

Questions about *The City* (1939)

1. What do the filmmakers consider to be the ideal type of American settlement?
2. What does the film tell us about the causes of urbanization?
3. What are the things that the film identifies as the major problems with modern cities?
4. What are the solutions proposed in the film?
5. What social purposes do the filmmakers have? Who are they trying to help?
6. The town featured at the end of the film was built by the federal government as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal. Its purpose was to help low-income urban families find jobs and provide affordable and adequate housing. What does the film's portrayal of the town tell you about the political priorities of the New Deal?
7. What's funny in this film? Did the filmmakers intend the scenes to be funny?
8. This film was prepared for an exhibit at the 1939 World's Fair titled "The World of Tomorrow." Did the "tomorrow" envisioned by this film come to pass? How have modern cities lived up to the filmmakers' expectations?
9. What scenes in the film surprised you? What are features of American cities and suburbs that have disappeared?
10. Who is missing from this film?