

Kate Field: The Many Lives of a Nineteenth-Century American Journalist (Writing American Women)

Gary Scharnhorst



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Kate Field was among the first celebrity journalists. A literary and cultural sensation, she reported the news while frequently becoming news herself because of her sharp wit and vibrant presence. She wrote for several prestigious newspapers, such as the Boston Post, Chicago Tribune, and New York Herald, as well her own Kate Field's Washington. Field's friends and professional acquaintances included Charles Dickens, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Anthony Trollope, and George Eliot. Legendary novelist Henry James patterned the character of Henrietta Stackpole after her in The Portrait of a Lady. In this eloquent and immensely readable biography, Gary Scharnhorst offers a fascinating, often poignant portrait of a fiercely intelligent and enormously independent woman who contributed significantly to America's intellectual and social life in the late nineteenth century. Kate Field was an outspoken advocate for the rights of black Americans and founder of the first woman's club in America. She campaigned to make Yosemite a national park and saved John Brown's Adirondack farm for the nation. The range of Field's activities should foster interest in her biography from students and scholars of nineteenth-century American literature, women's studies, journalism, and biography, and from both public and academic libraries.

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