

# Margaret Fuller

1810–1850



**WHY SHE MADE HISTORY** Margaret Fuller was the first American feminist. She championed the rights of women in the early 1800s.



*As you read the biography below, consider how Fuller lived. In what ways was her life different from the lives of most women in the early 1800s?*



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Various reform movements such as women's rights began to find support in the early 1800s. Scholars consider Margaret Fuller the first American feminist. She was a champion of equal rights for women in a time when most people thought that women belonged at home caring for their families. Margaret Fuller challenged the ideas of her time.

Fuller was born in 1810. She lived in the Boston area and spent time with New England transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson. She held her own in intense philosophical discussions with Emerson. She also taught for a time in a school started by Bronson Alcott.

Fuller had gifts for languages and for public speaking. She supported herself by holding a series of "conversations." She led philosophical discussions in these paid seminars held exclusively for women. Fuller published books on philosophy and translations of German poets and literary critics. In her account of travels along the Great Lakes, she told of the mistreatment of Native Americans by land-hungry whites. She was the first woman allowed to use library resources at Harvard University.

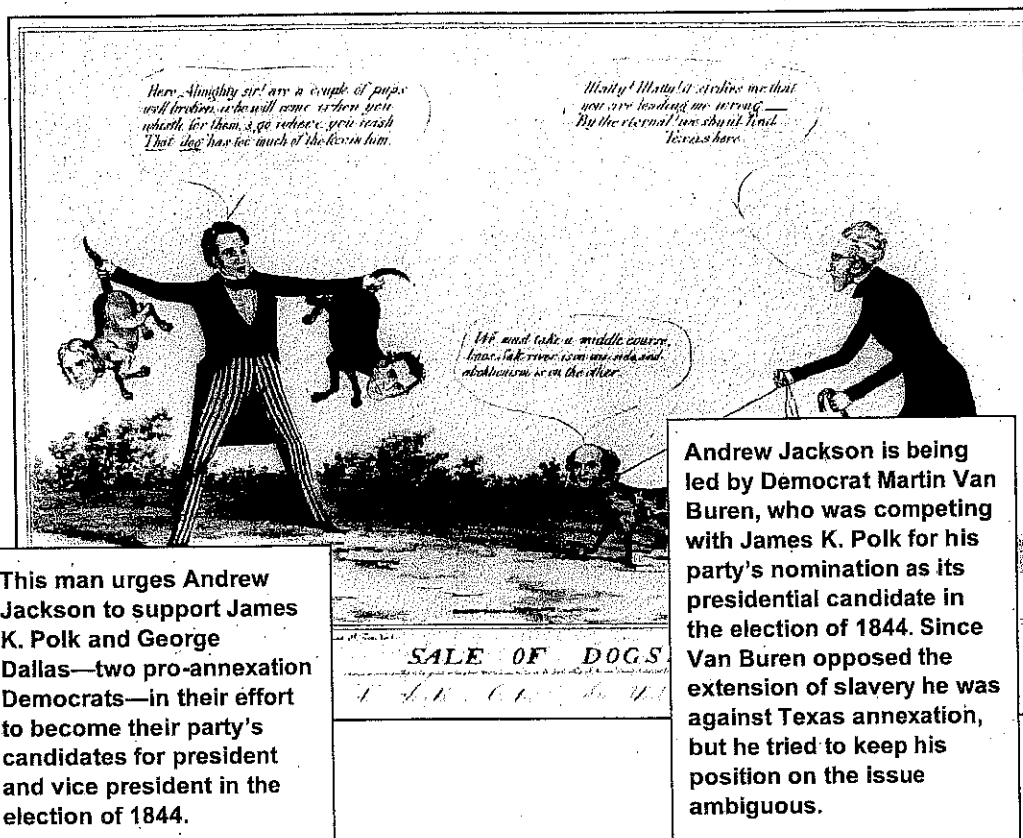
After working for a time on *The Dial*, a magazine started by the transcendentalists, Horace Greeley invited Fuller to become literary critic of his *New York Daily Tribune*. She also wrote about urban poverty and women's suffrage for the *Tribune*. She was so talented that Greeley sent her to Europe as a foreign correspondent. This was a first for American women in newspaper work.

When Fuller arrived in Italy, the country was involved in a revolution. Fuller had a relationship and a son with an Italian noble active in the revolution, Marchese Giovanni Angelo d'Ossoli. When the revolution failed, Fuller, Ossoli, and their year-old son left for New York. The captain of the ship they sailed on died during the voyage. During a storm the ship ran aground off Fire Island, on the New York coast. Fuller and her family were among those who perished. She was just 40 years old.

# Cartoon 17

# Political Cartoons

## Annexation of Texas



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### ANALYZING POLITICAL CARTOONS

Study the political cartoon, and then answer the questions that follow.

1. What does the cartoon suggest about Andrew Jackson's influence in the Democratic Party at this time, years after he had left the presidency?

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2. Why would Van Buren's opposition to slavery lead him to oppose Texas annexation?

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3. Which of the candidates in the cartoon eventually won the Democratic nomination and then the presidency?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **A Push for Reform**

## **Biography**

The manuscript of a book on the Italian revolution was thought to be among Fuller's things on the ship. Emerson sent his friend Henry David Thoreau to walk the beaches of the island in search of the book. The manuscript was never found.

### **WHAT DID YOU LEARN?**

1. **Recall** Review Margaret Fuller's professional life. What positions did she hold in her lifetime?

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2. **Analysis** How did Fuller influence the women of her day?

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### **ACTIVITY**

Learn more about the transcendentalists as a group. Read some of the writings of Emerson, Thoreau, and others. Identify key themes in the works of the transcendentalists, and write a short paper discussing the influence of these ideas in Fuller's life.

# Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave

Frederick Douglass



**ABOUT THE READING** As a boy, Frederick Douglass was given as a slave to a family in Baltimore, where he learned to read and write. He eventually escaped slavery and became a speaker and writer for the abolitionist movement. *Narrative* is an account of his experiences as a slave as well as an argument against slavery.



*As you read the passage below, pay attention to what slaves did to protect themselves and to have a sense dignity. The following words might be new to you: **sundered, ascertain, execrate.** You may want to use a dictionary to look them up.*

To describe the wealth of Colonel Lloyd would be almost equal to describing the riches of Job. He kept from ten to fifteen house-servants. He was said to own a thousand slaves, and I think this estimate quite within the truth. Colonel Lloyd owned so many that he did not know them when he saw them; nor did all the slaves of the out-farms know him. It is reported of him, that, while riding along the road one day, he met a colored man, and addressed him in the usual manner of speaking to colored people on the public highways of the south: "Well, boy, whom do you belong to?" "To Colonel Lloyd," replied the slave. "Well, does the colonel treat you well?" "No, sir," was the ready reply. "What, does he work you too hard?" "Yes, sir." "Well, don't he give you enough to eat?" "Yes, sir, he gives me enough, such as it is."

The colonel, after ascertaining where the slave belonged, rode on; the man also went on about his business, not dreaming that he had been conversing with his master. He thought, said, and heard nothing more of the matter, until two or three weeks afterwards. The poor man was then informed by his overseer that, for having found fault with his master, he was now to be sold to a Georgia trader. He was immediately chained and handcuffed; and thus, without a moment's warning, he was snatched away, and forever **sundered**, from his family and friends, by a hand more unrelenting than death. This is the penalty of telling the truth, of telling the simple truth, in answer to a series of plain questions.

It is partly in consequence of such facts, that slaves, when inquired of as to their condition and the character of their masters, almost universally say