religion, Gender & Sexualities"

MWF: 12:00 PM - 12:53 PM

Prof. Chris Sellers

This class surveys the history of cities and suburbs throughout North American history. We begin with the indigenous cities of pre-contact period and the walking city of preindustrial times. The bulk of the course will then cover tumultuous urban growth associated with the rise and migration of modern industry from the nineteenth through the twentieth century, and over the succeeding decades, in and around places such as New York, Los Angeles, and Mexico City. Readings and lectures cover the different peoples who have lived in and passed through these cities, the places they have built, including suburbs, and the kinds of conflicts that have thereby unfolded, along lines of class, ethnicity and race. We will survey the changing dynamics of urban growth, the evolving connections between the city and the country, and the intermediary, widening roles of a suburban "in-between." To illuminate the more personal and local significance of these changes, we will also undertake more focused examinations: of the changing ways urbanites got their food, avoided disease, and dealt with a local nature. Requirements will include written-up answers to reading questions, a medium-length paper, and an in-class final.