

The volume strives to suggest the role historical understanding can contribute to debates over contemporary issues. Thus, while it devotes a fair portion of its content to eighteenth-century affairs, it will probably be more useful if used in connection with course modules where twentieth-century figures are placed in the situation of looking back in time to debate the extent and meaning of original intent within the Constitution. If you enjoy drawing your students into discussions of the contemporary relevance of the Madisonian view of politics, this could serve you well. Be cautioned, however, that Nardo's summaries presuppose that each question has one basic positive and one basic negative argument--presented in summaries so carefully prepared that students may be tempted to deliver, rather than to formulate, a position. In that important sense the book may serve debates better than discussions.

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Eve Kornfeld. *Margaret Fuller: A Brief Biography with Documents*. Boston & New York: Bedford Books, 1997. Pp. xiii, 252. Paper, \$8.50; ISBN 0-312-12009-5.

Margaret Fuller was well known in early nineteenth-century America as a writer, philosopher, feminist, and activist. She was part of the Transcendentalist movement, a friend and colleague (and often a critic) of Ralph Waldo Emerson, the first editor of the Transcendentalists' journal, the *Dial*, and the first American woman journalist to serve as a foreign correspondent. Yet she remains virtually unknown to Americans today. In this brief biography, Eve Kornfeld, professor of history at San Diego State University, attempts to convey the essential elements of Fuller's life and her struggle to create a personal identity that would enable her to live a "fully human life" without what she considered to be artificial constraints based on gender, class, or race.

The first seven chapters of the book describe Fuller's childhood and education, her involvement with the Transcendentalists, the development of her feminist social vision, her work as literary critic for the *Dial* and Horace Greeley's *New York Daily Tribune*, and her sojourn in Rome during the Italian Revolution. Kornfeld admirably weaves background information about the time period together with an analysis of events in Fuller's life to produce a balanced account that still allows for diverse interpretation. Yet, because this is a brief biography, several areas of her life and times are not fully covered, leaving open possibilities for inquiring students to do further research. The second half of the book contains samples of the letters and writings by Fuller and contemporary responses to her.

Clearly, Kornfeld wrote this book for use in undergraduate classes. Her crisp, precise, jargon-free writing conveys the complexity of Fuller's philosophy without sounding patronizing. In particular, Kornfeld's excellent summary of Transcendental philosophy and Fuller's feminist critique of the central core values of

Transcendentalism are written in such a way as to be accessible to undergraduate students. In the appendix, Kornfeld includes a chronology of Fuller's life, a concise bibliography, and questions for consideration.

Kornfeld's explanatory footnotes are also a very welcome addition. Fuller often included references in her writing to figures from ancient Greece and Rome which many students today most likely would not recognize. In her *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, for example, Fuller writes: "More obvious is the meaning of these three forms, the Diana, Minerva, and Vesta." Without Kornfeld's footnote explaining the origin of these references in Roman mythology, the significance of this allusion might not be "obvious" to today's students.

To increase the impact and foster greater class discussion, instructors might find it useful to require students to read the documents together with the section of the biography to which they pertain rather than reading all the biography and then all the documents. While the biographical section describes, assesses, and analyzes her life, the documents reveal Margaret Fuller the person--her recollections, thoughts, emotions, and personality. By juxtaposing historical analysis and interpretation with primary documents, students can gain a greater understanding of both Margaret Fuller and the historian's craft.

This is an excellent book for use in American history, American studies, and women's studies classes.

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Kenneth G. Alferts, C. Larry Pool, William Mugleston, eds. *Perspectives on America, Volume 2: Readings in United States History From 1877*. New York: American Heritage Custom Publishing, 1997. Pp. v, 234. Paper, \$22.97; ISBN 0-8281-0097-1.

In *Readings in United States History* editors Kenneth G. Alferts, C. Larry Pool, and William Mugleston have compiled articles that include some very well-known events and people in American history, such as George Armstrong Custer and the Battle of the Little Big Horn, steel magnate Andrew Carnegie and his influence on American society and the Industrial Revolution, the Populist Movement of the 1890s, the causes and consequences of the Stock Market Crash of 1929, the "man of the century"—Franklin D. Roosevelt, the controversial Lydon B. Johnson, and finally the equally frustrating war conducted by LBJ—the Vietnam War.

In addition to the more obvious choices, the editors have included stories of lesser known events and their heroes and heroines. Some examples here would be Mary Ellen McCormack and her case that began the legal struggle for protection against child abuse, the Supreme Court's decision that undermined the Civil Rights Act