

Splish Splash, Splish Splash: Concepts of Hygiene in Women's Prescriptive Literature Making of the Middle Class

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Splish Splash, Splish Splash: Concepts of Hygiene in Women's Prescriptive Literature Making of the Middle Class

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Abstract

As the author of the conduct guide, *Hints to Young Ladies*, Porter is significant for several reasons. First, Porter's geographic situation and proximity to the Boston publishing market is important because this essay examines early nineteenth century urbanization and the expansion of the book industry in the Northeast and MidAtlantic. Changing demographic patterns as Americans moved to urban areas renewed debates over how one should fashion their appearance as a marker of socioeconomic status. Because this essay draws from prescriptive literature, it is also important to trace the growth of the book industry to understand where these works were published and distributed. In addition to locale, the content of Porter's guide is equally important.

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