
The Radical Margaret Fuller

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Abstract

In 1846, Margaret Fuller took her long-delayed trip to Europe, supporting her travels by writing a total of 37 dispatches for Horace Greeley's New-York Daily Tribune. The trajectory of these dispatches is simultaneously personal and political: Fuller's concerns for the roles of women in society articulated in *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* coalesce in the dispatches as she becomes more exposed to impoverishment, both her own and others'. Her increasing need for immediate financial support develops in parallel both to her production of an Italian family and to the Risorgimento-the "resurgence" or unification-movement in 1840s and 1850s Italy. As her own son struggles to grow, children become increasingly important to the narrative that develops from these dispatches, as does Fuller's castigation of the rich who oppress the poor, whether these rich become symbolized by Pope Pius IX, by her American readership who live in and profit from their slaveholding country, or by the American tourists she meets in Italy, who, she laments, have their eyes so resoundingly closed to the republican-and socialist-movements of European states. In this paper, I compare Fuller's increasingly radical representation of the developments of revolution in Europe with three other 1848 literary sources: coverage of international events in the New-York paper, the *Evening Post*; discussions of communism and concerns about German immigrants in the US-based German-language newspaper, the *Deutsche Schnellpost*; and the pamphlet so instrumental to many people's movements, Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engel's *The Communist Manifesto*. Read together, these sources demonstrate a tension in Fuller's writing between a deep-seated acceptance and abhorrence of bourgeois sentimentality and lifestyle, a political tension that indicates the competing discourses in which she is involved-represented most flatly by her bourgeois upbringing and her increasing financial stress in Italy.

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