

## The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child (New Americanists)

Carolyn L. Karcher



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For half a century Lydia Maria Child was a household name in the United States. Hardly a sphere of nineteenth-century life can be found in which Lydia Maria Child did not figure prominently as a pathbreaker. Although best known today for having edited Harriet A. Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, she pioneered almost every department of nineteenth-century American letters—the historical novel, the short story, children's literature, the domestic advice book, women's history, antislavery fiction, journalism, and the literature of aging. Offering a panoramic view of a nation and culture in flux, this innovative cultural biography (originally published by Duke University Press in 1994) recreates the world as well as the life of a major nineteenth-figure whose career as a writer and social reformer encompassed issues central to American history.

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