

Class

The social construction of class creates both visible and invisible disparities between people across the street and across the world. As class consciousness developed, art in many forms was created to help understand and escape people's lived experiences of social, economic, and cultural class systems. Art is also caught up in class struggles, perhaps most visibility in the contested binary between "high" and "low" forms of art. Since Kimberlé Crenshaw posited intersectionality as a way of recognizing how people embody overlapping and compounding identities, studies of class have shifted. Class must be considered in tandem with race, gender, nationality, labor, and the systematic forces by which the world is regulated. The list below, in the wake of Crenshaw and intersectionality, is organized thematically. Some works highlight more than one theme on the list, which has been noted. Of course, artworks are multivalent, and as such, they address many additional, unmentioned themes.

In addition to providing visual representations of class, the objects below offer opportunities for students to practice their visual literacy and analysis skills that enhance learning inside and outside the museum, classroom, and institution. Sample questions, discussion prompts, and classroom activities are provided. This module is designed to be adaptable to specific courses, assignments, and learning goals. Please consult (INSERT EMAIL) if you have any questions, modifications, or recommendations based on your learning outcomes.

Themes:

Class as it intersects with

1. Gender
2. Race
3. Resistance
4. Ethnicity
5. Labor
6. Food
7. "The Beggar"

Classroom Activities

Close analysis:

Spend 10-15 minutes looking at one artwork. Try to look from different angles, positions, and distances. Do not write anything down. As you look, take in as much as you can from the work while also considering how it represents or engages with class.

After spending time with the artwork, either

- 1) turn to a classmate and share your observations with them. Describe the painting in detail, as well as your emotional or affective responses to it. Listen attentively while your partner describes the work of art with which they spent time. Discuss how class is represented in the works. Connect your experiences with the artworks to at least one definition or theory about class that you have learned in this course so far.
- 2) Pull out a notebook and write down some of your observations. In a journal-like entry, describe the work and how it relates to or represents class. Do not worry about writing conventions; your thoughts are more important. Note any further questions you have about the work. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the group.

Interpretation:

Choose two artworks from (INSERT MODULE) that communicate different perspectives or voices on the chosen theme. Compare and contrast how they represent class differently. Write a defensible, interpretive thesis to establish your argument. In the body of your paper, be sure to include visual details that support your answer. Possible differences to consider include, but are not limited to, color, line, texture, subject, gender, realism, abstraction, artist identity, culture, time period, or political impulse. Be as specific as possible. 750-1000 words.

Free (Creative) Write:

Storytelling: Choose one of the artworks you encountered at the Museum, and write a short story based on the work. Include visual detail and imagery. Class or class struggle should be an animating piece of your short story.

Poetry: Write a poem based on an artwork you encountered today. Be sure it addresses the appropriate class-related theme.

Film: Imagine one of the works you studied is really a still image from a film. What happens next?

Class and Gender



Object # 2014.0456

Title: untitled [clinic, children being vaccinated]

Artist: Dulari Devi

Medium: ink

Dimensions: 19 7/8 x 27 5/8 in. (50.5 x 70.2 cm)

Date: n.d.

Dulari Devi is a low-caste Indian artist who works in the Mithila tradition. For thousands of years, women painted intricate pieces inside the mud walls of their homes. In the 1930s, an outside British man documented such work, and artists transferred the traditional style to paper in the 1970s. More so than other Mithila

artists, Dulari Devi draws attention to class/caste struggles. The artist is almost entirely illiterate, which makes her command of pen and ink all the more impressive. *[Clinic, children being vaccinated]* tells a story about poverty and access to medical care. On the right side, women and their children who can afford to pay receive vaccines. On the left-hand side, those who cannot afford it are refused by a figure who holds up a hand. Dulari Devi uses subtle signs, such as delicate tears, handbags, and children's toys (or lack thereof), to signify class disparities. This work invites close analysis and consideration about class, health, culture, gender, justice, and their intersections.

Other themes: race, resistance

Discussion questions: What story does this artwork tell? What does it have to do with class? What signs does the artist use to show the socio-economic (or, in India, caste) differences between the figures? Identify at least two details as examples. Why do you think the artist chose to make these differences so subtle? Why do you think the artist used so little color (a move which diverges greatly from the Mithila tradition)? How does access to health care further impact class differences? Why is access to medical care a classed issue? How does this painting relate to the COVID-19 crisis and India, the United States, or both?



Object # 1960.002

Title: The Little Beggars (Les Petites Mendicantes)

Artist: William Adolphe Bouguereau (French, 1825-1905)

Medium: oil painting

Dimensions: 63 5/8 × 36 3/4 in.

Date: 1890

Bouguereau was a popular, acclaimed French academic painter. He was born into a rather wealthy French family, trained in the academy, and was known for realistic genre paintings. One of his emphases was the female body. This work shows two young women, ages unknown, requesting alms with their intent gazes and one girl's outstretched hand. Their clothing, bare feet, and satchels reinforce the title's representation of them as "little beggars."

Other themes: "The Beggar"

Discussion questions: How does Bouguereau represent class? Why do you think he chose to represent two young women? How does this painting affect a viewer emotionally? How might you read the girls' gazes, gestures, or outfits? Is this painting a reliable representation of class—why or why not? What do you make of the title: "The Little Beggars?"



Object # 1963.0109

Title: [Portrait of Louis XIV]

Artist: Hyacinthe Rigaud (French, 1659-1743)

Medium: Oil

Dimensions: 57 x 44 in.

Date: 1701

Hyacinthe Rigaud was a French painter most famous for his portraits of nobility. The son of a tailor, he has a particular eye for clothing and fabrics, which is evident in his *Portrait of Louis XIV*. His paintings are considered near-exact records of historical fashions. This work—one of the more prestigious in the SU Art collections—could be used to study class from a number of angles. One might center on Louis XIV himself,

who reigned over France during the 17th and early 18th centuries. The King influenced perceptions of the arts as social capital and classed ideas such as politeness, order, and taste. Students could also consider portraiture, representations of masculine power, notions of "high art," gesture, clothing, and decoration in terms of class.

Discussion questions: How does Louis XIV perform class? Which details in the portrait communicate status to the viewer? What does this painting tell us about history? How does class intersect with culturally informed ideas of masculinity? How might you interpret his gesture or pose? How does this painting make you feel? Is art "high class?" Why or why not?



Object # 1990.746

Title: 1170 Washing Clothes in a Stream

Artist: Raimond von Stillfried (Austrian, 1839-1911)

Medium: albumen hand-tinted

Date: circa 1870

Raimund von Stillfried, born in Austria, moved to Yokohama, Japan after his military career and opened a photography studio. He trained many Japanese photographers before moving back to Vienna, Austria in 1883. This photograph

features Japanese women, through Stillfried's photographic lens, washing clothes in a stream.

Photography offers the chance to evaluate the historical and artistic impulse inherent in the medium.

This photograph provides documentary evidence about clothing, labor, and gender in Japan around the turn of the nineteenth century. At the same time, viewers ought to question von Stillfried's artistic influence on the work.

Other themes: labor, race

Discussion questions: How significant is class in this photograph, if at all? Why might someone take a photograph of this scene? To what extent are photographs reliable sources of history? How are gender, class, labor, and culture connected?



Object # 1991.230

Title: Girls Kanagawa (Prostitutes)

Artist: unknown

Medium: albumen print hand-tinted

Dimensions: Object: 8 11/16 × 10 7/8 in. (22.1 × 27.7 cm) Sheet: 9 1/8 × 10 7/8 in. (23.2 × 27.7 cm)

Date: circa 1880

This photograph, whose photographer is unknown, shows at least thirteen women who are identified as prostitutes. This image lacks extensive research and records, so its historical value ought not be taken for

granted. Nonetheless, it provides a visual example of a complex intersection of gender, culture, labor, and class. Mediators, both male and female, would often arrange with poor farming or fishing families for women and girls in late-nineteenth century Japanese villages to go overseas allegedly for "public duty." Once paid, the mediators would sell the women and girls to the prostitution industry. Clientele would range from high to low class, and they could be from many different countries and cultures. To discuss class, one might consider architecture, clothing, labor, place, makeup, transportation, and gender in the photograph.

Other themes: labor, race

Discussion questions: What do you notice about this photograph? What questions arise? What is your emotional reaction to the subjects and/or the subject matter? What photographic details suggest evidence of class? How is labor both gendered and classed in this photograph? How is or is not this photograph a valuable and/or reliable historical document?



Object # 1995.0759.10

Title: Homeless Woman

Artist: Edward Steichen

Medium: gelatin silver print

Dimensions: Object: 13 1/8 x 10 1/2 in. (33.3 x 26.7 cm)

Date: 1932, printed 1981-82

Steichen was one of the more influential photographers in twentieth-century America. He is credited with the invention of fashion photography and aiding in the transformation of photography into an art form. *Homeless Woman* was captured by Steichen in 1932 but printed posthumously in the 1980s. The photograph features twelve black-and-white women white whom the title collapses into one

“Homeless Woman.” Taken during the Great Depression, perhaps this photo represents a common experience of poverty. In terms of class, one might consider the historical circumstances, the averse gazes of the women, clothing, age, or (dis)ability.

Discussion questions: What does homelessness look like? How does Steichen represent these women? Why might the title use the singular “woman” to describe the subjects? What can we learn about class from this image? How can we use photography to study historical events like the Great Depression?

Class and Race



Object # 2010.0012

Title: Baling Cotton

Artist: Alfred R. Waud (American, born England, 1828-1891)

Medium: wood engraving

Dimensions: Object: 9 3/16 x 12 1/8 in. (23.3 x 30.8 cm) Sheet: 15 1/16 x 11 7/16 in. (38.3 x 29.1 cm)

Date: 1871

Alfred Waud was born in England and emigrated to the United States in 1850. He is most famous for his Civil War sketches, which he completed on the battlefields. This engraving, however, was created in the Reconstruction period. A detailed artist, he represents men, women, children, animals, economic exchange, labor, material culture, and social and racial dynamics. *Baling Cotton* provides a host of discussion topics from fashion to labor, gender to animal rights, all of which participate in the racialized economic system of cotton production. Students could consider the engraving’s historical context, its representation of gendered labor, or the spacing of its subjects.

Other themes: gender, labor

Discussion questions: What strikes you about this engraving? What do you notice about the spatial arrangement of the subjects? Why do you think Waud used space in that way? How does the artist represent the relationship between gender and labor? What story does this engraving tell about post-Civil War America? How might you read the animals in this scene? How are class, race, and labor connected in this composition?



Object # 2019.0121

Title: a. New York - Incidents in the Construction by Negro Labor, of the West Shore Railway, Along the Hudson; b. New York City - Landing a Monster Shark at the Foot of Vesey Street, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, August 27, 1881, page 432

Artist: unknown

Medium: wood engraving

Dimensions: 16 x 11 in.

Date: 1881

Drawn by an unnamed staff person at *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, this image reinforces several racial stereotypes and interracial dynamics. The page contains two images, labeled A and B. The first (A) illustrates the construction of the West Shore Railway along the Hudson River, which was done by a Black (then labeled "Negro") workforce. The image overlays a construction scene which appears to include dynamite along a cliffside with two other images, one of "Italian Women Washing" and the other of a racialized and problematic depiction of Black men speaking to two white women. The second image (B) shows a group of fishermen catching a large shark in New York City. The page provides historical and artistic context for how race, labor, and gender compounded class in the Northern US in the late nineteenth century. One could ask students to analyze clothing, community, or jobs as understood by race, gender, and/or class.

Other themes: gender, labor

Discussion questions: How is labor classed in this image? Why do you think the artist chose to represent groups of people? What objects or details in the image communicate something about class? What is the relationship between the pictorial and written text(s) on the page? What value can we gain by studying this object? What risks do we take?



Object # 1995.0759.11

Title: Paul Robeson as "The Emperor Jones"

Artist: Edward Steichen

Medium: gelatin silver print

Dimensions: Object: 13 1/8 x 10 1/2 in. (33.4 x 26.7 cm) Sheet: 20 x 15 15/16 in. (50.8 x 40.5 cm)

Date: 1933, printed 1981-82

Steichen (artist behind "Homeless Woman") was one of the more influential photographers in twentieth-century America. This portrait shows Paul

Robeson, a musician, actor, and Civil Rights activist from the early to mid-twentieth century, posing as Emperor Jones, the 1930s film that launched his celebrity career. The film and Robeson address several class-related issues, including labor, slavery and its aftermath, imprisonment, and international relations between the so-called developed and developing worlds. Students might consider the photograph only, noting how Robeson's facial expression and costuming relates to class. They might also research Robeson himself, who was a political activist abroad and Civil Rights leader in the United States.

Other themes: resistance, labor, gender

Discussion questions: How is Robeson classed in this photograph? What do you make of his royal costume? What do you make of his facial expression? How does entertainment (in all its forms) influence our perceptions of class?



Object # 1969.229

Title: Mural Sketch for SS America

Artist: Constantin Alajalov (Armenian, 1900-1987)

Medium: gouache

Dimensions: 7 1/2 x 23 in

Date: 1969

Constantin Alajalov was a twentieth century Armenian-American. Born in Russia, he emigrated to the United States at age twenty-three, and within three years, Alajalov was creating illustrations and paintings for *The New Yorker* magazine. *Mural Sketch for SS America* represents a utopic vision for "America." Alajalov includes activities, entertainment, athletics, dining, and romantic experiences. It offers explicit representations of class, such as the waiters in a hurry. Further, however, Alajalov's work presents an opportunity to consider this utopia and who or what is welcome. In terms of both class and race, this object requires students to think about *absence* and its implications.

Other themes: labor, gender

Discussion questions: What is a utopia? How does this painting create a utopia? Consider its relationship to both class and race. Who does the painting represent? Who does the painting render absent? Why?



Object # 2020.0019

Title: [Black Lives Matter protest, man standing with his left fist raised]

Artist: Flo Ngala (American, born 1995)

Medium: Inkjet archival pigment

Dimensions: 7 3/4 x 11 in.

Date: 2020

Flo Ngala is a contemporary Black photographer and photojournalist based out of New York. She was born and raised in vibrant Harlem to a West African family, and her photography and photojournalism has recently taken off. She traveled with Gucci Mane and Cardi B, and her intimate portraits of the two

musicians launched her rising career. She has since worked with Facebook, Netflix, *The New York Times*, and *GQ*. Her images, like this photograph from a Black Lives Matter protest, seek to create “powerful moments with people” while always maintaining her artistic integrity. She captured a number of such moments during protests in the wake of George Floyd’s murder in the summer of 2020. This object offers many avenues to discuss class and its impacts: Ngala’s success as a young, Black, female artist, the raised fist as a symbol for (Black) power, and specific details—such as the mask and the COVID-19 pandemic—which incite relevant discussions about history, health disparity, or government regulation.

Other themes: resistance, gender

Discussion questions: How does Ngala capture her subject? What is symbolic about the photograph? How is class related to this portrait? Examine the material objects in the photograph (including the car, the mask, and the man’s clothing). How do they relate to class?

Class and Resistance

NEED IMAGE!

Object # 1988.267

Title: La Huelga

Artist: Ricardo Carpani (Argentine, 1930-1997)

Medium: oil

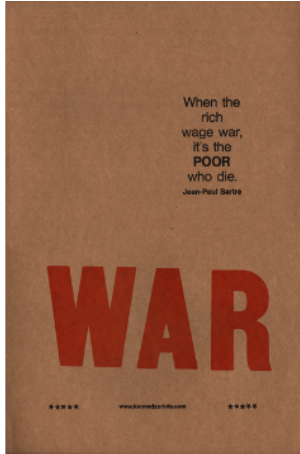
Dimensions: 79 x 64 in. (200.7 x 162.6 cm)

Date: 1963

Ricardo Carpani was an Argentinian artist in the mid-late twentieth century. He trained in Paris, France, but spent most of his life in Buenos Aires. His paintings reveal his sympathies for social causes, as most of them focus on the unemployed, working class, impoverished, and Argentine-specific nationalistic themes. *La Huelga*, which translates to The Strike, shows a stylized fist raised above a human head. Incredible detail is rendered to the knuckles, and the strength by which the fist seems clenched grants the image exceptional power. Like much of the world, Argentina experienced political and social protests in the 1960s and beyond, much of which revolved around social and labor demands, and Carpani may be addressing such issues. Whether he represents a specific or general *huelga*, the image presents a striking visual of resistance to systemic and classed problems.

Other themes: ethnicity, labor

Discussion questions: How does this image make you feel? Why do you think Carpani gave the fist so much detail and attention? Why is the face relegated to the background? Why is the fist such a powerful symbol of resistance worldwide? Can art be an effective means of resistance or revolution? Why or why not?



Object # 2011.0248

Title: “WAR When the Rich Wage War, It’s the POOR who DIE – Jean-Paul Sartre”

Artist: Amos Paul Kennedy (American, born 1950)

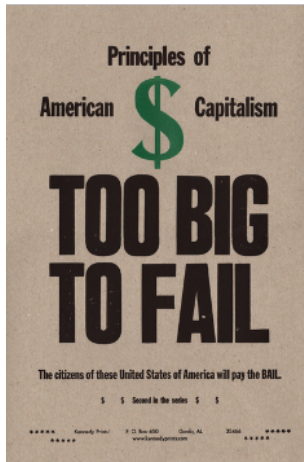
Medium: Letterpress

Dimensions: Object: 19 1/2 × 12 1/2 in. (49.5 × 31.7 cm) Sheet: 19 1/2 × 12 1/2 in. (49.5 × 31.7 cm)

Date: no date

Amos Paul Kennedy, a Black contemporary printer, book artist, and papermaker, is known widely for his posters that offer social and political commentary. He emphasizes questions that spur discomfort and reflection about, among other topics, race, social systems, and artistic pretentiousness. This poster states, via a Sartre quote, the injustice of violence that is funded by the rich yet suffered by the poor. Students might reflect on the words Kennedy printed, the stylistic choices (font, color, size, etc), or even printed posters themselves as forms of resistance.

Discussion questions: How does this poster make you feel? Why would Sartre say that about war? Why might Kennedy reprint his words? How could you explain Kennedy’s font, color, or size choices? Are posters art? Why or why not? How is (or is not) this work a form of resistance to class?



Object # 2011.0253

Title: Principles of American Capitalism TOO BIG TO FAIL The citizens of these United States of America will pay the BAIL

Artist: Amos Paul Kennedy (American, born 1950)

Medium: letterpress

Dimensions: Object: 19 1/2 × 12 1/2 in. (49.5 × 31.7 cm) Sheet: 19 1/2 × 12 1/2 in. (49.5 × 31.7 cm)

Date: n.d.

Other themes: race, labor

This work of Kennedy’s is the second of a four-poster series that indicts capitalism itself. The posters state the “principles of American capitalism” that expose the irony in bailing out corporations. Because the companies are “too big to fail,” Kennedy writes that the US citizens with “pay the bail.” The final poster in his series states a motto: “privatize profits, socialize risks.” This series not only shows Kennedy’s resistant impulse, but also names class as a systemic issue that is bound up with capitalism. Students would benefit from discussing one or all four posters in the series.

Discussion questions: How does Kennedy use irony and tone? What is the purpose of this poster (or series)? How does he criticize or question American capitalism? How is the series related to class and class systems?

Class and Ethnicity

The intersection of class and ethnicity allows students to question borders, binaries, and systems by which the world is separated. This subset includes objects that mostly feature people, economies, and issues of Central and South America. The presence of the United States, however, is still felt via the tourists and the American perspective of many of the artists. When analyzing these objects, students can ask questions about international relations, gendered forms of labor, consumer capitalism, and the tourism industry. Key ideas include movement, the market, tradition, modernity, and self- versus outsider-representation.

Other themes: gender, labor

Discussion questions: What (and whose) stories do these works tell? What is the difference between self-representation versus outsider-representation in art, and why is it significant? How do the material objects (clothing, vehicles, goods) signify class? Who are the subjects of these works, and why? In what way(s) is movement important? What is the market, and why does it matter? How do these works represent the relationship between ethnicity and class?



Object # 1967.330

Title: Tourists in Mexico

Artist: Constantin Alajálov (American, 1900-1987)

Medium: gouache pencil

Dimensions: Object: 17 1/16 × 12 5/8 in. (43.4 × 32.1 cm) Sheet: 21 1/8 × 15 1/8 in. (53.6 × 38.4 cm)

Date: 1956



Object # 1996.0012

Title: Railway Vendors-Mexico

Artist: Fritz Eichenberg

Medium: wood engraving

Dimensions: Object: 7 3/4 × 9 15/16 in. (19.7 × 25.2 cm)
Sheet: 11 1/4 × 14 1/8 in. (28.5 × 35.9 cm)

Date: 1936



Object # 1981.2030

Title: Market Patzcuaro, Mexico

Artist: Todd Webb (American, 1905-2000)

Medium: gelatin silver print

Dimensions: Object: $7 \frac{5}{8} \times 9 \frac{5}{8}$ in. (19.4 × 24.4 cm) Sheet: $8 \times 9 \frac{15}{16}$ in. (20.3 × 25.2 cm)

Date: 1965



Object # 1958.29

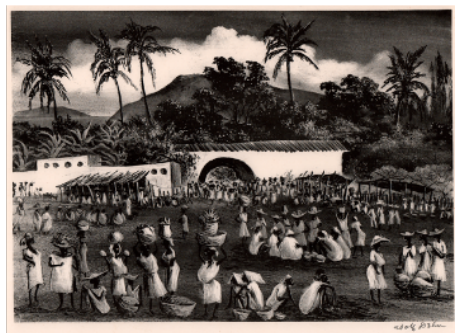
Title: Sunday Afternoon

Artist: Emilio Sanchez (American, born Cuba, 1921-1999)

Medium: color lithograph

Dimensions: $15 \times 12 \frac{1}{8}$ in

Date: 1957



Object # 1965.0698

Title: Market in Haiti

Artist: Adolf Dehn (American, 1895-1968)

Medium: lithograph

Dimensions: Object: $9 \frac{5}{8} \times 13 \frac{9}{16}$ in. (24.4 × 34.4 cm) Sheet: $12 \frac{1}{16} \times 16 \frac{1}{8}$ in. (30.6 × 40.9 cm)

Date: 1952



Object # 1999.0035

Title: Central America

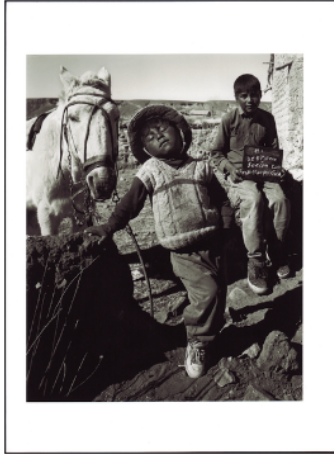
Artist: Howard Cook (American, 1901-1980)

Medium: woodcut

Dimensions: Object: $5 \frac{7}{8} \times 9 \frac{3}{16}$ in. (15 × 23.3 cm) Sheet: $6 \frac{9}{16} \times 10 \frac{15}{16}$ in. (16.6 × 27.8 cm)

Date: 1926

Other themes: labor, gender



Object # 2018.0329

Title: Young Boys, South America

Artist: Bruce Weber (American, born 1946)

Medium: digital carbon print

Dimensions: Object: 10 × 8 1/16 in. (25.4 × 20.4 cm) Sheet: 13 × 9 5/8 in. (33 × 24.5 cm)

Date: n.d.

Class and Labor

The following objects provide visual examples of different forms of labor. Students could consider the ways in which the artists represent certain types of jobs, and whether any patterns emerge. Ask students to reflect on the images and how they engage with class by way of people, jobs, uniforms, medium, space, color, infrastructure, abstraction, gender, or titles.



Object # 2004.0008

Title: The Steerage

Artist: Alfred Stieglitz (American, 1864-1946)

Medium: Photogravure

Date: 1907

(Note: this photograph depicts the separation of the upper and working classes.)



Object # 2000.0015

Title: Coal Pickers

Artist: Riva Helfond

Medium: color lithograph

Date: 1938



Object # 2004.0009

Title: Mechanic (skilled) in a modern locomotive plant, 1930's

Artist: Lewis Wickes Hine (American, 1874-1940)

Medium: Gelatin silver print

Date: circa 1930



Object # 1990.158

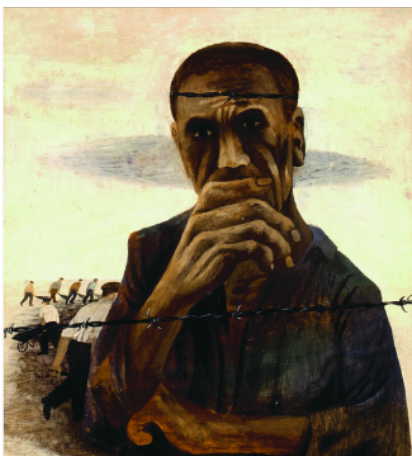
Title: Foundry

Artist: Lewis Rubenstein (American, 1908-2003)

Medium: Lithograph on wove paper

Date: 1938

(Note: a foundry is a factory for casting metal.)



Object # 1960.034

Title: 1943 AD

Artist: Ben Shahn (American, born Lithuania, 1898-1969)

Medium: Tempera

Date: circa 1943

(Note: Ben Shahn is known as one of America's most important Social Realist painters. *1943 AD* is based off a photograph the artist took of a farmer during the Depression.)



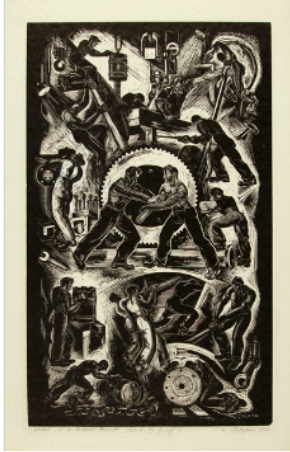
Object # 1981.2385
Title: Untitled No. 17 (women tying blinds)
Artist: Berenice Abbott (American, 1898-1991)
Medium: gelatin silver print
Date: circa 1945



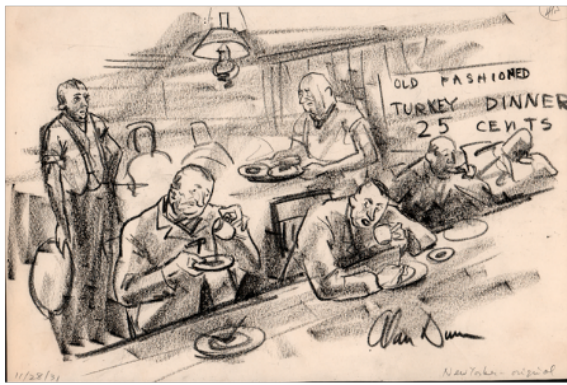
Object # 1981.2443
Title: Fishermen on a docked boat
Artist: Berenice Abbott (American, 1898-1991)
Medium: gelatin silver print
Date: circa 1965



Object # 1967.0156
Title: Day's End
Artist: Martin Lewis
Medium: drypoint
Date: 1937



Object # 1968.741
Title: Labor in a Diesel Plant
Artist: Letterio Calapi (American, 1902-1993)
Medium: wood engraving
Dimensions: Image: 15 3/4 x 9 5/8 in. (40 x 24.4 cm)
Date: 1940



Object # 1979.1863
Title: "Pssst! Not in front of the servants, Eddie."
Artist: Alan Dunn (American, 1900-1974)
Medium: crayon
Dimensions: Object: 9 1/8 x 13 1/4 in. (23.1 x 33.7 cm)
 Sheet: 9 1/8 x 13 1/4 in. (23.1 x 33.7 cm)
Date: 1931



Object # 1993.068
Title: No caption (Façade of house with two servants in window)
Artist: Mary Petty (American, 1899-1976)
Medium: crayon watercolor ink
Dimensions: Object: 9 15/16 x 19 13/16 in. (25.3 x 50.3 cm) Sheet: 13 1/2 x 22 1/2 in. (34.3 x 57.2 cm)
Date: no date



Object # 1965.0868
Title: Here is Our Music, and I Imagine it Will be First Class
Artist: William Glackens
Medium: etching
Dimensions: Object: 3 11/16 x 5 3/8 in. (9.4 x 13.7 cm)
 Sheet: 6 x 8 11/16 in. (15.3 x 22.1 cm)
Date: 1904

Class and Food

As this teaching resource was being developed, food emerged as a common theme in the objects that engaged with notions of class. This natural recurrence provided the inspiration for a subset on the ways in which class is involved with food, whether via nourishment, food insecurity, or social performances of class at restaurants. Students will likely appreciate discussing how food is related to class given the accessibility and poignancy of the topic.



Object # 1970.674

Title: Meal of the Poor

Artist: Karl Schrag (American, born in Germany, 1912-1995)

Medium: etching aquatint

Dimensions: Object: 4 15/16 × 6 15/16 in. (12.6 × 17.6 cm)

Sheet: 11 1/8 × 13 1/4 in. (28.2 × 33.7 cm)

Date: 1941



Object # 2017.0725

Title: Thanksgiving Day, 1860 The Two Great Classes of Society, Those Who Have More Dinners Than Appetite; Those Who Have More Appetite...

Artist: Winslow Homer (American, 1836-1910)

Medium: wood engraving

Date: 1860



Object # 1979.0964

Title: No caption (Sign: "Opening Here Soon, A High Class Restaurant")

Artist: Alan Dunn (American, 1900-1974)

Medium: crayon ink

Dimensions: Object: 7 3/4 × 8 3/8 in. (19.7 × 21.3 cm)

Sheet: 7 3/4 × 8 3/8 in. (19.7 × 21.3 cm)

Date: 1945



Object # 1991.117

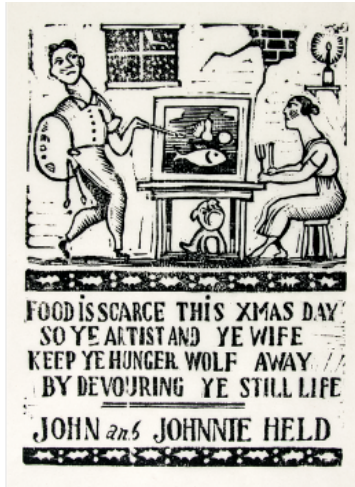
Title: Food Seller

Artist: unknown

Medium: albumen print hand-tinted

Dimensions: Object: 7 5/8 × 9 1/2 in. (19.3 × 24.2 cm) Sheet: 8 1/8 × 10 1/16 in. (20.7 × 25.5 cm)

Date: circa 1880



Object # 1988.544

Title: Food is Scarce this Xmas Day so Ye Artist and Ye Wife Keep Ye Hunger Wolf Away by Devouring Ye Still Life

Artist: John Held, Jr. (American, 1889-1958)

Medium: linocut

Dimensions: Object: 11 5/8 × 8 7/16 in. (29.6 × 21.5 cm) Sheet: 24 5/8 × 16 5/16 in. (62.5 × 41.4 cm)

Date: n.d.



Object # 1966.334

Title: Lunch Hour

Artist: Constantin Alajálov (American, 1900-1987)

Medium: gouache pencil

Dimensions: Object: 13 1/2 × 9 15/16 in. (34.3 × 25.2 cm) Sheet: 19 × 14 15/16 in. (48.2 × 38 cm)

Date: 1942

Class and “The Beggar”

“The Beggar” is a uniquely classed identity that both showcases and transcends certain national, ethnic, racial, or temporal categories. The SU Art Collection includes objects that depict “The Beggar” in seventeenth-century Europe, nineteenth-century Japan, and twentieth-century United States. Perhaps in tandem with a larger lesson or assignment on “The Beggar” as an identity, these objects provide multivalent and intersectional examples of a singular idea in a wide contextual and cultural arena. A focus on “The Beggar” could help students understand how class influences identity within, beyond, and between social, national, temporal, and racial boundaries.

Discussion questions: What does a “beggar” look like? What do you associate with the idea of the “beggar?” How do these artists represent the beggar(s)? What is similar about their representations, and what is different? Why do you think “The Beggar” is such a common or popular artistic subject?



Object # 1965.0115

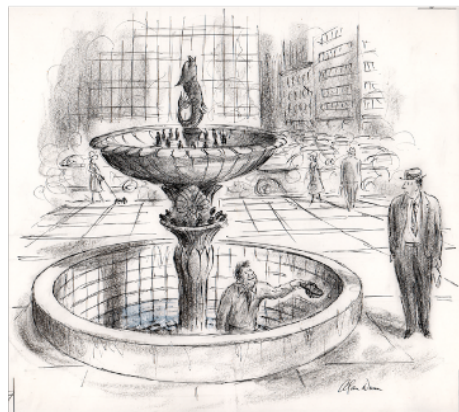
Title: Beggars receiving alms at the door of a house

Artist: Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (Dutch, 1606-1669)

Medium: etching

Dimensions: Object: 6 1/2 × 5 1/8 in. (16.5 × 13 cm) Sheet: 8 1/16 × 6 11/16 in. (20.5 × 17 cm)

Date: 1648



Object # 1982.306

Title: No caption (Beggar in fountain)

Artist: Alan Dunn (American, 1900-1974)

Medium: crayon ink

Dimensions: Object: 10 5/16 × 11 5/16 in. (26.2 × 28.8 cm)
Sheet: 10 11/16 × 11 3/4 in. (27.2 × 29.8 cm)

Date: c 1965



Object # 1966.1197

Title: Beggar

Artist: Eugene Higgins

Medium: etching drypoint

Dimensions: Object: 3 1/8 x 2 3/4 in. (8 x 7 cm) Sheet: 6 3/16 x 5 1/16 in. (15.7 x 12.8 cm)

Date: circa 1948

****NEED IMAGE****

Object # 2020.0045

Title: [Oriental Jewish beggars at the festival of LAG Ba'Omer, Meron, Israel]

Artist: Leonard Freed

Medium: Vintage gelatin silver print

Dimensions: 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.

Date: 1967



Object # 1987.141

Title: Beggar and Peasant

Artist: unknown

Medium: albumen print hand-tinted

Dimensions: Object: 9 3/4 x 7 15/16 in. (24.8 x 20.1 cm) Sheet: 9 3/4 x 7 15/16 in. (24.8 x 20.1 cm)

Date: circa 1890



Object # 1986.641

Title: Beggars Fighting Like Beasts

Artist: Rico Lebrun (American, born Italy, 1900-1964)

Medium: ink

Dimensions: 39 3/4 x 27 7/16 in

Date: 1961



Object # 1986.660

Title: Beggar

Artist: Rico Lebrun (American, born Italy, 1900-1964)

Medium: lithograph

Dimensions:

Date: 1945



Object # 1975.001C

Title: Divine Beggar

Artist: Ernst Barlach

Medium: woodcut

Dimensions: Object: 10 1/8 × 13 5/16 in. (25.7 × 33.8 cm)

Date: 1920

****NEED IMAGE****

Object # 2013.0099

Title: Seated French Beggar

Artist: Abram Tromka (American, born Poland, 1896-1954)

Medium: copper plate etching

Dimensions: Object: 4 7/8 × 7 3/4 in. (12.4 × 19.7 cm) Sheet: 4 7/8 × 7 3/4 in. (12.4 × 19.7 cm)

Date: n.d.