



## Ennobling the Trivial: Susan Sontag's The Volcano Lover

*Margit Speiser*

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Sontag's perception of herself as primarily a fiction writer is contrasted sharply with her fame as a celebrity literary critic and essay writer. Her first essay collection *Against Interpretation* (1966) established her work as a critic and became a model of her idiomatic prose style. Sontag's idea of the novel as a form of art which "people with serious and sophisticated taste in the other arts can take seriously" inspired the author Margit Speiser to more closely examine *The Volcano Lover* the third of Sontag's four novels a remake of the multiply recycled story of the "tria juncta in uno" - Sir William Hamilton Emma Hamilton and Admiral Lord Nelson. Love stories and romances are generally considered by critics and scholars to be trivial/light/debased fiction. How did Sontag "ennoble" her love story make it look more academic to capture their attention with a "mere" romance? Based on this central question the author analyzed the text with a view to literary genres narrative strategies writing techniques and gender aspects. This book is aimed at high school students and university undergraduates but could also be of interest for readers of contemporary literature."



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