



Uncle Sam's Thanksgiving Dinner, from "Harper's Weekly"

Date

published November 20, 1869

Primary Maker

Thomas Nast

Medium

Wood engraving on newsprint

Description

American Reconstruction Era. "This image reflects Nast's hope for the future, that all Americans will one day celebrate democracy and equal rights together. On the dinner table, the centerpiece reads, "universal suffrage." Nast hoped that once there was universal suffrage, there would be self-governance, freedom, and equality. In the foreground, a Chinese mother tends to her child, while her husband chats with Columbia, the personification of American democracy, and black man. At the head of the table Uncle Sam carves the turkey. Nast popularized Uncle Sam, who often stands in contrast to Columbia and highlights the negative qualities of American government. In this case, Uncle Sam is the host and is responsible for this democratic celebration. Portraits of Lincoln, Washington, and Grant are in the background. Nast saw the three leaders as men whose reforms would lead to this state of equality." (SOURCE: Susanna White, "Emancipation and Denigration: Thomas Nast Pictures Black America", 2008)

Dimensions

Composition: 9 1/8 x 13 3/4 in. (23.2 x 34.9 cm) Sheet: 15 1/4 x 10 1/8 in. (38.7 x 25.7 cm)