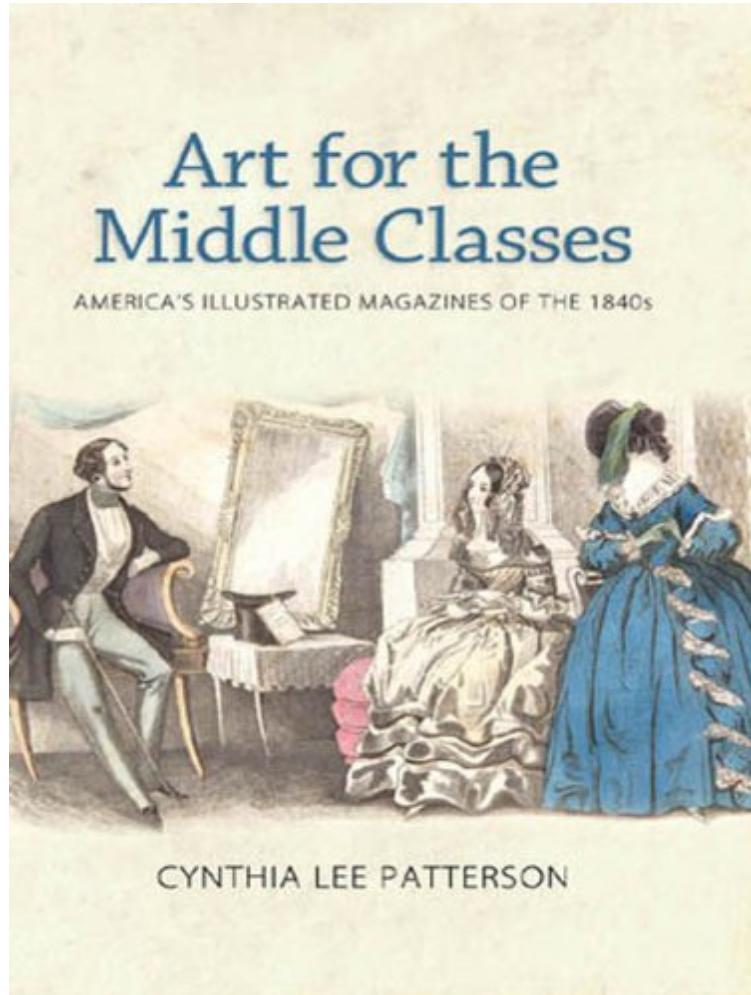


(Free read ebook) Art for the Middle Classes: America's Illustrated Magazines of the 1840s

## Art for the Middle Classes: America's Illustrated Magazines of the 1840s

*Cynthia Lee Patterson*  
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**Cynthia Lee Patterson : Art for the Middle Classes: America's Illustrated Magazines of the 1840s** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Art for the Middle Classes: America's Illustrated Magazines of the 1840s:

How did the average American learn about art in the mid-nineteenth century? With public art museums still in their infancy, and few cities and towns large enough to support art galleries or print shops, Americans relied on mass-circulated illustrated magazines. One group of magazines in particular, known collectively as the Philadelphia pictorials, circulated fine art engravings of paintings, some produced exclusively for circulation in these monthlies, to

an eager middle-class reading audience. These magazines achieved print circulations far exceeding those of other print media (such as illustrated gift books, or catalogs from art-union membership organizations). Godey's, Graham's, Peterson's, Miss Leslie's, and Sartain's Union Magazine included two to three fine art engravings monthly, "tipped in" to the fronts of the magazines, and designed for pull-out and display. Featuring the work of a fledgling group of American artists who chose American rather than European themes for their paintings, these magazines were crucial to the distribution of American art beyond the purview of the East Coast elite to a widespread middle-class audience. Contributions to these magazines enabled many an American artist and engraver to earn, for the first time in the young nation's history, a modest living through art. Author Cynthia Lee Patterson examines the economics of artistic production, innovative engraving techniques, regional imitators, the textual "illustrations" accompanying engravings, and the principal artists and engravers contributing to these magazines.

Cynthia Patterson's comprehensive *Art for the Middle Classes: American's Illustrated Magazines of the 1840s* studies the "embellishments" that provided art to eager middle-class readers of the "Philadelphia Pictorials," the five monthly magazines that reigned supreme in the U.S. in the 1840s. Drawing on archival materials concerning the relationships among editors, artists, and writers, the nature of the reading audiences, new technologies of image reproduction, and the economics of distribution patterns and practices, Patterson argues that these periodical embellishments, virtually ignored in histories of art, are artifacts of broad historical, literary, and artistic significance. Lavishly illustrated and engagingly written, *Art for the Middle Classes* is an essential contribution to the fields of book history, periodicals, and American cultural history. Susan Belasco, professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and past president of the Research Society for American Periodicals, has produced many splendid studies of the popular arts, printing technology, publishing economics, magazine journalism, and middle-class consumer culture. *Art for the Middle Classes* is distinctive and extraordinarily useful, because it integrates all of these strains of historical research and more. It is a wide-ranging, meticulously researched, and wonderfully readable evocation of popular magazine art in 1840s America. David Paul Nord, professor of journalism and adjunct professor of history at Indiana University, Bloomington and author of *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America* and *From the Inside Flap: A history of the periodicals that brought art and sophistication to a rising bourgeoisie in the heartland*, About the Author Cynthia Lee Patterson, Bartow, Florida, is assistant professor of English at University of South Florida Polytechnic. Her articles have appeared in *American Periodicals*, *Journal of American History*, and the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*.