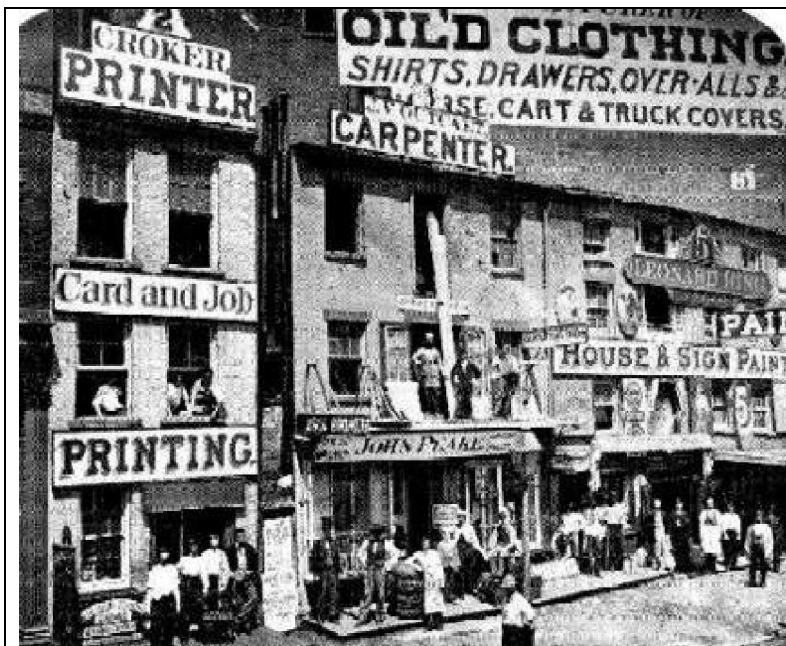


What was New York City like in the Nineteenth Century?

The movie “Gangs of New York” shows the Five Points neighborhood of Manhattan as a slum with gangs and criminals. In 1842, the poet Walt Whitman described its people as “the Republic’s most needed asset, the wealth of stout poor men who will work.”

1. Examine the two pictures and decide which view you agree with and why.
2. How would your neighborhood today appear to an outsider? Why?

A. Drawing of Five Points in 1827



B. Lower Hudson Street, c. 1865

This is a very early photograph of the Five Points neighborhood in Manhattan. What can you learn about the community from this picture?