Who invented suburbia and why? Where did the idea come from that the ideal of middle class living is a large detached house at the edge of a metropolitan area? And what is the future of the suburban idea? The course will start in eighteenth century London, the birthplace in my interpretation of the modern residential suburb, and continue through the streetcar suburbs of the 19th century to the postwar automobile suburbs like Levittown. The last section will examine “global suburbs,” the diverse patterns of expansion at the edge that characterize the megacities of today. Assigned reading includes Robert Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias: the rise and fall of suburbia; D.J. Waldie, Holy Land: a suburban memoir; and readings on contemporary suburbanization from informal settlements to gated communities.