

## Featured Artifact: Iron Worker's Hard Hat

<http://historyexplorer.americanhistory.si.edu/resource/?key=3501>  
Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the Present)



**Look at the artifact presented to you. In a few sentences, respond to the following questions:**

**Describe:** Objectively describe the artifact. What do you think it is made of? What does it look like? Does it look old or new? Is it intact, or is it damaged in some way?

**Analyze:** When, where or how do you think this item was used? What kind of person may have created or used this item? What significance do you think the object held, either for the creator or the user? Do you see words or images on the artifact that connect it to others (besides the creator and user)?

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**Share your conclusions with a partner, then discuss the following:**

**Evaluate :** Justify why you came to those conclusions about the artifact. What further questions do you have about the object? Of those questions, which could you solve by observing the object in person and which would you need to solve with research?

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## Background Information

You can find more photos of Dennis Quinn and information about the recovery efforts after September 11<sup>th</sup> here: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/september11/collection/record.asp?ID=142>

Description: This hard hat was worn by an iron worker from Chicago, Illinois, who came to New York to help clear the debris of the World Trade Center.

Context: After the Twin Towers collapsed, construction workers from around the country came to New York to offer their skills in removing the tons of debris. Dennis Quinn traveled by car from Chicago with four fellow iron workers to join the rescue effort. Starting on September 17, he worked for six weeks (8 hours a day, seven days a week) untangling and removing the debris pile.

**After reading and considering the background information, compose a response to the following:**

**Analyze:** Address the following object-specific questions:

- Do you remember the events of September 11, 2001? How did you react to these events?
- Why do you think people like Dennis Quinn felt compelled to travel to New York City to help with recovery from September 11<sup>th</sup>?

**Synthesize:** What does this object tell us about the era in which it was created, or the American experience as a whole? How would you describe the social, economic, or political climate of America during this time? What connections can you make between this object and other things that you have seen, read, or experienced?

**Analyze:** Address the following era-specific questions:

- How have economic, social and cultural developments in contemporary America shaped who we are as a country today?
- What is the United States' role in the world at large, and how can we adapt to an ever-changing globe?