

## "The Drunkard's Progress"

<http://www.icue.com/portal/site/iCue/chapter?cuecard=1596>



### General Information

<b>Source:</b>	NBC News	<b>Resource Type:</b>	Video iCue Mini-Documentary [Explainer]
<b>Creator:</b>	N/A	<b>Copyright:</b>	© NBC Universal, Inc.
<b>Event Date:</b>	1800 - 1900	<b>Copyright Date:</b>	2007
<b>Air/Publish Date:</b>	07/29/2007	<b>Clip Length</b>	00:02:04

### Description

Anti-alcoholism cartoons like this one, which depicts the nine steps of the "drunkard's progress," were widespread in the 19th century. Josh Brown of the American Social History Project explains why.

### Keywords

Temperance, Alcoholism, Reform, Men, Women, Labor, Domesticity, Homestead, Children, Family, Immigrants, Morality

### Transcript

Professor JOSHUA BROWN (City University of New York/American Social History Project): This is a standard motif in temperance images, which is basically the sort of arc of the career of the alcoholic. You know, you start out just tipping slightly, occasionally a drink with dinner. It eventually affects your work. You eventually start beating your wife, you know, mistreating your children. You lose your job, you become unemployed, and you eventually end up being a derelict on the street, and you die. That's sort of the general arc. It's basically a standard morality story that was presented and published and distributed quite widely in the United States.

Alcohol in the 19th century is rampant. Certainly in cities, you know, saloons are all over the place. The

temperance movement is certainly concerned about alcohol abuse, the ramifications of the abuse of liquor, on the family, on work and so on and so forth. But it's also concerned about alcohol because of a change in the notion of appropriate behavior in public. Public drunkenness, which was quite common in the 18th century, now becomes outlawed in the 19th century.

And it's also a concern because of issues of industrialization, wanting people to appear on time every day, and to work, at that period of time, sometimes 12 hours a day, and work at least six days a week.

Finally, another concern about the temperance movements is politics. And bars, particularly once the immigrants entered the major American cities, became focal points for political organizations. So, some of temperance reform was about taking away control from immigrants.

Professor EDWARD T. O'DONNELL (Holy Cross College): Irish and German immigrants came with the tradition of alcohol consumption as part of their social life, part of their ways of celebrating, part of their diet, in many cases. And they come at the same time where America is enthusiastically embracing the temperance movement. So they're decried as running counter to the great trend in America at that time.

## Related Cue Cards

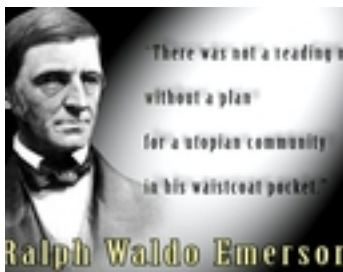
First Native-Born American to be Named A Saint is a Woman  
<http://www.icue.com/portal/site/iCue/chapter/?cuecard=5588>

Today at the Vatican, Pope Paul VI proclaimed a new saint in the Catholic Church. Elizabeth Ann Seton, a former New York socialite, founded the parochial school system in the United States. Her grave in Emmitsburg, Maryland is expected to become a shrine.



The Impulse For Reform  
<http://www.icue.com/portal/site/iCue/chapter/?cuecard=4450>

Americans are caught up in a wave of reform movements in the 1830s and '40s. Some campaign for better conditions in prisons and asylums, while others form utopian communities or discovered fad diets.



The Second Great Awakening  
<http://www.icue.com/portal/site/iCue/chapter/?cuecard=482>

In the first half of the nineteenth century, America undergoes a wave of religious revivals, the largest outpouring of religious sentiment since the American Revolution.



