Winslow Homer (1836-1910) is perhaps best known for his oils and watercolors of the sea. However, from 1857 to 1888, Homer illustrated books and articles for several magazines, including Appleton’s Journal, Our Young Folks, and especially Harper’s Weekly, which sent him to the front during the Civil War. Homer’s realistic depictions of everyday life were extremely popular as the magazines brought his work into households across the United States. The engravings explore many themes, often paralleled in his paintings, including the Civil War, the outdoors, recreational activities, the sea, women in society, African-Americans during both the Civil War and the Reconstruction, and childhood.

The theme and specific works in the exhibition were chosen by first-year Duke University students, under the supervision of curator Dr. Jill Meredith and Ms. Robin Gibson, curatorial assistant. The Duke-Semans Fine Arts Foundation provides support for the project which includes an accompanying brochure with text written by the Duke students, and which also allows the exhibition to travel to other venues in the state. A Homer wood engraving from Guilford College’s collection is featured through the duration of the exhibition at Guilford College.