CHAPTER 18

The Victorians Make the Modern
1880–1917

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

How did the changes wrought by industrialization shape Americans' identities, beliefs, and culture?

When Philadelphia hosted the 1876 Centennial Exposition, Americans weren't sure what to expect from their first world's fair—including what foods exhibitors would offer. One cartoonist humorously proposed that Russians would serve castor oil, Arabs would bring camel's milk punch, and Germans would offer beer. Reflecting widespread racial prejudices, the cartoon showed Chinese men selling "hashed cat" and "rat pie." In reality, though, the 1876 Exposition offered only plain lunchrooms and, for the wealthiest visitors, expensive French fare.

By the early twentieth century, American food had undergone a revolution. Visitors to the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 could try food from Scandinavia, India, and the Philippines. Across the United States, Chinese American restaurants flourished as a *chop suey* craze swept the nation. New Yorkers could sample Hungarian and Syrian cuisine; a San Francisco journalist enthusiastically reviewed local Mexican and Japanese restaurants. Even small-town diners could often find an Italian or German meal.

What had happened? Americans had certainly not lost all their prejudices: while plates of *chop suey* were being gobbled up, laws excluding Chinese immigrants remained firmly in place. Industrialization reshaped class identities, however, and promoted a creative consumer culture. In the great cities, amusement parks and vaudeville theaters catered to industrial workers (Chapter 19). Other institutions served middle-class customers who wanted novelty and variety at a reasonable price. A Victorian ethos of self-restraint and moral uplift gave way to expectations of leisure and fun. As African Americans and women claimed a right to public spaces—to shop, dine, and travel freely—they built powerful reform movements. At the same time, the new pressures faced by professional men led to aggressive calls for masculine fitness, exemplified by the rise of sports.

Stunning scientific discoveries—from dinosaur fossils to distant galaxies—also challenged long-held beliefs. Faced with electricity, medical vaccines, and other wonders, Americans celebrated technological solutions to human problems. But while science gained popularity, religion hardly faded. In fact, religious diversity grew, as immigrants brought new faiths and Protestants responded with innovations of their own. Americans found themselves living in a modern world—one in which their grandparents' beliefs and ways of life no longer seemed to apply. In a market-driven society that claimed to champion individual freedom, Americans took advantage of new ideas while expressing anxiety over the accompanying upheavals and risks.

Chicago Department Store Advertisement, 1893 In the same year that the Chicago World's Columbian Exhibition offered an array of dazzling experiences for visitors, the city's Siegel-Cooper Department Store did the same for consumers who could afford to shop in its halls. Note the many types of goods and services offered in its "Sixty-Five Complete Departments," from meat and groceries to medical and legal advice. What evidence, here, shows the types of customers the store sought to attract, inviting them to say, "I'll meet you at the Fountain"? How did the store encourage shoppers to linger?
Chicago History Museum.

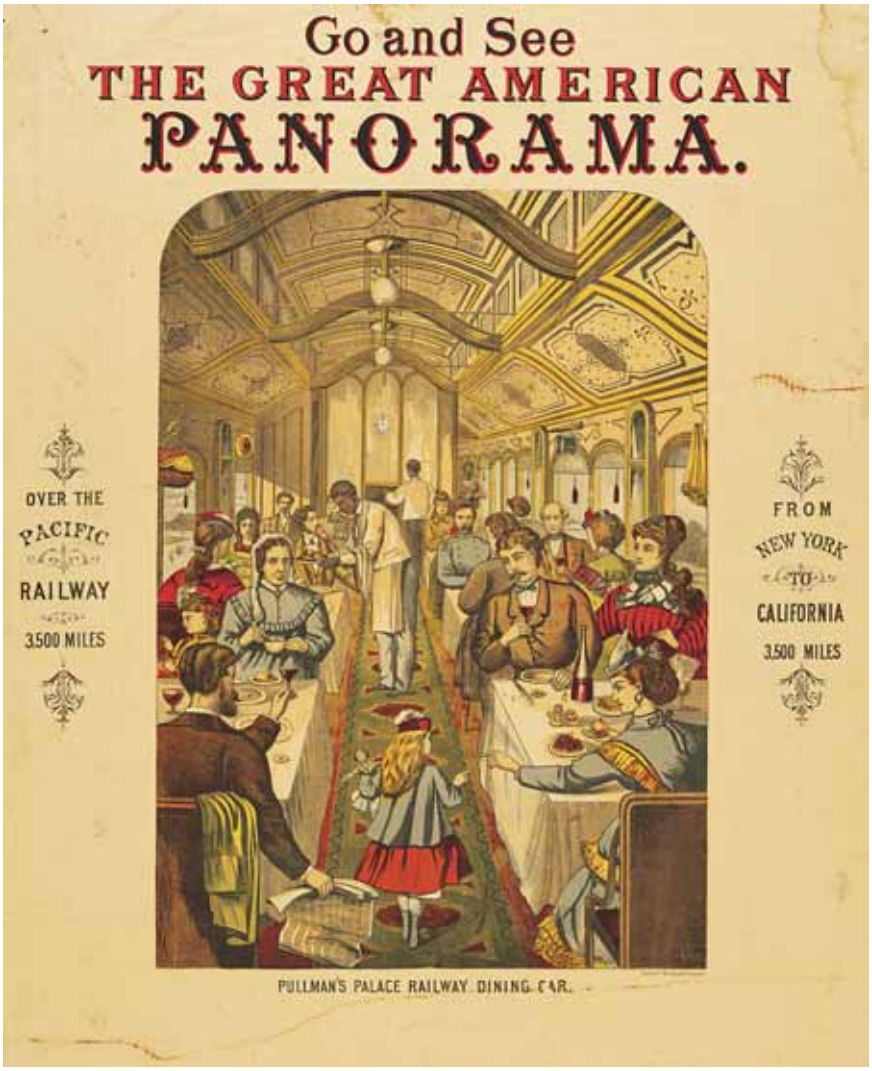
Commerce and Culture

As the United States industrialized, the terms *middle class* and *working class* came widely into use. Americans adopted these broad identities not only in the workplace but also in their leisure time. Professionals and corporate managers prospered; they and their families enjoyed rising income and an array of tempting ways to spend their dollars. Celebrating these new technological wonders, Americans hailed inventors as heroes. The most famous, Thomas Edison, operated an independent laboratory rather than working for a corporation. Edison, like many of the era's businessmen, was a shrewd entrepreneur who focused on commercial success. He and his colleagues helped introduce such lucrative products as the incandescent lightbulb and the phonograph, which came widely into use in American homes.

Even working-class Americans enjoyed cheaper products delivered by global trade and mass production, from bananas and cigarettes to colorful dime novels and magazines. Edison's moving pictures, for example, first found popularity among the urban working class (Chapter 19). Consumer culture *appeared*, at least, to be democratic: anyone should be able to eat at a restaurant or buy a rail ticket for the "ladies' car" — as long as she or he could pay. In practice, though, this was not the case, and consumer venues became sites of struggle over class inequality, race privilege, and proper male and female behavior.

Consumer Spaces

America's public spaces — from election polls to saloons and circus shows — had long been boisterous and male-centered. A woman who ventured there



Pacific Railway Poster, c. 1900

This color lithograph emphasized the family atmosphere of the railroad's Pullman Palace Dining Cars. Pullman, a Chicago-based manufacturer, became a household name by providing high-class sleeping and dining cars to the nation's railroads. Such advertisements invited prosperous Americans to make themselves "at home" in public, commercial spaces that were safe and comfortable for respectable women and children. Note that all the passengers are white, and the waiters black. Work as a railroad waiter or porter was one of the better-paid, more prestigious jobs available to African American men. Demands for segregated rail cars often focused on the alleged threat that black men might pose to white women — while, at the same time, such men and women regularly came in contact as railroad employees and passengers. Wisconsin Historical Society.

without a male chaperone risked damaging her reputation. But the rise of new businesses encouraged change. To attract an eager public, purveyors of consumer culture invited women and families, especially those of the middle class, to linger in department stores and enjoy new amusements.

No one promoted commercial domesticity more successfully than showman P. T. Barnum (1810–1891), who used the country's expanding rail network to develop his famous traveling circus. Barnum condemned earlier circus managers who had opened their tents to "the rowdy element." Proclaiming children as his key audience, he created family entertainment for diverse audiences (though in the South, black audiences sat in segregated seats or attended separate shows). He promised middle-class parents that his circus would teach children courage and promote the benefits of exercise. To encourage women's attendance, Barnum emphasized the respectability and refinement of his female performers.

Department stores also lured middle-class women by offering tearooms, children's play areas, umbrellas, and clerks to wrap and carry every purchase. Store credit plans enabled well-to-do women to shop without handling money in public. Such tactics succeeded so well that New York's department store district became known as Ladies' Mile. Boston department store magnate William Filene called the department store an "Adamless Eden."

These Edens were for the elite and middle class. Though bargain basements and neighborhood stores served working-class families, big department stores enlisted vagrancy laws and police to discourage the "wrong kind" from entering. Working-class women gained access primarily as clerks, cashiers, and cash girls, who at age twelve or younger served as internal store messengers, carrying orders and change for $1.50 a week. The department store was no Eden for these women, who worked long hours on their feet, often dealing with difficult customers. Nevertheless, many clerks claimed their own privileges as shoppers, making enthusiastic use of employee discounts and battling employers for the right to wear their fashionable purchases while they worked in the store.

In similar ways, class status was marked by the ways technology entered American homes. The rise of electricity, in particular, marked the gap between affluent urban consumers and rural and working-class families. In elite houses, domestic servants began to use — or find themselves replaced by — an array of new devices, from washing machines to vacuum cleaners. When Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876, entrepreneurs introduced the device for business use, but it soon found eager residential customers. Telephones changed etiquette and social relations for middle-class suburban women — while providing their working-class counterparts with new employment options (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 578).

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did new consumer practices, arising from industrialization, reshape Americans' gender, class, and race relationships?

Railroads also reflected the emerging privileges of professional families. Finding prosperous Americans eager for excursions, railroad companies, like department stores, made things comfortable for middle-class women and children. Boston's South Terminal Station boasted of its modern amenities, including "everything that the traveler needs down to cradles in which the baby may be soothed." An 1882 tourist guide promised readers that they could live on the Pacific Railroad "with as much true enjoyment as the home drawing room." Rail cars manufactured by the famous Pullman Company of Chicago set a national standard for taste and elegance. Fitted with rich carpets, upholstery, and woodwork, Pullman cars embodied the growing prosperity of America's elite, influencing trends in home decor. Part of their appeal was the chance for people of modest means to emulate the rich. An experienced train conductor observed that the wives of grocers, not millionaires, were the ones most likely to "sweep . . . into a parlor car as if the very carpet ought to feel highly honored by their tread."

First-class "ladies' cars" soon became sites of struggle for racial equality. For three decades after the end of the Civil War, state laws and railroad regulations varied, and African Americans often succeeded in securing seats. One reformer noted, however, "There are few ordeals more nerve-wracking than the one which confronts a colored woman when she tries to secure a Pullman reservation in the South and even in some parts of the North." When they claimed first-class seats, black women often faced confrontations with conductors, resulting in numerous lawsuits in the 1870s and 1880s. Riding the Chesapeake & Ohio line in 1884, young African American journalist Ida B. Wells was told to leave. "I refused," she wrote later, "saying that the [nearest alternative] car was a smoker, and as I was in the ladies' car, I proposed to stay." Wells resisted, but the conductor and a baggage handler threw her bodily off the train. Returning home to Memphis, Wells sued and won in local courts, but Tennessee's supreme court reversed the ruling.

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court settled such issues decisively — but not justly. The case, ***Plessy v. Ferguson***,

America Picks Up the Telephone

New consumer technologies often had different impacts on working-class and rural Americans than they did on the prosperous elite and the middle class. The documents below also suggest some of the ways that telephone use reflected new expectations about women's roles in the home, workplace, and society.

1. **"Hello Ma Baby" sheet music cover and lyrics, 1899.** *This popular music hit, this song was written in the voice of an African American man to his girl. The man's tuxedo is a bit disheveled; in 1899, most white Americans would have assumed he wore it for waiting tables or other service work. The woman wears a dressing gown—not how a respectable lady would want to appear. Nonetheless, the racial depiction here is more modern than those of old-fashioned minstrel shows. The song's chorus appears below. What changing expectations does it convey about courtship and dating?*

Courtesy of the E. Azalia Hackley Collection of Negro Music, Dance and Drama, Detroit Public Library.

Hello! ma Baby, Hello! ma honey, Hello! ma ragtime gal,
Send me a kiss by wire, Baby, my heart's on fire!
If you refuse me, honey, you'll lose me, then you'll be left alone;
Oh baby, telephone, and tell me I'm your own.

2. **"The Perfect Operator," *Saturday Evening Post*, July 12, 1930.** *Katherine Schmitt opened the New York Operator's School in 1902. Looking back later, she described the qualities sought in operators. What does this document tell us about the values of the emerging corporate workplace?*

[The operator] must now be made as nearly as possible a paragon of perfection, a kind of human machine, the exponent of speed and courtesy; a creature spirited enough to move like chain lightning, and with perfect accuracy; docile enough to deny herself the sweet privilege of the last word. She must assume that the subscriber is always right, and even when she knows he is not, her only comeback must be: "Excuse it please," in the same smiling voice.

3. **"The Mischievous Telephone Girl Makes More Trouble," *Wheeling Register*, West Virginia, October 26, 1884.** *Early operators had to speak to each caller and manually connect the call. Newspapers in the 1880s featured many stories like this one. Telephone companies predominantly hired young white native-born women as operators, or "hello girls." Many such employees came from the working class.*

The girl had been asleep a long time, when somebody called. Looking at the switch board, she observed that No. 1,111 was down, and leisurely raised the phone to her ear. . . . "Hello! . . . You bald headed old sinner! What do you want?"

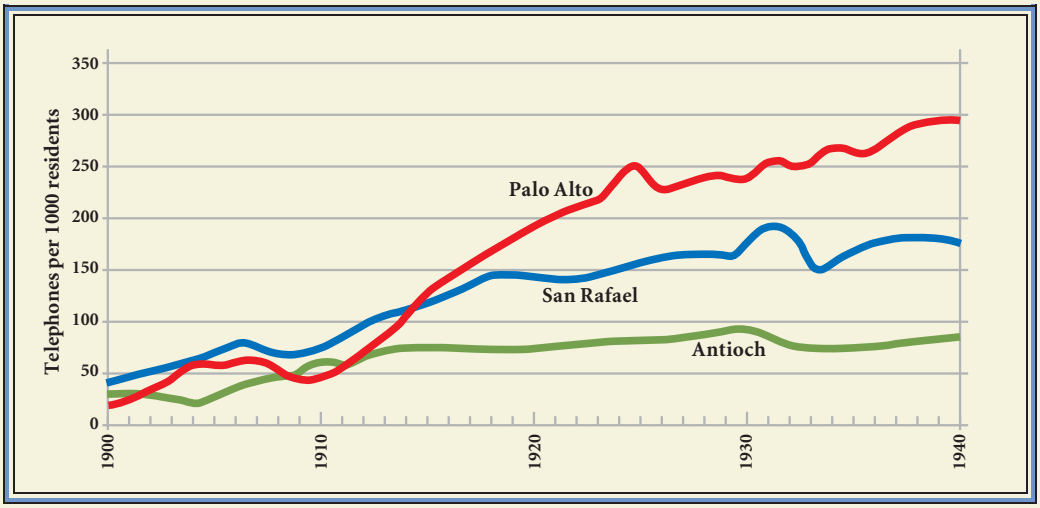
"Dr. Highflyer. No. 2,222."

"Hello!"

"Hello, Highflyer! My wife is not very well to-night. She has a severe pain in the back of her neck, and complains of a sort of goneness in the abdomen. . . . What shall I do for her?"

Here the wicked telephone girl switched on a machinist who was telling the owner of a saw mill what he thought ailed his boiler and the answer . . . was as follows:

"I think she's covered with scales inside about an inch thick. Let her cool down during the night, and before she fires up in the morning, take a hammer and pound her



Based on Figure 9 from *A Social History of the Telephone to 1940*, by Claude S. Fischer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). Copyright © 1992 by The Regents of the University of California. Used by permission of the University of California Press.

thoroughly all over, and then take a hose and hitch it on the fire plug and wash her out."

. . . The result is that No. 1,111 does not now speak to No. 2,222, and Dr. Highflyer has had the telephone taken out of his house.

4. **Estimated residential telephones in three California locations, 1900–1940 (top of page).** *Palo Alto was an affluent university town. Antioch was working-class. San Rafael had a mixed economy, including some industry; it served increasingly as a bedroom community for San Francisco professionals.*

5. **Telephone etiquette from "A Woman of Fashion," 1898.** *At the turn of the century, etiquette authorities began grudgingly to acknowledge the role of telephones in social life. Do you notice any contradictions in the advice below?*

Invitations by telephone, for anything other than informal engagements . . . are hopelessly vulgar. They should be the last resort. Invitations to bicycle or to play golf may be transmitted in this way, and the telephone is a blessing often in adjusting details, or making explanations; but for most social matters the use of the telephone is questionable, at best. Many women will stand with aching feet and irritated brow at a telephone for half an hour rather than write a note which would take four minutes. . . . Invitation by telephone is one of those modern innovations to which the conservative have never been accustomed, and which shocks elderly, conventional persons still. The convenience of the telephone for quickness and prompt response appeals, however, to so many persons, that it is hopeless and useless to inveigh against it. . . . If some one's note has been mislaid or forgotten, there is nothing simpler than to telephone to repair the error, and to explain. It is much speedier than sending a note. . . . There is no excuse for telephoning an invitation when time is not an object, or when the person invited is not an intimate friend.

6. **Bell Telephone advertisement, 1910.** *The text from this ad was accompanied by a picture of a young woman on the telephone with young men and women in a room behind her, dancing.*

For Social Arrangements: The informal invitation which comes over the phone is generally the most welcome. The Bell service makes it possible to arrange delightful social affairs at the last moment. . . .

For Impromptu Invitations: The easiest way to get up an informal party, quickly, is by telephone.

Sources: (2) Venus Green, *Race on the Line* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 67; (3) *Wheeling Register*, October 26, 1884; (5) *Etiquette for Americans* (New York: Herbert S. Stone & Co., 1898), 59, 70–71; (6) Claude S. Fischer, *America Calling* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 184.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. Consider the audience for each of these sources. Who was intended to read, view, or listen to it? What message does it convey?
2. Sources 2, 5, and 6 all give advice on how women should behave. Compare these pieces of advice. In what ways are they similar and different?
3. Based on these sources, which groups of Americans appear to have been affected by the arrival of telephones, and how?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Using evidence from these sources and your knowledge of the period, write an essay explaining how the telephone contributed to, and reflected, changes in American women's social and economic roles.

Horatio Alger Jr.
In dozens of popular boys' books published between 1867 and 1917, Horatio Alger Jr. assured young readers that if they were honest, worked hard, and cultivated good character, they could succeed in the new competitive economy. His heroes, such as the famous "Ragged Dick," often grew up in poverty on the streets of big cities. *Brave and Bold* (1874) told the story of a small-town boy forced to work in a factory; he is unfairly fired, but through persistence and courage he wins a good job and recovers an inheritance for his mother. Alger's books were republished often, as in this boys' magazine from 1911, and many remain in print today. Courtesy Stanford University Archives.

was brought by civil rights advocates on behalf of Homer Plessy, a New Orleans resident who was one-eighth black. Ordered to leave a first-class car and move to the "colored" car of a Louisiana train, Plessy refused and was arrested. The Court ruled that such segregation did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment as long as blacks had access to accommodations that were "separate but equal" to those of whites. "Separate but equal" was a myth: segregated facilities in the South were flagrantly inferior. Jim Crow segregation laws, named for a stereotyped black character who appeared in minstrel shows, clearly discriminated, but the Court allowed them to stand.

Jim Crow laws applied to public schools and parks and also to emerging commercial spaces — hotels, restaurants, streetcars, trains, and eventually sports stadiums and movie theaters. Placing a national stamp of approval on segregation, the *Plessy* decision remained in place until 1954, when the Court's *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* ruling finally struck it down. Until then, blacks' exclusion from first-class "public accommodations" was one of the most painful marks of racism. The *Plessy* decision, like the rock-bottom wages earned by twelve-year-old girls at Macy's, showed that consumer culture could be modern and innovative without being politically progressive. Business and consumer culture were shaped by, and themselves shaped, racial and class injustices.

Masculinity and the Rise of Sports

While industrialization spawned public domesticity — a consumer culture that courted affluent women and families — it also changed expectations for men in the workplace. Traditionally, the mark of a successful American man was economic independence: he was his own boss. Now, tens of thousands worked for other men in big companies — and in offices, rather than using their muscles. Would the professional American male, through his concentration on "brain work," become "weak, effeminate, [and] decaying," as one editor warned? How could well-to-do men assert their independence if work no longer required them to prove themselves physically? How could they develop toughness and strength? One answer was athletics.

"Muscular Christianity" The **Young Men's Christian Association** (YMCA) was one of the earliest and most successful promoters of athletic fitness. Introduced in Boston in 1851, the group promoted muscular Christianity, combining evangelism with gyms and athletic facilities where men could make themselves "clean and strong." Focusing first on white-collar workers, the YMCA developed a substantial industrial program after 1900. Railroad managers and other corporate titans hoped YMCAs would foster a loyal and contented workforce, discouraging labor unrest. Business leaders also relied on sports to build physical and mental discipline and help men adjust their bodies to the demands of the industrial clock. Sports honed men's competitive spirit, they believed; employer-sponsored teams instilled teamwork and company pride.

Working-class men had their own ideas about sports and leisure, and YMCAs quickly became a site of negotiation. Could workers come to the "Y" to play

billiards or cards? Could they smoke? At first, YMCA leaders said no, but to attract working-class men they had to make concessions. As a result, the "Y" became a place where middle-class and working-class customs blended — or existed in uneasy tension. At the same time, YMCA leaders innovated. Searching for winter activities in the 1890s, YMCA instructors invented the new indoor games of basketball and volleyball.

For elite Americans, meanwhile, country clubs flourished; both men and women could enjoy tennis, golf, and swimming facilities as well as social gatherings. By the turn of the century — perhaps because country club women were encroaching on their athletic turf — elite men took up even more aggressive physical sports, including boxing, weightlifting, and martial arts. As early as 1890, future president Theodore Roosevelt argued that such "virile" activities were essential to "maintain and defend this very civilization." "Most masterful nations," he claimed, "have shown a strong taste for manly sports." Roosevelt, son of a wealthy New York family, became one of the first American devotees of jujitsu. During his presidency (1901–1909), he designated a judo room in the White House and hired an expert Japanese instructor. Roosevelt also wrestled and boxed, urging other American men — especially among the elite — to increase their leadership fitness by pursuing the "strenuous life."

To see a longer excerpt of Theodore Roosevelt's views on sports, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

America's Game Before the 1860s, the only distinctively American game was Native American lacrosse, and the most popular team sport among European Americans was cricket. After the Civil War, however, team sports became a fundamental part of American manhood, none more successfully than baseball. A derivative of cricket, the game's formal rules had begun to develop in New York in the 1840s and 1850s. Its popularity spread in military camps during the Civil War. Afterward, the idea that baseball "received its baptism in the bloody days of our Nation's direst danger," as one promoter put it, became part of the game's mythology.

Until the 1870s, most amateur players were clerks and white-collar workers who had leisure to play and the income to buy their own uniforms. Business frowned on baseball and other sports as a waste of time, especially for working-class men. But late-nineteenth-century employers came to see baseball, like other athletic pursuits, as a benefit for workers. It provided fresh air and exercise, kept men out of saloons, and promoted discipline and teamwork. Players on company-sponsored teams, wearing uniforms emblazoned with their employers' names, began to compete on paid work time. Baseball thus set a pattern for how other American sports developed. Begun among independent craftsmen, it was taken up by elite men anxious to prove their strength and fitness. Well-to-do Americans then decided the sport could benefit the working class.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME

How and why did American sports evolve, and how did athletics soften or sharpen social divisions?

Big-time professional baseball arose with the launching of the National League in 1876. The league quickly built more than a dozen teams in large cities, from the Brooklyn Trolley Dodgers to the Cleveland Spiders. Team owners were, in their own right, profit-minded entrepreneurs who shaped the sport to please consumers. Wooden grandstands soon gave way to concrete and steel stadiums. By 1900, boys collected lithographed cards of their favorite players, and the baseball cap came into fashion. In 1903, the Boston Americans defeated the Pittsburgh Pirates in the first World Series. American men could now adopt a new consumer identity — not as athletes, but as fans.

Rise of the Negro Leagues Baseball stadiums, like first-class rail cars, were sites of racial negotiation and conflict. In the 1880s and 1890s, major league managers hired a few African American players. As late as 1901, the Baltimore Orioles succeeded in signing Charlie Grant, a light-skinned black player from Cincinnati, by renaming him Charlie Tokohoma and claiming he was Cherokee. But as this subterfuge suggested, black players were increasingly barred. A Toledo team received a threatening note before one game in Richmond, Virginia: if their "negro catcher" played, he would be lynched. Toledo put a substitute on the field, and at the end of the season the club terminated the black player's contract.

Shut out of white leagues, players and fans turned to all-black professional teams, where black men could showcase athletic ability and race pride. Louisiana's top team, the New Orleans Pinchbacks, pointedly named themselves after the state's black Reconstruction governor. By the early 1900s, such teams organized into separate **Negro Leagues**. Though players suffered from erratic pay and rundown ball fields, the leagues thrived until the desegregation of baseball after World War II. In an era of stark discrimination, they celebrated black manhood and talent. "I liked the way their uniform fit, the way they wore their cap," wrote an admiring fan of

the Newark Eagles. "They showed a style in almost everything they did."

American Football The most controversial sport of the industrializing era was football, which began at elite colleges during the 1880s. The great powerhouse was the Yale team, whose legendary coach Walter Camp went on to become a watch manufacturer. Between 1883 and 1891, under Camp's direction, Yale scored 4,660 points; its opponents scored 92. Drawing on the workplace model of scientific management, Camp emphasized drill and precision. He and other coaches argued that football offered perfect training for the competitive world of business. The game was violent: six players' deaths in the 1908 college season provoked a public outcry. Eventually, new rules protected quarterbacks and required coaches to remove injured players from the game. But such measures were adopted grudgingly, with supporters arguing that they ruined football's benefits in manly training.

Like baseball and the YMCA, football attracted sponsorship from business leaders hoping to divert workers from labor activism. The first professional teams emerged in western Pennsylvania's steel towns, soon after the defeat of the steelworkers' union. Carnegie Steel executives organized teams in Homestead and Braddock; the first league appeared during the anthracite coal strike of 1902. Other teams arose in the midwestern industrial heartland. The Indian-Acme Packing Company sponsored the Green Bay Packers; the future Chicago Bears, first known as the Decatur Staleys, were funded by a manufacturer of laundry starch. Like its baseball equivalent, professional football encouraged men to buy in as spectators and fans.

Football Practice, Chilocco Indian School, 1911

Football became widely popular, spreading from Ivy League schools and state universities to schools like this one, built on Cherokee land in Oklahoma. The uniforms of this team, typical of the day, show very limited padding and protection—a factor that contributed to high rates of injury and even death on the field. As they practiced in 1911, these Chilocco students had an inspiring model to look up to: in that year Jim Thorpe, a fellow Oklahoman and a member of the Sac and Fox tribe, was winning national fame by leading the all-Indian team at Pennsylvania's Carlisle School to victory against Harvard. Thorpe, one of the finest athletes of his generation, went on to win gold medals in the pentathlon and decathlon at the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. National Archives.

The Great Outdoors

As the rise of sports suggests, elite and middle-class Americans began by the 1880s and 1890s to see Victorian culture as stuffy and claustrophobic. They revolted by heading outdoors. A craze for bicycling swept the country; in 1890, at the height of the mania, U.S. manufacturers sold an astonishing ten million bikes. Women were not far behind men in taking up athletics. By the 1890s, even elite women, long confined to corsets and heavy clothes that restricted their movement, donned lighter dresses and pursued archery and golf. Artist Charles Gibson became famous for his portraits of the Gibson Girl, an elite beauty depicted on the tennis court or swimming at the beach. The Gibson Girl personified the ideal of "New Women," more educated, athletic, and independent than their mothers.

Those with money and leisure time used railroad networks to get to the national parks of the West, which, as one senator put it, became a "breathing-place for the national lungs." People of more modest means began to take up camping. As early as 1904, California's Coronado Beach offered tent rentals for $3 a week. A decade later, campgrounds and cottages in many parts of the country catered to a working-class clientele. In an industrial society, the outdoors became associated with leisure and renewal rather than danger and hard work. One journalist, reflecting on urban life from the vantage point of a western vacation, wrote, "How stupid it all seems: the mad eagerness of money-making men, the sham pleasures of conventional society." In the wilderness, he wrote, "your blood clarifies; your brain becomes active. You get a new view of life."

As Americans searched for such renewal in remnants of unexploited land, the nation's first environmental movement arose. John Muir, who fell in love with the Yosemite Valley in 1869, became the most famous voice for wilderness. Raised in a stern Scots Presbyterian family on a Wisconsin farm, Muir knew much of the Bible by heart. He was a keen observer who developed a deeply spiritual relationship with the natural world. His contemporary Mary Austin, whose book *Land of Little Rain* (1905) celebrated the austere beauty of the California desert, called him "a devout man." In cooperation with his editor at *Century* magazine, Muir founded the **Sierra Club** in 1892. Like the earlier Appalachian Mountain Club, founded in Boston in 1876, the Sierra Club dedicated itself to preserving and enjoying America's great mountains.

Encouraged by such groups, national and state governments set aside more public lands for preservation and recreation. The United States substantially expanded its park system and, during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, extended the reach of national forests. Starting in 1872 with the preservation of Yellowstone in Wyoming, Congress had begun to set aside land for national parks. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson provided comprehensive oversight of these national parks, signing an act creating the **National Park Service** (Map 18.1). A year later, the system numbered thirteen parks — including Maine's Acadia, the first east of the Mississippi River.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What changes in American society precipitated the rise of national parks and monuments?

Environmentalists also worked to protect wildlife. By the 1890s, several state Audubon Societies, named in honor of antebellum naturalist John James Audubon, banded together to advocate broader protections for wild birds, especially herons and egrets that were being slaughtered by the thousands for their plumes. They succeeded in winning the Lacey Act (1900), which established federal penalties for selling specified birds, animals, and plants. Soon afterward, state organizations joined together to form the **National Audubon Society**. Women played prominent roles in the movement, promoting boycotts of hats with plumage. In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt created the first National Wildlife Refuge at Pelican Island, Florida.

Roosevelt also expanded preservation under the Antiquities Act (1906), which enabled the U.S. president, without congressional approval, to set aside "objects of historic and scientific interest" as national monuments. Two years later, Roosevelt used these powers to preserve 800,000 acres at Arizona's magnificent Grand Canyon. The act proved a mixed blessing for conservation. Monuments received weaker protection than national parks did; many fell under the authority of the U.S. Forest Service, which permitted logging and grazing. Business interests thus lobbied to have coveted lands designated as monuments rather than national parks so they could more easily exploit resources. Nonetheless, the creation of national monuments offered some protection, and many monuments (such as Alaska's Katmai) later obtained park status. The expanding network of parks and monuments became popular places to hike, camp, and contemplate natural beauty.

The great outdoors provided new opportunities for women with the means to travel. One writer, advising women to enjoy mountain hikes, hinted at liberating possibilities: "For those loving freedom and health," he recommended "short skirts, pantlets, stout shoes, tasty hat." And like other leisure venues, "wilderness" did not remain in the hands of elite men and women.

MAP 18.1

National Parks and Forests, 1872–1980

Yellowstone, the first national park in the United States, dates from 1872. In 1893, the federal government began to intervene to protect national forests. Without Theodore Roosevelt, however, the national forest program might have languished; during his presidency, he added 125 million acres to the forest system, plus six national parks in addition to several that had already been created during the 1890s. America's national forest and park systems remain one of the most visible and beloved legacies of federal policy innovation in the decades between the Civil War and World War I.

As early as the late 1880s, the lakes and hiking trails of the Catskill Mountains became so thronged with working-class tourists from nearby New York City, including many Jewish immigrants, that elite visitors began to segregate themselves into gated summer communities. They thus preserved the "seclusion and privacy" that they snobbishly claimed as the privilege of those who could demonstrate "mental and personal worth."

At the state level, meanwhile, new game laws triggered conflicts between elite conservationists and the poor. Shifting from year-round subsistence hunting to a limited, recreational hunting season brought hardship to poor rural families who depended on game for food. Regulation brought undeniable benefits: it suppressed such popular practices as songbird hunting and the use of dynamite to kill fish. Looking back on the era before game laws, one Alabama hunter remembered that "the slaughter was terrific." But while game laws prevented further extinctions like that of the passenger pigeon, which vanished around 1900, they made it harder for rural people to support themselves from the bounty of the land.

Women, Men, and the Solitude of Self

Speaking to Congress in 1892, women's rights advocate Elizabeth Cady Stanton described what she called the "solitude of self." Stanton rejected the claim that women did not need equal rights because they enjoyed men's protection. "The talk of sheltering woman from the fierce storms of life is the sheerest mockery," she declared. "They beat on her from every point of the compass, just as they do on man, and with more fatal results, for he has been trained to protect himself."

Stanton's argument captured one of the dilemmas of industrialization: the marketplace of labor brought

John Singer Sargent, *Mr. and Mrs. I. N. Phelps Stokes*, 1897

This painting was a wedding gift to this wealthy young couple, both of whom inherited substantial fortunes. In what ways does the artist, a famous portraitist, represent Edith Minturn Stokes as a "New Woman" of the 1890s? What does he suggest about the relationship between husband and wife? How might we reconcile this with the painting's title, which identifies the central figure as "Mrs. I. N. Phelps Stokes," not as "Edith"? Mrs. Stokes was a noted beauty and active in an array of charitable causes. Here she wears a shirtwaist and skirt, more practical than the traditional heavy dresses and bustles of the previous decade.

both freedom and risk, and working-class women were particularly vulnerable. At the same time, middle-class women — expected to engage in selfless community service — often saw the impact of industrialization more clearly than fathers, brothers, and husbands did. In seeking to address alcoholism, poverty, and other social and economic ills, they gained a new sense of their own collective power. Women's protest and reform work thus helped lay the foundations for progressivism (Chapter 20) and modern women's rights.

Changes in Family Life

The average American family, especially among the middle class, decreased in size during the industrial era. In 1800, white women who survived to menopause had borne an average of 7.0 children; by 1900, the average was 3.6. On farms and in many working-class families, youngsters counted as assets on the family balance sheet: they worked in fields or factories. But parents who had fewer sons and daughters could concentrate their resources, educating and preparing each child for success in the new economy. Among the professional classes, education became a necessity, while limiting family size became, more broadly, a key to upward mobility.

Several factors limited childbearing. Americans married at older ages, and many mothers tried to space pregnancies more widely — as their mothers and grandmothers had — by nursing children for several years, which suppressed fertility. By the late nineteenth century, as vulcanized rubber became available, couples also had access to a range of other contraceptive methods, such as condoms and diaphragms. With pressure for family limitation rising, these methods were widely used and apparently effective. But couples rarely wrote about them. Historians' evidence comes from the occasional frank diary and from the thriving success of the mail-order contraceptive industry, which advertised prominently and shipped products — wrapped in discreet brown paper packages — to customers nationwide.

Reluctance to talk about contraceptives was understandable, since information about them was stigmatized and, after 1873, illegal to distribute. During Reconstruction, Anthony Comstock, crusading secretary of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, secured a federal law banning "obscene materials" from the U.S. mail. The **Comstock Act** (1873) prohibited circulation of almost any information about sex and birth control. Comstock won support for the law, in part, by appealing to parents' fears that young people were receiving sexual information through the mail,

Portrait of a Middle-Class American Family

This photograph of the Hedlund family was taken on July 4, 1911, on the front porch of their home in St. Paul, Minnesota. Christian, Grace, and Anna Hedlund appear on the top row, Louis and George on the bottom. Families like this one—with three children—were becoming typical among the middle class, in contrast to larger families in earlier generations. This photo was taken by twenty-one-year-old Joseph Pavlicek, a recent immigrant from Eastern Europe who was boarding with the Hedlunds. Pavlicek bought fireworks for the children to celebrate the holiday. He remembered being so proud and grateful to be in America that his heart "was nearly bursting." Minnesota Historical Society.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT

In what ways did the Comstock Act reflect and contradict the realities of American life in the industrial era?

promoting the rise of "secret vice." Though critics charged Comstock with high-handed interference in private matters, others supported his work, fearful of the rising tide of pornography, sexual information, and contraceptives made available by industrialization. A committee of the New York legislature declared Comstock's crusade "wholly essential to the safety and decency of the community." It appears, however, that Comstock had little success in stopping the lucrative and popular trade in contraceptives.

Education

In the industrial economy, the watchword for young people who hoped to secure good jobs was *education*. A high school diploma—now a gateway to a college degree—was valuable for boys who hoped to enter professional or managerial work. Daughters attended in even larger numbers than their brothers (Table 18.1). Parents of the Civil War generation, who had witnessed the plight of war widows and orphans, encouraged girls to prepare themselves for teaching or office jobs, work before marriage, and gain skills they could fall back on, "just in case." By 1900, 71 percent of Americans between the ages of five and eighteen attended school. That figure rose further in the early twentieth century, as public officials adopted laws requiring school attendance.

Most high schools were coeducational, and almost every high school featured athletics. Recruited first as cheerleaders for boys' teams, girls soon established field hockey and other sports of their own. Boys and girls engaged in friendly—and sometimes not-so-friendly—rivalry in high school. In 1884, a high school newspaper in Concord, New Hampshire, published

TABLE 18.1

High School Graduates, 1870–1910

Year	Number	Percent 17-Year-Olds	Male	Female
1870	16,000	2.0	7,000	9,000
1890	44,000	3.0	19,000	25,000
1910	156,000	8.6	64,000	93,000

Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975), 1: 386.

this poem from a disgruntled boy who caricatured his female classmates:

> We know many tongues of living and dead,
> In science and fiction we're very well read,
> But we cannot cook meat and cannot make bread
> And we've wished many times that we were all dead.

A female student shot back a poem of her own, denouncing male students' smoking habit:

> But if boys will smoke cigarettes
> Although the smoke may choke them,
> One consolation still remains—
> *They kill the boys that smoke them.*

The rate of Americans attending college had long hovered around 2 percent; driven by public universities' expansion, the rate rose in the 1880s, reaching 8 percent by 1920. Much larger numbers attended a growing network of business and technical schools. "GET A PLACE IN THE WORLD," advertised one Minneapolis business college in 1907, "where your talents can be used to the best advantage." Typically, such schools offered both day and night classes in subjects such as bookkeeping, typewriting, and shorthand.

The needs of the new economy also shaped the curriculum at more traditional collegiate institutions. State universities emphasized technical training and fed the growing professional workforce with graduates trained in fields such as engineering. Many private colleges distanced themselves from such practical pursuits; their administrators argued that students who aimed to be leaders needed broad-based knowledge. But they modernized course offerings, emphasizing French and German, for example, rather than Latin and Greek. Harvard, led by dynamic president Charles W. Eliot from 1869 to 1909, pioneered the **liberal arts**. Students at the all-male college chose from a range of electives, as Eliot called for classes that developed each young man's "individual reality and creative power."

In the South, one of the most famous educational projects was Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute, founded in 1881. Washington both taught and exemplified the goal of self-help; his autobiography, *Up from Slavery* (1901), became a best-seller. Because of the deep poverty in which most southern African Americans lived, Washington concluded that "book education" for most "would be almost a waste of time." He focused instead on industrial education. Students, he argued, would "be sure of knowing how to make a living after they had left us." Tuskegee sent female graduates into teaching and nursing; men more often entered the industrial trades or farmed by the latest scientific methods.

Washington gained national fame in 1895 with his **Atlanta Compromise** address, delivered at the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia. For the exposition's white organizers, the racial "compromise" was inviting Washington to speak at all. It was a move intended to show racial progress in the South. Washington, in turn, delivered an address that many interpreted as approving racial segregation. Stating that African Americans had, in slavery days, "proved our loyalty to you," he assured whites that "in our humble way, we shall stand by you . . . ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defense of yours." The races could remain socially detached: "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." Washington urged, however, that whites join him in working for "the highest intelligence and development of all."

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME
How did educational opportunities change after the Civil War, and for whom?

Whites greeted this address with enthusiasm, and Washington became the most prominent black leader of his generation. His soothing rhetoric and style of leadership, based on avoiding confrontation and cultivating white patronage and

Booker T. Washington

In an age of severe racial oppression, Booker T. Washington emerged as the leading public voice of African Americans. He was remarkable both for his effectiveness in speaking to white Americans and for his deep understanding of the aspirations of blacks. Born a slave, Washington had plenty of firsthand experience with racism. But having befriended several whites in his youth, he also believed that African Americans could appeal to whites of good will—and maneuver around those who were hostile—in the struggle for equality. He hoped, most of all, that economic achievement would erase white prejudice.
Brown Brothers.

private influence, was well suited to the difficult years after Reconstruction. Washington believed that money was color-blind, that whites would respect economic success. He represented the ideals of millions of African Americans who hoped education and hard work would erase white prejudice. That hope proved tragically overoptimistic. As the tide of disenfranchisement and segregation rolled in, Washington would come under fire from a younger generation of race leaders who argued that he accommodated too much to white racism.

In addition to African American education, women's higher education expanded notably. In the Northeast and South, women most often attended single-sex institutions, including teacher-training colleges. For affluent families, private colleges offered an education equivalent to men's—for an equally high price. Vassar College started the trend when it opened in 1861; Smith, Wellesley, and others followed. Anxious doctors warned that these institutions were dangerous: intensive brain work would unsex young women and drain energy from their ovaries, leading them to bear weak children. But as thousands of women earned degrees and suffered no apparent harm, fears faded. Single-sex higher education for women spread from private to public institutions, especially in the South, where the Mississippi State College for Women (1885) led the way.

Coeducation was more prevalent in the Midwest and West, where many state universities opened their doors to female students after the Civil War. Women were also admitted to most African American colleges founded during Reconstruction. By 1910, 58 percent of America's colleges and universities were coeducational. While students at single-sex institutions forged strong bonds with one another, women also gained benefits from learning with men. When male students were friendly, they built comfortable working relationships; when men were hostile, women learned coping skills that served them well in later employment or reform work. One doctor who studied at the University of Iowa remembered later that he and his friends mercilessly harassed the first women who entered the medical school. But when the women showed they were good students, the men's attitudes changed to "wholesome respect."

Whether or not they got a college education, more and more women recognized, in the words of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, their "solitude of self." In the changing economy, they could not always count on fathers and husbands. Women who needed to support themselves could choose from dozens of guidebooks such as *What Girls Can Do* (1880) and *How to Make Money Although a Woman* (1895). The Association for the Advancement of Women, founded in 1873 by women's college graduates, defended women's higher education and argued that women's paid employment was a positive good.

Today, many economists argue that education and high-quality jobs for women are keys to reducing poverty in the developing world. In the United States, that process also led to broader gains in women's political rights. As women began to earn advanced degrees, work for wages and salaries, and live independently, it became harder to argue that women were "dependents" who did not need to vote.

Class of 1896, Radcliffe College

When Harvard University, long a bastion of male privilege, created an "Annex" for women's instruction in 1879, it was a sure sign of growing support for women's higher education. The Annex became Radcliffe College in 1894. Two years later, this graduating class of thirty posed for their portrait. Among them was Alice Sterling of Bridgeport, Connecticut, who went on to marry Harvard graduate Frank Cook and devote herself to Protestant foreign missions. On two trips around the world, Alice Sterling Cook visited all the women's colleges that missionaries had founded in India, China, and Japan. Cook's energetic public activities typified those of many women's college alumnae. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University.

From Domesticity to Women's Rights

As the United States confronted industrialization, middle-class women steadily expanded their place beyond the household, building reform movements and taking political action. Starting in the 1880s, women's clubs sprang up and began to study such problems as pollution, unsafe working conditions, and urban poverty. So many formed by 1890 that their leaders created a nationwide umbrella organization, the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Women justified such work through the ideal of **maternalism**, appealing to their special role as mothers. Maternalism was an intermediate step between domesticity and modern arguments for women's equality. "Women's place is Home," declared the journalist Rheta Childe Dorr. But she added, "Home is the community. The city full of people is the Family. . . . Badly do the Home and Family need their mother."

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union

One maternalist goal was to curb alcohol abuse by prohibiting liquor sales. The **Woman's Christian Temperance Union** (WCTU), founded in 1874, spread rapidly after 1879, when charismatic Frances Willard became its leader. More than any other group of the late nineteenth century, the WCTU launched women into reform. Willard knew how to frame political demands

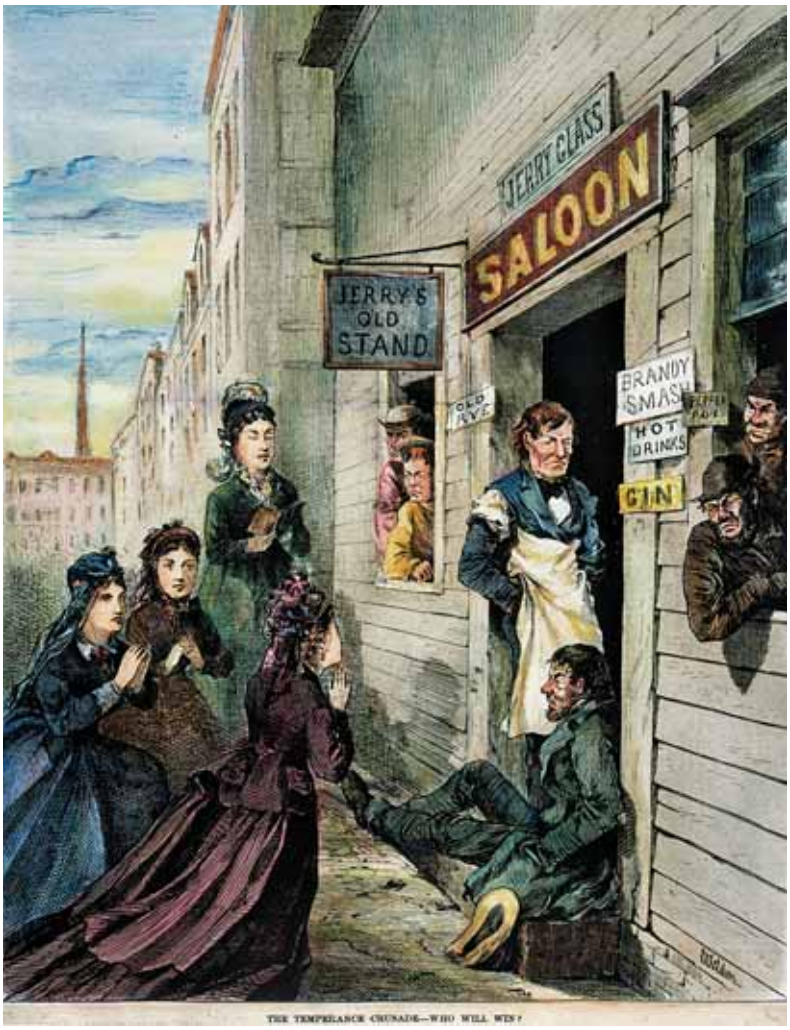
UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

How did women use widespread beliefs about their "special role" to justify political activism, and for what goals?

in the language of feminine self-sacrifice. "Womanliness first," she advised her followers; "afterward, what you will." WCTU members vividly described the plight of abused wives and children when men suffered in the grip of alcoholism. Willard's motto was "Home Protection," and though it placed all the blame on alcohol rather than other factors, the WCTU became the first organization to identify and combat domestic violence.

The prohibitionist movement drew activists from many backgrounds. Middle-class city dwellers worried about the link between alcoholism and crime, especially in the growing immigrant wards. Rural citizens equated liquor with big-city sins such as prostitution and political corruption. Methodists, Baptists, Mormons, and members of other denominations condemned drinking for religious reasons. Immigrants passionately disagreed, however: Germans and Irish Catholics enjoyed their Sunday beer and saw no harm in it. Saloons were a centerpiece of working-class leisure and community life, offering free lunches, public toilets, and a place to share neighborhood news. Thus, while some labor unions advocated voluntary temperance, attitudes toward prohibition divided along ethnic, religious, and class lines.

WCTU activism led some leaders to raise radical questions about the shape of industrial society. As she investigated alcohol abuse, Willard increasingly confronted poverty, hunger, unemployment, and other industrial problems. "Do Everything," she urged her members. Across the United States, WCTU chapters founded soup kitchens and free libraries. They introduced a German educational innovation, the kindergarten. They investigated prison conditions. Though she did not persuade most prohibitionists to follow her



THE TEMPERANCE CRUSADE—WHO WILL WIN?

A Plea for Temperance, 1874

The origins of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union lay in spontaneous prayer meetings held by women outside local saloons, where they appealed for men to stop drinking and liquor sellers to destroy their product. A string of such meetings in Ohio won national attention, as in this image from a popular magazine, the *Daily Graphic*. "Who Will Win?" asked the artist. The answers varied. A few saloon owners, struck with remorse over the damage caused by alcohol abuse, smashed their beer kegs and poured their liquor into the gutters. Far more refused, but in the 1880s, temperance women succeeded in organizing the largest grassroots movement of their day to build support for outlawing liquor sales. The Granger Collection, New York.

lead, Willard declared herself a Christian Socialist and urged more attention to workers' plight. She advocated laws establishing an eight-hour workday and abolishing child labor.

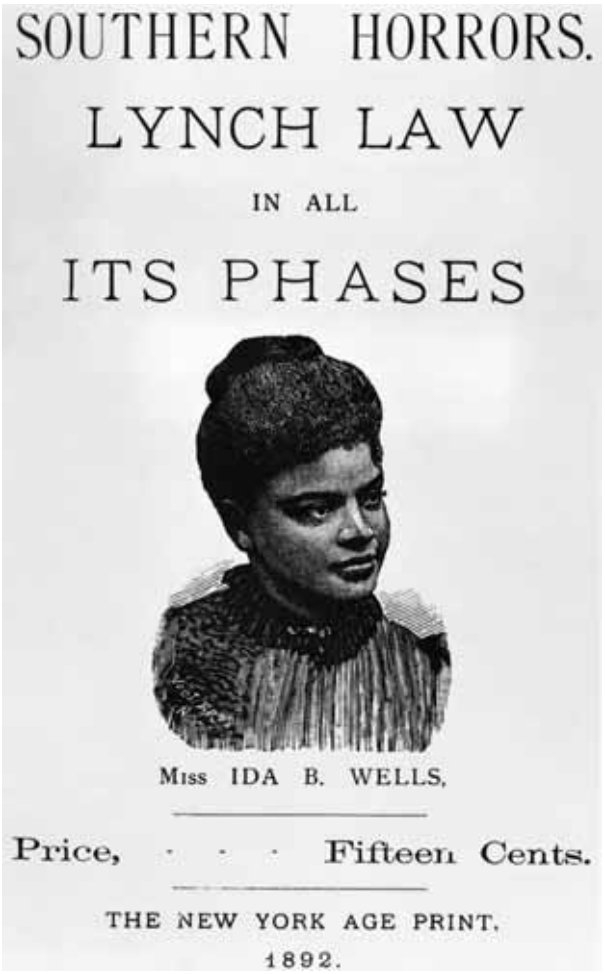
Willard also called for women's voting rights, lending powerful support to the independent suffrage movement that had emerged during Reconstruction. Controversially, the WCTU threw its energies behind the Prohibition Party, which exercised considerable clout during the 1880s. Women worked in the party as speakers, convention delegates, and even local candidates. Liquor was big business, and powerful interests mobilized to block antiliquor legislation. In many areas — particularly the cities — prohibition simply did not gain majority support. Willard retired to England, where she died in 1898, worn and discouraged by many defeats. But her legacy was powerful. Other groups took up the cause, eventually winning national prohibition after World War I.

Through its emphasis on human welfare, the WCTU encouraged women to join the national debate over poverty and inequality of wealth. Some became active in the People's Party of the 1890s, which welcomed women as organizers and stump speakers. Others led groups such as the National Congress of Mothers, founded in 1897, which promoted better child-rearing techniques in rural and working-class families. The WCTU had taught women how to lobby, raise money, and even run for office. Willard wrote that "perhaps the most significant outcome" of the movement was women's "knowledge of their own power."

Women, Race, and Patriotism As in temperance work, women played central roles in patriotic movements and African American community activism. Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), founded in 1890, celebrated the memory of Revolutionary War heroes. Equally influential was the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), founded in 1894 to extol the South's "Lost Cause." The UDC's elite southern members shaped Americans' memory of the Civil War by constructing monuments, distributing Confederate flags, and promoting school textbooks that defended the Confederacy and condemned Reconstruction. The UDC's work helped build and maintain support for segregation and disenfranchisement (Chapter 15, Thinking Like a Historian, p. 502).

African American women did not sit idle in the face of this challenge. In 1896, they created the **National Association of Colored Women**. Through its local clubs, black women arranged for the care of orphans, founded homes for the elderly, advocated temperance, and undertook public health campaigns. Such women shared with white women a determination to carry domesticity into the public sphere. Journalist Victoria Earle Matthews hailed the American home as "the foundation upon which nationality rests, the pride of the citizen, and the glory of the Republic." She and other African American women used the language of domesticity and respectability to justify their work.

One of the most radical voices was Ida B. Wells, who as a young Tennessee schoolteacher sued the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad for denying her a seat in the ladies' car. In 1892, a white mob in Memphis invaded a grocery store owned by three of Wells's



Ida B. Wells

In 1887, Ida Wells (Wells-Barnett after she married in 1895) was thrown bodily from a train in Tennessee for refusing to vacate her seat in a section reserved for whites, launching her into a lifelong crusade for racial justice. Her mission was to expose the evil of lynching in the South. This image is the title page of a pamphlet she published in 1892. Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

friends, angry that it competed with a nearby white-owned store. When the black store owners defended themselves, wounding several of their attackers, all three were lynched. Grieving their deaths, Wells left Memphis and urged other African Americans to join her in boycotting the city's white businesses. As a journalist, she launched a one-woman campaign against lynching. Wells's investigations demolished the myth that lynchers were reacting to the crime of interracial rape; she showed that the real cause was more often economic competition, a labor dispute, or a consensual relationship between a white woman and a black man. Settling in Chicago, Wells became a noted and accomplished reformer, but in an era of increasing racial injustice, few whites supported her cause.

The largest African American women's organization arose within the National Baptist Church (NBC), which by 1906 represented 2.4 million black churchgoers. Founded in 1900, the Women's Convention of the NBC funded night schools, health clinics, kindergartens, day care centers, and prison outreach programs. Adella Hunt Logan, born in Alabama, exemplified how such work could lead women to demand political rights. Educated at Atlanta University, Logan became a women's club leader, teacher, and suffrage advocate. "If white American women, with all their mutual and acquired advantage, need the ballot," she declared, "how much more do Black Americans, male and female, need the strong defense of a vote to help secure them their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?"

Women's Rights Though it had split into two rival organizations during Reconstruction, the movement for women's suffrage reunited in 1890 in the **National American Woman Suffrage Association** (NAWSA). Soon afterward, suffragists built on earlier victories in the West, winning full ballots for women in Colorado (1893), Idaho (1896), and Utah (1896, reestablished as Utah gained statehood). Afterward, movement leaders were discouraged by a decade of state-level defeats and Congress's refusal to consider a constitutional amendment. But suffrage again picked up momentum after 1911 (Map 18.2). By 1913, most women living west of the Mississippi River had the ballot. In other localities, women could vote in municipal elections, school elections, or liquor referenda.

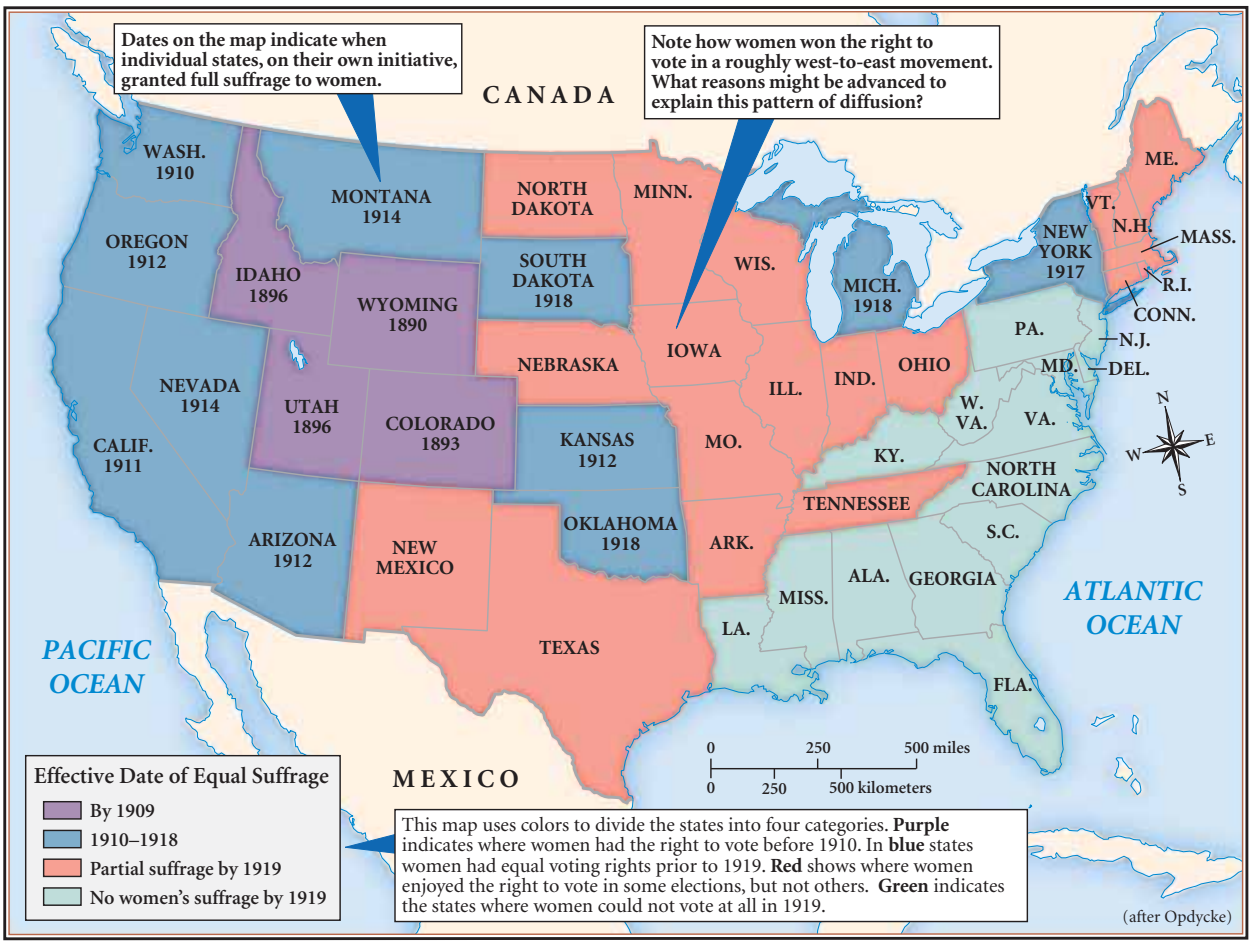
The rising prominence of the women's suffrage movement had an ironic result: it prompted some women — and men — to organize against it, in groups such as the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (1911). Antisuffragists argued that it was expensive to add so many voters to the rolls; wives' ballots would just "double their husbands' votes" or worse, cancel them out, subjecting men to "petticoat rule." Some antisuffragists also argued that voting would undermine women's special roles as disinterested reformers: no longer above the fray, they would be plunged into the "cesspool of politics." In short, women were "better citizens without the ballot." Such arguments helped delay passage of national women's suffrage until after World War I.

By the 1910s, some women moved beyond suffrage to take a public stance for what they called **feminism** — women's full political, economic, and social equality. A famous site of sexual rebellion was New York's Greenwich Village, where radical intellectuals, including many gays and lesbians, created a vibrant community. Among other political activities, women there founded the Heterodoxy Club (1912), open to any woman who pledged not to be "orthodox in her opinions." The club brought together intellectuals, journalists, and labor organizers. Almost all supported suffrage, but they had a more ambitious view of what was needed for women's liberation. "I wanted to belong to the human race, not to a ladies' aid society," wrote one divorced journalist who joined Heterodoxy. Feminists argued that women should not simply fulfill expectations of feminine self-sacrifice; they should work on their own behalf.

Science and Faith

Amid rapid change, the United States remained a deeply religious nation. But new discoveries enhanced another kind of belief: faith in science. In the early nineteenth century, most Americans had believed the world was about six thousand years old. No one knew what lay beyond the solar system. By the 1910s, paleontologists were classifying the dinosaurs, astronomers had identified distant galaxies, and physicists could measure the speed of light. Many scientists and ordinary Americans accepted the theory of evolution.

Scientific discoveries received widespread publicity through a series of great world's fairs, most famously Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, held (a year late) to celebrate Columbus's arrival in America in 1492. At the vast fairgrounds, visitors strolled through enormous buildings that displayed the latest inventions in industry, machinery, and transportation. They marveled over a moving sidewalk and, at dusk,



MAP 18.2

Women's Suffrage, 1890–1919

By 1909, after more than sixty years of agitation, only four lightly populated western states had granted women full voting rights. A number of other states offered partial suffrage, limited to voting for school boards and such issues as taxes and local referenda on whether or not to permit the sale of liquor licenses (the so-called local option). Between 1910 and 1918, as the effort shifted to the struggle for a constitutional amendment, eleven states joined the list granting full suffrage. The West remained the most progressive region in granting women's voting rights; the most stubborn resistance lay in the ex-Confederacy.

saw the fair buildings illuminated with strings of electric lights. One observer called the fair "a vast and wonderful university of the arts and sciences."

It is hardly surprising, amid these achievements, that "fact worship" became a central feature of intellectual life. Researchers in many fields argued that one could rely only on hard facts to understand the "laws of life." In their enthusiasm, some economists and sociologists rejected all social reform as sentimental. Fiction writers and artists kept a more humane emphasis, but they made use of similar methods — close observation and attention to real-life experience — to create works of realism. Other Americans struggled to reconcile scientific discoveries with their religious faith.

Darwinism and Its Critics

Evolution — the idea that species are not fixed, but ever changing — was not a simple idea on which all scientists agreed. In his immensely influential 1859 book, *On the Origin of Species*, British naturalist Charles Darwin argued that all creatures struggle to survive. When individual members of a species are born with random genetic mutations that better suit them for

their environment — for example, camouflage coloring for a moth — these characteristics, since they are genetically transmissible, become dominant in future generations. Many scientists rejected this theory of **natural selection**. They followed a line of thinking laid out by French biologist Jean Baptiste Lamarck, who argued, unlike Darwin, that individual animals or plants could acquire transmittable traits within a single lifetime. A rhinoceros that fought fiercely, in Lamarck's view, could build up a stronger horn; its offspring would then be born with that trait.

Darwin himself disapproved of the word *evolution* (which does not appear in his book) because it implied upward progress. In his view, natural selection was blind: environments and species changed randomly. Others were less scrupulous about drawing sweeping conclusions from Darwin's work. In the 1870s, British philosopher Herbert Spencer spun out an elaborate theory of how human society advanced through "survival of the fittest." **Social Darwinism**, as Spencer's idea became (confusingly) known, found its American champion in William Graham Sumner, a sociology professor at Yale. Competition, said Sumner, was a law of nature, like gravity. Who were the fittest? "Millionaires," Sumner declared. Their success showed they were "naturally selected."

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
How did the ideas of scientists and social scientists reflect events they saw happening around them?

Even in the heyday of Social Darwinism, Sumner's views were controversial (American Voices, p. 596). Some thinkers objected to the application of biological findings to the realm of society and government. They pointed out that Darwin's theories applied to finches and tortoises, not human institutions. Social Darwinism, they argued, was simply an excuse for the worst excesses of industrialization. By the early twentieth century, intellectuals revolted against Sumner and his allies.

Meanwhile, though, the most dubious applications of evolutionary ideas were codified into new reproductive laws based on **eugenics**, a so-called science of human breeding. Eugenicists argued that mentally deficient people should be prevented from reproducing. They proposed sterilizing those deemed "unfit," especially residents of state asylums for the insane or mentally disabled. In early-twentieth-century America, almost half of the states enacted eugenics laws. By the time eugenics subsided in the 1930s, about twenty thousand people had been sterilized, with California and Virginia taking the lead. Women in Puerto Rico and other U.S. imperial possessions (Chapter 21) also suffered from eugenics policies. Advocates of eugenics had a broad impact. Because they associated mental unfitness with "lower races" — including people of African, Asian, and Native American descent — their arguments lent support to segregation and racial discrimination. By warning that immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe would dilute white Americans' racial purity, eugenicists helped win passage of immigration restriction in the 1920s.

Realism in the Arts

Inspired by the quest for facts, American authors rejected nineteenth-century romanticism and what they saw as its unfortunate product, sentimentality. Instead, they took up literary **realism**. In the 1880s, editor and novelist William Dean Howells called for writers "to picture the daily life in the most exact terms possible." By the 1890s, a younger generation of writers pursued this goal. Theodore Dreiser dismissed unrealistic novels that always had "a happy ending." In *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891), based on the struggles of his midwestern farm family, Hamlin Garland turned the same unsparing eye on the hardships of rural life. Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893), privately printed because no publisher would touch it, described the seduction, abandonment, and death of a slum girl.

Some authors believed realism did not go far enough to overturn sentimentalism. Jack London spent his teenage years as a factory worker, sailor, and tramp. In stories such as "The Law of Life" (1901), he dramatized what he saw as the harsh reality of an uncaring universe. American society, he said, was "a jungle wherein wild beasts eat and are eaten." Similarly, Stephen Crane tried to capture "a world full of fists." London and Crane helped create literary **naturalism**. They suggested that human beings were not so much rational shapers of their own destinies as blind victims of forces beyond their control — including their own subconscious impulses.

America's most famous writer, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who took the pen name of Mark Twain, came to an equally bleak view. Though he achieved enormous success with such lighthearted books as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), Clemens courted controversy with *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), notable for its indictment of slavery and racism. In his novel *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), which ends with a bloody, technology-driven slaughter of Arthur's knights, Mark Twain became one of the bitterest critics of America's idea of

John French Sloan, *A Woman's Work*, 1912

The subject of this painting — a woman hanging out laundry behind a city apartment building — is typical of the subjects chosen by American artist John Sloan (1871–1951). Sloan and a group of his allies became famous as realists; critics derided them as the "Ash Can school" because they did not paint rural landscapes or other conventional subjects considered worthy of painting. Sloan, though, warned against seeing his paintings as simple representations of reality, even if he described his work as based on "a creative impulse derived out of a consciousness of life." "'Looks like' is not the test of a good painting," he wrote: "Even the scientist is interested in effects only as phenomena from which to deduce order in life."
Cleveland Museum of Art. Gift of Amelia Elizabeth White.

progress. Soon afterward, Clemens was devastated by the loss of his wife and two daughters, as well as by failed investments and bankruptcy. An outspoken critic of imperialism and foreign missions, Twain eventually denounced Christianity itself as a hypocritical delusion. Like his friend the industrialist Andrew Carnegie, Clemens "got rid of theology."

By the time Clemens died in 1910, realist and naturalist writers had laid the groundwork for **modernism**, which rejected traditional canons of literary taste. Questioning the whole idea of progress and order, modernists focused on the subconscious and "primitive" mind. Above all, they sought to overturn convention and tradition. Poet Ezra Pound exhorted, "Make it new!" Modernism became the first great literary and artistic movement of the twentieth century.

In the visual arts, new technologies influenced aesthetics. By 1900, some photographers argued that their "true" representations made painting obsolete. But painters invented their own forms of realism. Nebraska-born artist Robert Henri became fascinated with life in the great cities. "The backs of tenement houses are living documents," he declared, and he set out to put them on canvas. Henri and his followers, notably John Sloan and George Bellows, called themselves the New York Realists. Critics derided them as the Ash Can school because they chose subjects that were not conventionally beautiful.

In 1913, Realists participated in one of the most controversial events in American art history,

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
What effect did technology and scientific ideas have on literature and the arts?

Three Interpretations of Social Darwinism

The idea that human society advanced through "survival of the fittest" was a popular doctrine, referred to by historians as "Social Darwinism." Many Americans agreed with Harvard sociologist William Graham Sumner, who argued that the poor and weak were a "burden," a "dead-weight on the society in all its struggles." Such views prompted a range of responses, ranging from enthusiastic endorsement to uneasy accommodation to impassioned opposition.

Theodore Dreiser

The Financier

Theodore Dreiser (1871–1945) was an American literary naturalist. His novel *The Financier* (1912) traces the rise of Frank Cowperwood, a young man who, during the last years of the nineteenth century, becomes a powerful banker. Dreiser loosely based the character on the life of financier Charles Yerkes. In this excerpt, the narrator describes a transformative moment in Cowperwood's youth.

[Cowperwood] could not figure out how this thing he had come into — this life — was organized. How did all these people get into the world? What were they doing here? Who started things, anyhow? His mother told him the story of Adam and Eve, but he didn't believe it. . . .

One day he saw a squid and a lobster put in [a] tank, and in connection with them was witness to a tragedy which stayed with him all his life and cleared things up considerably intellectually. The lobster, it appeared from the talk of the idle bystanders, was offered no food, as the squid was considered his rightful prey. He lay at the bottom of the clear glass tank . . . apparently seeing nothing — you could not tell in which way his beady, black buttons of eyes were looking — but apparently they were never off the body of the squid. The latter, pale and waxy in texture, looking very much like pork fat or jade, moved about in torpedo fashion; but his movements were apparently never out of the eyes of his enemy, for by degrees small portions of his body began to disappear, snapped off by the relentless claws of his pursuer. . . .

[One day] only a portion of the squid remained. . . . In the corner of the tank sat the lobster, poised apparently for action. The boy stayed as long as he could, the bitter struggle fascinating him. Now, maybe, or in an hour or a day, the squid might die, slain by the lobster, and the lobster would eat him. He looked again at the greenish-copperish engine of destruction in the corner and wondered when this would be. . . .

He returned that night, and lo! the expected had happened. There was a little crowd around the tank. The lobster was in the corner. Before him was the squid cut in two and partially devoured. . . .

The incident made a great impression on him. It answered in a rough way that riddle which had been annoying him so much in the past: "How is life organized?" Things lived on each other — that was it. Lobsters lived on squids and other things. What lived on lobsters? Men, of course! . . . And what lived on men? he asked himself. Was it other men? Wild animals lived on men. And there were Indians and cannibals. And some men were killed by storms and accidents. He wasn't so sure about men living on men; but men did kill each other. How about wars and street fights and mobs? . . .

Frank thought of this and of the life he was tossed into, for he was already pondering on what he should be in this world, and how he should get along. From seeing his father count money, he was sure that he would like banking; and Third Street, where his father's office was, seemed to him the cleanest, most fascinating street in the world.

Source: Theodore Dreiser, *The Financier* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1912), 10–15.

Lyman Abbott

The Evolution of Christianity

Liberal Congregationalist Lyman Abbott (1835–1922) was a noted advocate of the Social Gospel. In *The Evolution of Christianity* (1892), Abbott sought to reconcile the theory of evolution with the development of Christianity.

The doctrine of evolution is not a doctrine of harmonious and uninterrupted progress. The most common, if not the most accurate formula of evolution is "struggle for existence, survival of the fittest." The doctrine of evolution assumes that there are forces in the world seemingly hostile to progress, that life is a perpetual battle and progress a perpetual victory.

The Christian evolutionist will then expect to find Christianity a warfare — in church, in society, in the individual. . . . He will remember that the divine life is

resident in undivine humanity. He will not be surprised to find the waters of the stream disturbed; for he will reflect that the divine purity has come into a turbid stream, and that it can purify only by being itself indistinguishably combined with the impure. When he is told that modern Christianity is only a "civilized paganism," he will reply, "That is exactly what I supposed it to be; and it will continue to be a civilized paganism until civilization has entirely eliminated paganism." He will not be surprised to find pagan ceremonies in the ritual, ignorance and superstition in the church, and even errors and partialisms in the Bible. For he will remember that the divine life, which is bringing all life into harmony with itself, is a life resident in man. He will remember that the Bible does not claim to be the absolute Word of God; that, on the contrary . . . it claims to be the Word of God . . . as spoken to men, and understood and interpreted by men, which saw it in part as we still see it, and reflected it as from a mirror in enigmas.

He will remember that the Church is not yet the bride of Christ, but the plebeian daughter whom Christ is educating to be his bride. He will remember that Christianity is not the absolutely divine, but the divine in humanity, the divine force resident in man and transforming man into the likeness of the divine. Christianity is the light struggling with the darkness, life battling with death, the spiritual overcoming the animal. We judge Christianity as the scientist judges the embryo, as the gardener the bud, as the teacher the pupil, — not by what it is, but by what it promises to be.

Source: Lyman Abbott, *The Evolution of Christianity* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1892), 8–10.

Lester Frank Ward

Glimpses of the Cosmos

Lester Frank Ward (1841–1913) helped establish sociology in the United States. Following French philosopher Auguste Comte, he held that the social sciences should develop methods of improving society. In his autobiography *Glimpses of the Cosmos* (1913–1918), Ward rejected Social Darwinism.

How shall we distinguish this human, or anthropic, method from the method of nature? Simply by reversing all the definitions. Art is the antithesis of nature. If we call one the natural method, we must call the other the artificial method. If nature's process is rightly named natural selection, man's process is artificial selection. The survival of the fittest is simply the survival of the strong, which implies, and might as well be called, the destruction of the weak. And if nature progresses through the destruction of the weak, man progresses through the *protection* of the weak. . . .

. . . Man, through his intelligence, has labored successfully to resist the law of nature. His success is conclusively demonstrated by a comparison of his condition with that of other species of animals. No other cause can be assigned for his superiority. How can the naturalistic philosophers shut their eyes to such obvious facts? Yet, what is their attitude? They condemn all attempts to protect the weak, whether by private or public methods. They claim that it deteriorates the race by enabling the unfit to survive and transmit their inferiority. . . . Nothing is easier than to show that the unrestricted competition of nature does not secure the survival of the fittest possible, but only of the actually fittest, and in every attempt man makes to obtain something fitter than this actual fittest he succeeds, as witness improved breeds of animals and grafts of fruits. Now, the human method of protecting the weak deals in such way with men. It not only increases the number but improves the quality.

Source: Lester Frank Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos* (New York: Harper, 1913), 371, 374.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. By telling the squid and lobster story, what message was Dreiser conveying to readers, about men such as Cowperwood? If Abbott and Ward had read *The Financier*, how might they have responded? Why?
2. Historians sometimes claim that American thinkers of this era, endorsing Social Darwinism and "survival of the fittest," opposed social reform. How do Abbott and Ward complicate that view?

the Armory Show. Housed in an enormous National Guard building in New York, the exhibit introduced America to modern art. Some painters whose work appeared at the show were experimenting with cubism, characterized by abstract, geometric forms. Along with works by Henri, Sloan, and Bellows, organizers featured paintings by European rebels such as Pablo Picasso. America's academic art world was shocked. One critic called cubism "the total destruction of the art of painting." But as the exhibition went on to Boston and Chicago, more than 250,000 people crowded to see it.

A striking feature of both realism and modernism, as they developed, was that many leading writers and artists were men. In making their work strong and modern, they also strove to assert their masculinity. Paralleling Theodore Roosevelt's call for "manly sports," they denounced nineteenth-century culture as hopelessly feminized. Stephen Crane called for "virility" in literature. Jack London described himself as a "man's man, . . . lustfully roving and conquering." Artist Robert Henri banned small brushes as "too feminine." In their own ways, these writers and artists contributed to a broad movement to masculinize American culture.

Religion: Diversity and Innovation

By the turn of the twentieth century, emerging scientific and cultural paradigms posed a significant challenge to religious faith. Some Americans argued that science and modernity would sweep away religion altogether. Contrary to such predictions, American religious practice remained vibrant. Protestants developed creative new responses to the challenges of industrialization, while millions of newcomers built institutions for worship and religious education.

Immigrant Faiths Arriving in the United States in large numbers, Catholics and Jews wrestled with similar questions. To what degree should they adapt to Protestant-dominated American society? Should the education of clergy be changed? Should children attend

Arthur B. Davies, *Dancers*, 1914–1915

Artist Arthur Davies (1862–1928) was one of the primary organizers of New York's 1913 Armory Show, which introduced Americans to modernist art. An associate of John Sloan and other New York Realists, Davies experimented with an array of painting styles, as well as printmaking and tapestry making. This painting dates from a three-year period, just after the Armory Show, in which Davies experimented with Cubist techniques. *Dancers*, 1914–1915 (oil on canvas), Detroit Institute of Arts, USA/Gift of Ralph Harman Booth/The Bridgeman Art Library.

religious or public schools? What happened if they married outside the faith? Among Catholic leaders, Bishop John Ireland of Minnesota argued that "the principles of the Church are in harmony with the interests of the Republic." But traditionalists, led by Archbishop Michael A. Corrigan of New York, disagreed. They sought to insulate Catholics from the pluralistic American environment. Indeed, by 1920, almost two million children attended Catholic elementary schools nationwide, and Catholic dioceses operated fifteen hundred high schools. Catholics as well as Jews feared some of the same threats that distressed Protestants: industrial poverty and overwork kept working-class people away from worship services, while new consumer pleasures enticed many of them to go elsewhere.

Faithful immigrant Catholics were anxious to preserve familiar traditions from Europe, and they generally supported the Church's traditional wing. But they also wanted religious life to express their ethnic identities. Italians, Poles, and other new arrivals wanted separate parishes where they could celebrate their customs, speak their languages, and establish their own parochial schools. When they became numerous enough, they also demanded their own bishops. The Catholic hierarchy, dominated by Irishmen, felt the integrity of the Church was at stake. The demand for ethnic parishes implied local control of church property. With some strain, the Catholic Church managed to satisfy the diverse needs of the immigrant faithful. It met the demand for representation, for example, by appointing immigrant priests as auxiliary bishops within existing dioceses.

In the same decades, many prosperous native-born Jews embraced Reform Judaism, abandoning such religious practices as keeping a kosher kitchen and conducting services in Hebrew. This was not the way of Yiddish-speaking Jews from Eastern Europe, who arrived in large numbers after the 1880s. Generally much poorer and eager to preserve their own traditions, they founded Orthodox synagogues, often in vacant stores, and practiced Judaism as they had at home.

But in Eastern Europe, Judaism had been an entire way of life, one not easily replicated in a large American city. "The very clothes I wore and the very food I ate had a fatal effect on my religious habits," confessed the hero of Abraham Cahan's novel *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917). "If you . . . attempt to bend your religion to the spirit of your surroundings, it breaks. It falls to pieces." Levinsky shaved off his beard and plunged into the Manhattan clothing business. Orthodox Judaism survived the transition to America, but like other immigrant religions, it had to renounce its claims to some of the faithful.

Protestant Innovations One of the era's dramatic religious developments — facilitated by global steamship and telegraph lines — was the rise of Protestant foreign missions. From a modest start before the Civil War, this movement peaked around 1915, a year when American religious organizations sponsored more than nine thousand overseas missionaries, supported at home by armies of volunteers, including more than three million women. A majority of Protestant missionaries served in Asia, with smaller numbers posted to Africa and the Middle East. Most saw American-style domesticity as a central part of evangelism, and missionary societies sent married couples into the field. Many unmarried women also served overseas as missionary

Christian Missions in Japan, 1909

Through this colorful postcard, Protestant missionaries in Japan demonstrate their success in winning converts (at least a few) and their adaptation of missionary strategies to meet local needs and expectations. Here, outside their headquarters, they demonstrate "preaching by means of banners." The large characters on the vertical banner proclaim the "Association of Christian Gospel Evangelists." The horizontal banner is a Japanese translation of Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

IDENTIFY CAUSES
How did America's religious life change in this era, and what prompted those changes?

teachers, doctors, and nurses, though almost never as ministers. "American woman," declared one Christian reformer, has "the exalted privilege of extending over the world those blessed influences, that are to renovate degraded man."

Protestant missionaries won converts, in part, by providing such modern services as medical care and women's education. Some missionaries developed deep bonds of respect with the people they served. Others showed considerable condescension toward the "poor heathen," who in turn bristled at their assumptions (America Compared, p. 601). One Presbyterian, who found Syrians uninterested in his gospel message, angrily denounced all Muslims as "corrupt and immoral." By imposing their views of "heathen races" and attacking those who refused to convert, Christian missionaries sometimes ended up justifying Western imperialism.

Chauvinism abroad reflected attitudes that also surfaced at home. Starting in Iowa in 1887, militant Protestants created a powerful political organization, the **American Protective Association** (APA), which for a brief period in the 1890s counted more than two million members. This virulently nativist group expressed outrage at the existence of separate Catholic schools while demanding, at the same time, that all public school teachers be Protestants. The APA called for a ban on Catholic officeholders, arguing that they were beholden to an "ecclesiastic power" that was "not created and controlled by American citizens." In its virulent anti-Catholicism and calls for restrictions on immigrants, the APA prefigured the revived Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s (Chapter 22).

The APA arose, in part, because Protestants found their dominance challenged. Millions of Americans, especially in the industrial working class, were now Catholics or Jews. Overall, in 1916, Protestants still constituted about 60 percent of Americans affiliated with a religious body. But they faced formidable rivals: the number of practicing Catholics in 1916 — 15.7 million — was greater than the number of Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians combined.

Some Protestants responded to the urban, immigrant challenge by evangelizing among the unchurched. They provided reading rooms, day nurseries, vocational classes, and other services. The goal of renewing religious faith through dedication to justice and social welfare became known as the **Social Gospel**. Its goals were epitomized by Charles Sheldon's novel *In His Steps* (1896), which told the story of a congregation who resolved to live by Christ's precepts for one year. "If church members were all doing as Jesus would do," Sheldon asked, "could it remain true that armies of men would walk the streets for jobs, and hundreds of them curse the church, and thousands of them find in the saloon their best friend?"

The Salvation Army, which arrived from Great Britain in 1879, also spread a gospel message among the urban poor, offering assistance that ranged from soup kitchens to shelters for former prostitutes. When

The Salvation Army on the Streets

This theater poster for the popular play *On the Bowery* (1894), written by theater agent Robert Neilson Stephens, shows how many Americans perceived the Salvation Army. Here, Salvation Army workers in New York City offer the organization's newspaper, *War Cry*, to a man who brushes them off (rudely). The man is Steve Brodie, a celebrity who was recruited to portray himself onstage. A former East River lifesaving champion who became a saloon owner in New York's Bowery district, Brodie had won fame in 1886 by claiming to have jumped from the Brooklyn Bridge and survived. (It was later claimed that he faked the stunt, but "doing a Brodie" became popular slang for taking a big risk.) While many Americans admired the Salvation Army, others — particularly men of working-class origins, like Brodie — rejected its appeals. Library of Congress.

AMERICA COMPARED

Christianity in the United States and Japan

During the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exhibition, a Parliament of Religions brought together representatives of prominent faiths for discussion. English-speaking Protestants dominated the program, but several Asian representatives included Kinzo Hirai, a lay Buddhist from Japan. In his speech, Hirai reviewed Japan's experiences with the United States since Commodore Matthew C. Perry "opened" the country in 1853.

I do not understand why the Christian lands have ignored the rights and advantages of forty million souls of Japan for forty years. . . . One of the excuses offered by foreign nations is that our country is not yet civilized. Is it the principle of civilized law that the rights and profits of the so-called uncivilized, or the weaker, should be sacrificed? As I understand it, the spirit and necessity of law is to protect the rights and profits of the weaker against the aggression of the stronger. . . .

From the religious source, the claim is made that the Japanese are idolaters and heathen. . . . [A]dmitting for the sake of argument that we are idolaters and heathen, is it Christian morality to trample upon the rights and advantages of a non-Christian nation, coloring all their natural happiness with the dark stain of injustice? . . .

You send your missionaries to Japan and they advise us to be moral and believe Christianity. We like to be moral, we know that Christianity is good; and we are very thankful for this kindness. But at the same time our people are rather perplexed. . . . For when we think that the treaty stipulated in the time of feudalism, when we were yet in our youth, is still clung to by the powerful nations of Christendom; when we find that every year a good many western vessels of seal fishery are smuggled into our seas; when legal cases are always decided by the foreign authorities in Japan unfavorably to us; when some years ago a Japanese was not allowed to enter a university on the Pacific coast of America because of his being of a different race; when a few months ago the school board in San Francisco enacted a regulation that no Japanese should be allowed to enter the public school there; when last year the Japanese were driven out in wholesale from one of the territories of the United States; when our business men in San Francisco were compelled by some union not to employ Japanese assistants and laborers, but the Americans; when there are some in the same city who speak on the platform against those of us who are already here; when there are many who go in procession hoisting lanterns marked "Japs must go"; when the Japanese in the Hawaiian Islands were deprived of their suffrage; when we see some western people in Japan who erect before the entrance to their houses a special post upon which is the notice, "No Japanese is allowed to enter here" — just like a board upon which is written, "No dogs allowed"; when we are in such a situation, notwithstanding the kindness of the western nations from one point of view, who send their missionaries to us, that we unintelligent heathens are embarrassed and hesitate to swallow the sweet and warm liquid of the heaven of Christianity, will not be unreasonable.

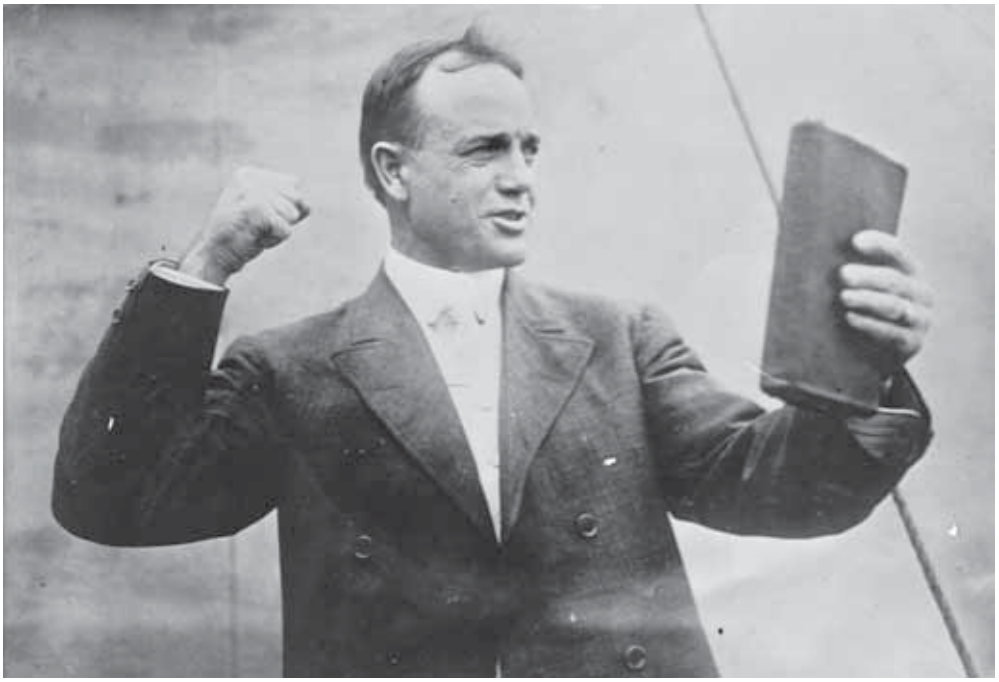
Source: *The World's Parliament of Religions*, ed. John Henry Barrows (Chicago: Parliament Publishing Co., 1893), 444–450.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. What is Hirai's attitude toward American Christians?
2. Of what events is Hirai aware that are taking place in the United States? How does this shape his view of Christian missions in Japan?
3. How might American delegates to the Parliament, especially Protestant missionaries, have responded to Hirai?

all else failed, down-and-outers knew they could count on the Salvation Army, whose bell ringers became a familiar sight on city streets. The group borrowed up-to-date marketing techniques and used the latest business slang in urging its Christian soldiers to "hustle."

The Salvation Army succeeded, in part, because it managed to bridge an emerging divide between Social Gospel reformers and Protestants who were taking a different theological path. Disturbed by what they saw as rising secularism, conservative ministers and their allies held a series of Bible Conferences at Niagara Falls between 1876 and 1897. The resulting "Niagara Creed" reaffirmed the literal truth of the Bible and the certain damnation of those not born again in Christ. By the 1910s, a network of churches and Bible institutes had emerged from these conferences. They called their



Billy Sunday with His Bible

One of the most popular Protestant preachers of the early twentieth century, Billy Sunday (1862–1935) was a former professional baseball player with an imposing physique and dynamic preaching style. More willing than most of his predecessors to make direct political arguments, Sunday championed antiradicalism and prohibition—stances that foreshadowed the Protestant political crusades of the 1920s. Sunday's most famous sermon was his anti-liquor exhortation, "Get on the Water Wagon." Library of Congress.

movement **fundamentalism**, based on their belief in the fundamental truth of the Bible.

Fundamentalists and their allies made particularly effective use of revival meetings. Unlike Social Gospel advocates, revivalists said little about poverty or earthly justice, focusing not on the matters of the world, but on heavenly redemption. The pioneer modern evangelist was Dwight L. Moody, a former Chicago shoe salesman and YMCA official who won fame in the 1870s. Eternal life could be had for the asking, Moody promised. His listeners needed only "to come forward and take, TAKE!" Moody's successor, Billy Sunday, helped bring evangelism into the modern era. More often than his predecessors, Sunday took political stances based on his Protestant beliefs. Condemning the "booze traffic" was his greatest cause. Sunday also denounced unrestricted immigration and labor radicalism. "If I had my way with these ornery wild-eyed Socialists," he once threatened, "I would stand them up before a firing squad." Sunday supported some progressive reform causes; he opposed child labor, for example, and advocated voting rights for women. But in other ways, his views anticipated the nativism and antiradicalism that would dominate American politics after World War I.

Billy Sunday, like other noted men of his era, broke free of Victorian practices and asserted his leadership in a masculinized American culture. Not only was he a commanding presence on the stage, but before his conversion he had been a hard-drinking outfielder for the Chicago White Stockings. To advertise his revivals, Sunday often organized local men into baseball teams, then put on his own uniform and played for both sides. Through such feats and the fiery sermons that followed, Sunday offered a model of spiritual inspiration, manly strength, and political engagement. His revivals were thoroughly modern: marketed shrewdly, they provided mass entertainment and the chance to meet a pro baseball player. Like other cultural developments of the industrializing era, Billy Sunday's popularity showed how Americans often adjusted to modernity: they adapted older beliefs and values, enabling them to endure in new forms.

SUMMARY

Industrialization and new consumer practices created foundations for modern American culture. While middle-class families sought to preserve the Victorian domestic ideal, a variety of factors transformed family life. Families had fewer children, and a substantial majority of young people achieved more education than their parents had obtained. Across class and gender lines, Americans enjoyed athletics and the outdoors, fostering the rise of environmentalism.

Among an array of women's reform movements, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union sought

prohibition of liquor, but it also addressed issues such as domestic violence, poverty, and education. Members of women's clubs pursued a variety of social and economic reforms, while other women organized for race uplift and patriotic work. Gradually, the Victorian ideal of female moral superiority gave way to modern claims for women's equal rights.

New intellectual currents, including Darwinism, challenged Victorian certainties. In the arts, realist and naturalist writers rejected both romanticism and Victorian domesticity. Many Americans were shocked by the results, including Theodore Dreiser's scandalous novel *Sister Carrie*, Mark Twain's rejection of Christian faith, and the boldly modernist paintings displayed at New York's Armory Show. Science and modernism did not, however, displace religion. Newly arrived Catholics and Jews, as well as old-line Protestants, adapted their faith to the conditions of modern life. Foreign missions, in the meantime, spread the Christian gospel around the world, with mixed results for those receiving the message.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

Plessy v. Ferguson (p. 577)
Young Men's Christian Association (p. 580)
Negro Leagues (p. 581)
Sierra Club (p. 583)
National Park Service (p. 583)
National Audubon Society (p. 583)
Comstock Act (p. 585)
liberal arts (p. 587)
Atlanta Compromise (p. 587)
maternalism (p. 589)
Woman's Christian Temperance Union (p. 589)
National Association of Colored Women (p. 591)
National American Woman Suffrage Association (p. 592)
feminism (p. 592)
natural selection (p. 594)
Social Darwinism (p. 594)
eugenics (p. 594)
realism (p. 594)
naturalism (p. 594)
modernism (p. 595)
American Protective Association (p. 600)
Social Gospel (p. 600)
fundamentalism (p. 602)

Key People

Thomas Edison (p. 576)
John Muir (p. 583)
Booker T. Washington (p. 587)
Frances Willard (p. 589)
Ida B. Wells (p. 591)
Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) (p. 594)
Billy Sunday (p. 602)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. Why did athletics become popular in the late-nineteenth-century United States? In what ways did this trend represent broader changes in American society and culture?
2. What changes in women's private and public lives occurred in the decades after the Civil War, and how did these affect women from different backgrounds? Why do you think emphasis on the status of "ladies" became so insistent in this era?

3. Some historians argue that the changes brought by industrialization caused Americans to become a more secular people. To what extent do you agree or disagree, and why? Use evidence from this chapter to make your case.

4. What policy changes resulted, in part, from Americans' new zest for outdoor recreation? (You may also want to review Chapter 16, pp. 521 and 524–525 on John Wesley Powell, the creation of Yellowstone, and early wildlife conservation.)

5. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** On the Part 6 thematic timeline (p. 543), review developments in "Ideas, Beliefs, and Culture" and "Environment and Geography." How did industrialization change Americans' relationship to the outdoors — to natural environments? What connections do you see between those changes and other, broader shifts in American society and culture?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** This chapter explains cultural transformation as largely the result of industrialization. That's true, but it's not the whole story: the Civil War also helped bring about change. Organizers of the WCTU, for example, were distressed by alcoholism among the industrial working class but also by the plight of veterans, some of whom anaesthetized their war wounds through heavy drinking. Review the material in Chapters 14 and 15, on the Civil War and its aftermath, and then write an essay in which you explain how changes in American society during the Civil War and Reconstruction laid the groundwork for new controversies in the areas of race relations, reform, science, and religious faith.

2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** This chapter contains several depictions of domestic spaces, and also of women in public. After studying these images, how would you describe the ideal roles that Americans of this era believed women should fulfill? Did the ideal differ, based on social and economic class? Compare these images to the photographs of women in this chapter. What differences do you see between the "ideal" depictions and the ways in which real women appeared in front of the camera?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Patrick W. Carey, *The Roman Catholics in America* (1996). A major synthesis of American Catholic history.

Stephen Fox, *The American Conservation Movement* (1985). A history of the rise of environmentalism.

Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow* (1996). An influential account of African American women's activism in reform and politics.

Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity* (2001). A good introduction to the new ideas of masculinity that emerged in this period, and their impact on religious faith.

Jonathan Sarna, *American Judaism* (2004). Provides an excellent account of the negotiations between Americanized Jews and new Eastern European immigrants in this era.

David Shi, *Facing Facts* (1994). Explores the impact of realism and scientific thinking on the arts and intellectual life.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1861	• Vassar College founded for women
1872	• First national park established at Yellowstone
1873	• Association for the Advancement of Women founded • Comstock Act
1874	• Woman's Christian Temperance Union founded
1876	• Baseball's National League founded • Appalachian Mountain Club founded
1879	• Salvation Army established in the United States
1881	• Tuskegee Institute founded
1885	• Mississippi State College for Women founded
1890	• National American Woman Suffrage Association founded • Daughters of the American Revolution founded
1892	• Elizabeth Cady Stanton delivers "solitude of self" speech to Congress • John Muir founds Sierra Club
1893	• Chicago World's Columbian Exposition
1894	• United Daughters of the Confederacy founded
1895	• Booker T. Washington delivers Atlanta Compromise address
1896	• National Association of Colored Women founded • Charles Sheldon publishes *In His Steps* • *Plessy v. Ferguson* legalizes "separate but equal" doctrine
1900	• Lacey Act
1903	• First World Series • First National Wildlife Refuge established
1906	• Antiquities Act
1913	• Armory Show of modern art held in New York City
1916	• National Park Service created

KEY TURNING POINT: Some historians have argued that the 1890s was a crucial turning point in American culture — a decade when "modernity arrived." Based on events in this chapter, do you agree?