



Carl Kunz, *Silversmith's Shop*, 1838

## All for a hat

A fine beaver hat was a fashion statement for wealthy Europeans and Americans from about 1600 until the 1840s. The word "beaver" came to describe the hat as well as the animal. By the 1850s, silk hats replaced the beavers as the most fashionable topper.

**WOW:** Remember the Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland*? Many hatters did indeed go "mad" from inhaling vapors from the mercury they used to shape hats. Constant exposure to this chemical ate away parts of their brains. YUK!

"Doffing," or removing your hat in the presence of your social superior, was done all over Europe. In theory, everyone but the king was both doffed at AND a doffer.



Hatters "Kettle" several Stages of Hat-making.

Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of Susanna Lunden*, 1622



Artist unknown, *Lady Promenading in a Park*, about 1780



Jacques-Louis David, *Portrait of Pierre Seriziat*, 1795

