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# Quotes about Cities and City Life

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Washington is no place for a good actor. The competition from bad actors is too great.

- Allen, Fred A.

The first thing that strikes a visitor to Paris is a taxi.

- Allen, Fred A.

A great city is not to be confounded with a populous one.

- Aristotle

I found Rome brick, I left it marble.

- Augustus, Caesar

We do not look in our great cities for our best morality.

- Austen, Jane

One has not great hopes from Birmingham. I always say there is something direful in the sound.

- Austen, Jane

The life of our city is rich in poetic and marvelous subjects. We are enveloped and steeped as though in an atmosphere of the marvelous; but we do not notice it.

- Baudelaire, Charles

Cities are distinguished by the catastrophic forms they presuppose and which are a vital part of their essential charm. New York is King Kong, or the blackout, or vertical bombardment: Towering Inferno. Los Angeles is the horizontal fault, California breaking off and sliding into the Pacific: Earthquake.

- Baudrillard, Jean

The cities of the world are concentric, isomorphic, synchronic. Only one exists and you are always in the same one. It's the effect of their permanent revolution, their intense circulation, their instantaneous magnetism.

- Baudrillard, Jean

Not to find one's way in a city may well be uninteresting and banal. It requires ignorance -- nothing more. But to lose oneself in a city -- as one loses oneself in a forest -- that calls for a quite different schooling. Then, signboard and street names, passers-by, roofs, kiosks, or bars must speak to the wanderer like a cracking twig under his feet in the forest.

- Benjamin, Walter

Every city has a sex and an age which have nothing to do with demography. Rome is feminine. So is Odessa. London is a teenager, an urchin, and, in this, hasn't changed since the time of Dickens. Paris, I believe, is a man in his twenties in love with an older

woman.

- Berger, John

When in Rome, do as Rome does.

- Bierce, Ambrose

What I like about cities is that everything is king size, the beauty and the ugliness.

- Brodsky, Joseph

Cities, like cats, will reveal themselves at night.

- Brooke, Rupert

The catalogue of forms is endless: until every shape has found its city, new cities will continue to be born. When the forms exhaust their variety and come apart, the end of cities begins.

- Calvino, Italo

As a remedy to life in society I would suggest the big city. Nowadays, it is the only desert within our means.

- Camus, Albert

New York is an exciting town where something is happening all the time, most unsolved.

- Carson, Johnny

Paris, a city of gaieties and pleasures, where four-fifths of the inhabitants die of grief.

&#91;About Paris&#93;

- Chamfort, Sebastien-Roch Nicolas De

A neighborhood is a residential area that is changing for the worse.

- Ciardi, John

No city should be too large for a man to walk out of in a morning.

- Connolly, Cyril

All that a city will ever allow you is an angle on it -- an oblique, indirect sample of what it contains, or what passes through it; a point of view.

- Conrad, Peter

What is a city, but the people; true the people are the city.

- Coriolanus III

Where the criminals cover their crimes by making them legal. &#91;On Washington D.

C.&#93;

- Dane, Frank

If you're not in New York, you're camping out.

- Dewey, Thomas E.

A great city, whose image dwells in the memory of man, is the type of some great idea. Rome represents conquest; Faith hovers over the towers of Jerusalem; and Athens embodies the pre-eminent quality of the antique world, Art.

- Disraeli, Benjamin

I'm impressed with the people from Chicago. Hollywood is hype, New York is talk, Chicago is work.

- Douglas, Michael

There are a number of things wrong with Washington. One of them is that everyone is too far from home.

- Eisenhower, Dwight D.

Cities force growth and make people talkative and entertaining, but they also make them artificial.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Cities give us collision. 'Tis said, London and New York take the nonsense out of a man.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The city is recruited from the country.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The City attaches an exaggerated importance to the healing power of lunch.

- Fieldes, Christopher

I once spent a year in Philadelphia, I think it was on a Sunday.

- Fields, W. C.

Towns are excrescences, gray fluxions, where men, hurrying to find one another, have lost themselves.

- Forster, Edward M.

The Metropolis should have been aborted long before it became New York, London or Tokyo.

- Galbraith, John Kenneth

Paris is the caf? of Europe.

- Galiani, Ferdinando

Washington is a city of people doing badly what should not be done at all.

- Gurney, Robert

If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for

the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a movable feast.

- Hemingway, Ernest

What else can you expect from a town that's shut off from the world by the ocean on one side and New Jersey on the other?

- Henry, O.

There is more sophistication and less sense in New York than anywhere else on the globe.

- Herold, Don

There is a time of life somewhere between the sullen fugues of adolescence and the retrenchments of middle age when human nature becomes so absolutely absorbing one wants to be in the city constantly, even at the height of summer.

- Hoagland, Edward

In Washington, the first thing people tell you is what their job is. In Los Angeles you learn their star sign. In Houston you're told how rich they are. And in New York they tell you what their rent is.

- Hoggart, Simon

We are in danger of making our cities places where business goes on but where life, in its real sense, is lost.

- Humphrey, Hubert H.

A large city cannot be experientially known; its life is too manifold for any individual to be able to participate in it.

- Huxley, Aldous

Washington is an endless series of mock palaces clearly built for clerks.

- Huxtable, Ada Louise

But look what we have built low-income projects that become worse centers of delinquency, vandalism and general social hopelessness than the slums they were supposed to replace. Cultural centers that are unable to support a good bookstore. Civic centers that are avoided by everyone but bums. Promenades that go from no place to nowhere and have no promenaders. Expressways that eviscerate great cities. This is not the rebuilding of cities. This is the sacking of cities.

- Jacobs, Jane

Prepare for death, if here at night you roam, and sign your will before you sup from home.

- Johnson, Samuel

All things may be bought in Rome with money.

- Juvenal, (Decimus Junius Juvenalis)

The faces in New York remind me of people who played a game and lost.

- Kempton, Murray

Washington is a city of Southern efficiency and Northern charm.

- Kennedy, John F.

We will neglect our cities to our peril, for in neglecting them we neglect the nation.

- Kennedy, John F.

If one had but a single glance to give the world, one should gaze on Istanbul.

- Lamartine, Alphonse De

Towns oftener swamp one than carry one out onto the big ocean of life.

- Lawrence, D. H.

The crime problem in New York is getting really serious. The other day the Statue of Liberty had both hands up.

- Leno, Jay

New York now leads the world's great cities in the number of people around whom you shouldn't make a sudden move.

- Letterman, David

The two elements the traveler first captures in the big city are extra human architecture

and furious rhythm. Geometry and anguish. At first glance, the rhythm may be confused with gaiety, but when you look more closely at the mechanism of social life and the painful slavery of both men and machines, you see that it is nothing but a kind of typical, empty anguish that makes even crime and gangs forgivable means of escape.

- Lorca, Federico Garcia

Man's course begins in a garden, but it ends in a city.

- Maclaren, Alexander

The city as a center where, any day in any year, there may be a fresh encounter with a new talent, a keen mind or a gifted specialist -- this is essential to the life of a country. To play this role in our lives a city must have a soul -- a university, a great art or music school, a cathedral or a great mosque or temple, a great laboratory or scientific center, as well as the libraries and museums and galleries that bring past and present together. A city must be a place where groups of women and men are seeking and developing the highest things they know.

- Mead, Margaret

A city is a place where there is no need to wait for next week to get the answer to a question, to taste the food of any country, to find new voices to listen to and familiar ones to listen to again.

- Mead, Margaret

I have never felt salvation in nature. I love cities above all.

- Michelangelo

The city is loveliest when the sweet death racket begins. Her own life lived in defiance of nature, her electricity, her frigidaires, her soundproof walls, the glint of lacquered nails, the plumes that wave across the corrugated sky. Here in the coffin depths grow the everlasting flowers sent by telegraph.

- Miller, Henry

America is a nation with no truly national city, no Paris, no Rome, no London, no city which is at once the social center, the political capital, and the financial hub.

- Mills, C. Wright

Either these 'unsaved' people are to be evangelized, or the leaven of communism and infidelity will assume such enormous proportions that it will break you in a reign of terror such as this country has never known.

- Moody, Dwight L.

New York, the nation's thyroid gland.

- Morley, Christopher

The city is not a concrete jungle. It is a human zoo.

- Morris, Desmond

The city is a fact in nature, like a cave, a run of mackerel or an ant-heap. But it is also a conscious work of art, and it holds within its communal framework many simpler and more personal forms of art. Mind takes form in the city; and in turn, urban forms condition mind.

- Mumford, Lewis

The chief function of the city is to convert power into form, energy into culture, dead matter into the living symbols of art, biological reproduction into social creativity.

- Mumford, Lewis

An artist has no home in Europe except in Paris.

- Nietzsche, Friedrich

There is no solitude in the world like that of the big city.

- Norris, Kathleen

Today's city is the most vulnerable social structure ever conceived by man.

- Oppenheimer, Martin

Washington is a place where politicians don't know which way is up and taxes don't know which way is down.

- Orben, Robert

Any city however small, is in fact divided into two, one the city of the poor, the other of the

rich. These are at war with one another.

- Plato

All great art is born of the metropolis.

- Pound, Ezra

A city is a large community where people are lonesome together.

- Prochnow, Herbert

Who goes to Rome a beast returns a beast.

- Proverb, Italian

Living in cities is an art, and we need the vocabulary of art, of style, to describe the peculiar relationship between man and material that exists in the continual creative play of urban living. The city as we imagine it, then, soft city of illusion, myth, aspiration, and nightmare, is as real, maybe more real, than the hard city one can locate on maps in statistics, in monographs on urban sociology and demography and architecture.

- Raban, Jonathan

Just as language has no longer anything in common with the thing it names, so the movements of most of the people who live in cities have lost their connection with the earth; they hang, as it were, in the air, hover in all directions, and find no place where they can settle.

- Rilke, Rainer Maria

I look upon those pitiful concretions of lime and clay which spring up, in mildewed forwardness, out of the kneaded fields about our capital... not merely with the careless disgust of an offended eye, not merely with sorrow for a desecrated landscape, but with a painful foreboding that the roots of our national greatness must be deeply cankered when they are thus loosely struck in their native ground. The crowded tenements of a struggling and restless population differ only from the tents of the Arab or the Gipsy by their less healthy openness to the air of heaven, and less happy choice of their spot of earth; by their sacrifice of liberty without the gain of rest, and of stability without the luxury of change.

- Ruskin, John

Boston is a moral and intellectual nursery always busy applying first principals to trifles.

- Santayana, George

There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the unfurling of leaves in spring, or the rustle of an insect's wings. But perhaps it is because I am a savage and do not understand. The clatter only seems to insult the ears.

- Seattle, Chief

New York is not Mecca. It just smells like it.

- Simon, Neil

In place of a world, there is a city, a point, in which the whole life of broad regions is

collecting while the rest dries up. In place of a type-true people, born of and grown on the soil, there is a new sort of nomad, cohering unstably in fluid masses, the parasitical city dweller, traditionless, utterly matter-of-fact, religionless, clever, unfruitful, deeply contemptuous of the countryman and especially that highest form of countryman, the country gentleman.

- Spengler, Oswald

All things atrocious and shameless flock from all parts to Rome.

- Tacitus, Publius Cornelius

City life is millions of people being lonesome together.

- Thoreau, Henry David

The great city is that which has the greatest man or woman: if it be a few ragged huts, it is still the greatest city in the whole world.

- Whitman, Walt

A great city is that which has the greatest men and women.

- Whitman, Walt

Through this broad street, restless ever, ebbs and flows a human tide, wave on wave a living river; wealth and fashion side by side; Toiler, idler, slave and master, in the same quick current glide.

- Whittier, John Greenleaf

The cities of America are inexpressibly tedious. The Bostonians take their learning too sadly; culture with them is an accomplishment rather than an atmosphere; their Hub, as they call it, is the paradise of prigs. Chicago is a sort of monster-shop, full of bustles and bores. Political life at Washington is like political life in a suburban vestry. Baltimore is amusing for a week, but Philadelphia is dreadfully provincial; and though one can dine in New York one could not dwell there.

- Wilde, Oscar

One belongs to New York instantly. One belongs to it as much in five minutes as in five years.

- Wolfe, Thomas

This city now doth, like a garment, wear the beauty of the morning; silent bare, ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie open unto the fields and to the sky; All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

- Wordsworth, William

The screech and mechanical uproar of the big city turns the citified head, fills citified ears -- as the song of birds, wind in the trees, animal cries, or as the voices and songs of his loved ones once filled his heart. He is sidewalk-happy.

- Wright, Frank Lloyd

To look at the cross-section of any plan of a big city is to look at something like the section

of a fibrous tumor.

- Wright, Frank Lloyd





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