

**Volume 3**

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**George Sand**

**Lead: In November 1830 in a chateau in central France, an unhappy 26-year-old woman discovered in her husband's desk a fat envelope on which was written her name and the words, "Only to be Opened After My Death." For the Baroness Aurore Dudevant it became cause for her declaration of independence.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: In the packet, her husband Casimir had poured out volumes of bitterness and rancor built**

**up in their years of marriage. For Aurore the role of dutiful wife and mother of their two young ones had never been particularly agreeable and the letter seemed good cause to break away from a man with whom she had little in common and whom she considered a drunken idler. Though her inheritance had provided the family its income, a married woman in that era had little rights to her own money therefore when Madame Dudevant left for Paris she had to make her living as a writer.**

**She quickly began selling her work, but it was her lifestyle that scandalized Paris and eventually the literary world. She adopted masculine clothing, including trousers and a top**

hat, but even more titillating was her sexual life which involved a long series of lovers most prominent of which was the composer Frederick Chopin. To increase the sale of her books Dudevant took a pseudonym, eventually settling on the sexually neutral George Sand.

Under that name her output was prodigious, averaging twenty pages a day. Sand produced 70 novels, 24 plays, a huge autobiography, numerous essays and thousands of letters. Her subject matter ranged from pirates to priests and covered the surface of human experience, but is generally considered by most modern critics to be tedious and mediocre. She desired to live as a man, independent

**and self-sufficient, but with all the feminine attributes: good mother, housekeeper and lover. “My profession, she said, “is to be free.” In that she was an inspiration to many women in later years who wished to break their dependence upon men.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

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