

Charles Kenny - In Praise of Slums. Why millions of people choose to live in urban squalor



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There is something viscerally repulsive about urban poverty: the stench of open sewers, the choking smoke of smoldering trash heaps, the pools of fetid drinking water filmed with the rainbow color of chemical spills. It makes poverty in the countryside seem almost Arcadian by comparison. The rural poor may lack nutrition, health care, education, and infrastructure; still, they do the backbreaking work of tending farms in settings that not only are more bucolic, but also represent the condition of most of humanity for most of history. With life so squalid in urban slums, why would anyone want to move there?

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