

## Art Dealing in Nineteenth-Century England: The Case of Thomas Agnew

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### Abstrak

Thomas Agnew (1794&ndash1871) was the founder of the English firm of art dealers and print publishers, Thomas Agnew & Sons, Ltd. Based originally in Manchester, his firm became the most successful of all art dealers in nineteenth-century Britain, one that still flourishes in London today. Focusing on the case of Thomas Agnew and his son William, the purpose of this paper is to explore the emergence of professional art dealing in nineteenth-century England and to locate this practice within the contexts of middle-class identity formation and conspicuous consumption. Through a detailed examination of Agnew&rsquo;s practices and dealings, the paper seeks to address the role played by art dealers in fashioning art patronage and collecting as a distinct discourse in this pivotal period in the cultural history of England