Art and the Public Sphere offers an examination of fine art and popular culture in relation to concepts of the public through changing themes. During Fall semester 2019, we will examine social conflicts and political controversies in American culture through the lens of visual culture, including art and photography but also popular media. We will consider how visual images both reflect and participate in the social and political life of the nation and how the terms of citizenship have been represented—and, at times, contested—by artists throughout the 20th century. Students in this course will consider the relation between American art and the body politic by focusing on issues of nationalism, war, government patronage, poverty, activism, censorship, consumerism, class identity, sexuality, and race. In examining American art and social life, students will combine close attention to selected images with the broader study of historical context and conflict.