



• Photo courtesy of Associated Press

# Edith Wharton at Yale

*A Conference in Honor of R. W. B. Lewis  
Sponsored by the Edith Wharton Society*

Yale University  
New Haven, Connecticut  
April 28-30, 1995

## COVER PHOTO

Edith Wharton at the June 20, 1923 Yale University commencement ceremony at which she received an honorary Doctorate of Letters. In his speech of presentation, Professor William Lyon Phelps described Wharton as an

American novelist of international fame. Chevalier of the Legion of Honour in France. For nearly twenty-five years she has produced novels, some of the most notable being "The House of Mirth," "Ethan Frome," "The Age of Innocence." Her books are marked by sincerity in art, beauty in construction, distinction in style. She writes short stories and full-length works with equal skill. She is a master in the creation of original and living characters, and her powers of ironical description are exerted to salutary ends. She is a realist in the best sense of the word, revealing the inner nature of men and women without recourse to sensationalism and keeping ever within the boundaries of true art. She holds a universally recognized place in the front rank of the world's living novelists. She has elevated the level of American literature. We are proud that she is an American and especially proud to enroll her name among the daughters of Yale.

*The Yale Alumni Weekly* (6 July 1923)

### Conference Co-Directors:

Clare Colquitt, San Diego State University  
Susan Goodman, University of Delaware  
Candace Waid, Yale University

Edith Wharton at Yale is the fourth conference sponsored by the Edith Wharton Society, an organization dedicated to the study and appreciation of the life and works of Edith Wharton. Organizing this conference was a collective effort to which many contributed. Deserving special thanks are:

- The Smart Family Foundation
- The Whitney Humanities Center
- The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- Department of English, Yale University
- The University of Delaware
- San Diego State University
- Sheila Brewer, Whitney Humanities Center
- Julia Ehrhardt, Yale University
- Jennifer Greeson, Yale University
- Helen Killoran, Ohio University, Lancaster
- David Marshall, Director, Whitney Humanities Center
- Scott Marshall, Edith Wharton Restoration, Lenox
- Barbara Schloss, San Diego State University
- Patti Smith, Department of English, Yale University
- Patricia Willis, Curator of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- Annette Zilversmit, Editor, *Edith Wharton Review*, Long Island University, Brooklyn

## FRIDAY, APRIL 28

**2:00 p.m.** Wharton Book Party, Bookhaven  
290 York St.

**3:00 p.m.** Conference registration

**4:00 p.m. Plenary session: Visions of Edith Wharton**  
Whitney Humanities Center  
53 Wall St.

*Welcome: David Marshall, Director, Whitney Humanities Center, and Patricia Willis, Curator of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*

**Linda Wagner-Martin**, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: Chair

**Cynthia Griffin Wolff**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology: "Edith Wharton and the Ladies' Matinee"

**Shari Benstock**, University of Miami, Coral Gables: "Edith Wharton: Victorian Lady and Modern Woman"

**5:30 p.m. Reception and special exhibit from the Beinecke Wharton holdings**  
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
121 Wall St.

**8:00 p.m. An Unnatural Woman, A Play by Scotti Sween**, starring Claire Hart-Palumbo  
Whitney Humanities Center, Auditorium

## SATURDAY, APRIL 29

**9:00-10:30 a.m. Small group sessions** (four panels)  
William L. Harkness Hall (WLH)  
100 Wall St.

### Images of Wharton: WLH 207

**Carol J. Singley**, Rutgers University: Chair

**Janet Beer Goodwyn**, Roehampton Institute, London: "Life and I" and "Literature": Edith Wharton's Childhood Awakenings to Literature and Language"

**Viola Hopkins Winner**, University of Virginia: "Edith Wharton and the Importance of Dress"

**Kathy Fedorko**, Middlesex Community College: "Re-membering" Athena in Wharton's Life and Work"

**Eleanor Dwight**, New School for Social Research: "Reading the Visual Clues to Edith Wharton's Personality: Pictures and Places"

### Framing a Life: WLH 202

**Alfred Bendixen**, California State University, Los Angeles: Chair

**Jean Frantz Blackall**, Cornell University: "1895: Edith Wharton's Silent Year"

**Mary Ann Caws**, City University of New York: "Framing, Sighting, and Self-Writing: John Ruskin and Edith Wharton"

**Penelope Vita-Finzi**, Independent Scholar, London: "Italian Backgrounds: Edith Wharton's Debt to Vernon Lee"

**Helen Killoran**, Ohio University, Lancaster: "Edith Wharton Reads Biography"

#### Artifice and Aesthetics: WLH 203

**Frederick Wegener**, St. John's University: Chair

**Katherine Joslin**, Western Michigan University: "Architectonic or Episodic?: Edith Wharton, Gender, and *The Fruit of the Tree*"

**Heather K. Thomas**, Loyola College in Maryland: "*The Decoration of Houses*, Nineteenth-Century Merchandising Techniques, and Edith Wharton's Aesthetic Theory"

**Sarah Bird Wright**, College of William and Mary: "Refracting the Odyssey: Edith Wharton's Travel Texts as the Cultural Capital of Her Fiction"

**Suzanne W. Jones**, University of Richmond: "*The Decoration of Houses* and Edith Wharton's Fiction"

#### Wharton and Popular Culture: WLH 204

**Carole Shaffer-Koros**, Kean College: Chair

**Karen R. Hamer**, Southern Oregon State College: "'Break[ing] Up the Text So Brutally': *Ladies' Home Journal* and *A Backward Glance*"

**Kristin Lauer**, Fordham University: "Lioness of a Warm Winter: A Refusal to Deplore Edith Wharton's Latent Sentimentalism"

**Jessica Levine**, University of California, Berkeley: "Discretion and Recuperation in *The Old Maid*: Wharton Takes on the Philistines"

**Eileen Connell**, University of Virginia: "The Perils of Individualism: Edith Wharton's Early Representations of America's Turn-of-the-Century 'Divorce Disease'"

**10:30-11:00 a.m.** **Coffee break: WLH 309**  
William L. Harkness Hall

**11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** **Small group sessions** (four panels)  
William L. Harkness Hall

#### Dismantling Wharton's Houses of Mirth I: WLH 202

**Jenni Dyman**, Arapahoe Community College: Chair

**Annette Zilversmit**, Long Island University, Brooklyn: "The Politics of Revision: Through the Gaze of the Beinecke Manuscripts of *The House of Mirth*"

**Richard Kaye**, Princeton University: "Textual Hermeneutics and the Passive Male: Edith Wharton's Revisions of *The House of Mirth* and the Resistance to American Literary Naturalism"

**Chitra Viraraghavan**, Tufts University: "Hidden Ingredients: Eating and Discomfort in Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth*"

**Stephanie Batcos**, University of Delaware: "The Moral Education of Lily Bart and Gwendolyn Harleth"

#### Literary Relations: WLH 207

**Esther Lanigan**, College of William and Mary: Chair

**Adeline R. Tintner**, Independent Scholar, New York City: "Louis Auchincloss's Three Lives of Edith Wharton"

**Susan Koprince**, University of North Dakota: "Wharton and Longfellow"

**Donna M. Campbell**, Buffalo State College: "Lily Triumphant: Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth*, and *Susan Lenox*"

**Deborah Clarke**, Pennsylvania State University: "Dangerous Sanctuaries: Imperiled Autonomy in Wharton and Faulkner"

#### Yrs, Edith: The Correspondence: WLH 203

**Alan Price**, Pennsylvania State University, Hazleton: Chair

**Claudine Lesage**, University of Amiens: "Léon Bélugou, l'Ami Français"

**Daniel Bratton**, Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto, and Youngdong Institute of Technology, Youngdong, Korea: "The Letters of Edith Wharton and Louis Bromfield"

**Sharon Shaloo**, Independent Scholar, Arlington, Massachusetts: "Edith Wharton and Mary Cadwalader Jones: A Literary Sisterhood"

**Ellen Dupree**, University of Nevada, Reno: "The Meaning of a Selling Success: Edith Wharton's Move to Appleton"

#### Texts and Contexts: WLH 204

**Judith L. Sensibar**, Arizona State University: Chair

**Jerome Loving**, Texas A&M University: "The Death of Romance: Lily Bart and the 1908 *Portrait of a Lady*"

**Elizabeth Keyser**, Hollins College: "*The Age of Innocence*: 'A Backward Glance' at 'The Major Phase'"

**Ludger Brinker**, Macomb College: "Edith Wharton Meets the New York Intellectuals; or, The New New York Responds to the Old New York: A Study in Reception History"

**Frederick Wegener**, St. John's University: "Trembling Like an Aspen: Edith Wharton's Struggles as a Critical Writer"

**12:30-1:30 p.m.** **Lunch:** Rose Alumni House  
232 York St.

**1:30-3:00 p.m.** **Plenary session: Problems of Biography**  
Rose Alumni House

**Linda Peterson**, Yale University: Chair

**R. W. B. Lewis**, Yale University: "Life into Writing/Writing into Life"

**Patricia Bosworth**, New York City: "Private and Public: A Daughter's Reflections on Writing about Her Father"

**Charlotte Margolis Goodman**, Skidmore College: "A Backward Glance: Rethinking Women's Biography in the Postmodern Era"

**3:00-3:30 p.m.** **Coffee break:** William L. Harkness Hall 309

3:30-5:00 p.m. **Small group sessions** (four panels)  
William L. Harkness Hall

**The War at Home: WLH 202**

**Mary Suzanne Schriber**, Northern Illinois University: Chair

**Judith L. Sensibar**, Arizona State University: "What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?": Gender Confusion in Wharton's War Writing and Post-War Fiction"

**Sarah Kilborne**, Scholar-in-Residence, Wistariahurst Museum, Holyoke, Massachusetts: "Edith Wharton the Philanthropist: In Context"

**Jacquelyn M. Scott**, Arizona State University: "Summer: Wharton's Revision of Individual Bond/age in Community"

**Valérie Baudier**, Yale University: "Edith Wharton's Fathers and Fatherlands"

**Autographs and Autobiographies: WLH 203**

**Windy Counsell**, University of Delaware: Chair

**Jennifer Swift**, SUNY, Buffalo: "Great Grandfather Stevens's Eagle Andirons and Great Grandmother's Bible: Edith Wharton's Invented Genealogy in *A Backward Glance*"

**Manuela Thurner**, Yale University: "Woman or Writer?: Strategies of Self-Representation in Edith Wharton's *A Backward Glance*"

**Hildegard Hoeller**, Muhlenberg College: "Love and Letters: The Janus-Headed Edith Wharton"

**Alan Price**, Pennsylvania State University, Hazleton: "Mrs. Wharton, Never 'Mrs. Edith Wharton': The Significance of Names"

**Edith Wharton: Friends and Family: WLH 204**

**Janet Beer Goodwyn**, Roehampton Institute, London: Chair

**Carol J. Singley**, Rutgers University: "Abiding Loyalties: Elisina Tyler's Diary and Wharton's Last Months of Life"

**Mia Manzulli**, New York University: "Keeping Up with the Joneses": Edith Jones Wharton and Beatrix Jones Farrand"

**Elsa Nettels**, College of William and Mary: "Edith Wharton and Zona Gale"

**Fictions and Fashions: WLH 207**

**Helen Killoran**, Ohio University, Lancaster: Chair

**Deborah Pletsch-Owen**, University of Waterloo, Ontario: "Form Follows Fashion: Unstable (Postcolonial) Interiors in *The Age of Innocence*"

**Maureen Honey**, University of Nebraska, Lincoln: "The Uses of Art in Edith Wharton's Fiction"

**Nancy Bentley**, University of Pennsylvania: "Wharton, Car Accidents, and the Erotics of Publicity"

**Anne Ullmo**, University of Paris, Sorbonne: "The Tomb-Painting"

6:00 p.m. **Banquet:** Horchow Hall  
55 Hillhouse Ave.

8:00 p.m. **Special screening of *The Age of Innocence*(1934)**, starring Irene Dunne and John Boles  
Whitney Humanities Center, Auditorium

**Scott Marshall**, Edith Wharton Restoration, Lenox: "Edith Wharton: A Filmography"

**Brigitte Peucker**, Yale University: "Rival Arts?: Filming *The Age of Innocence*"

**SUNDAY, APRIL 30**

9:00-10:30 a.m. **Small group sessions** (five panels)  
Linsly Chittenden Hall (LC)  
63 High St.

**Dueling Lives: Autobiography and Biography: LC 209**

**Jean Frantz Blackall**, Cornell University: Chair

**Susan Goodman**, University of Delaware: "A Composed Life: The Biographies of Edith Wharton"

**Clare Colquitt**, San Diego State University: "The Making of Percy Lubbock's *Portrait of Edith Wharton*"

**Denise Witzig**, Saint Mary's College: "The Letter of the Law: Rethinking the Woman Writer in the Stories of Edith Wharton"

**Candace Waid**, Yale University: "Justifiable Biography"

**Edith Wharton: Encounters with Race and Class: LC 208**

**Annette Zilversmit**, Long Island University, Brooklyn: Chair

**Anne C. MacMaster**, Millsaps College: "Dark-Skinned Servants and 'the Invention of Whiteness': Color, Race, and Freedom in *The Age of Innocence*"

**Jill Wacker**, University of Pennsylvania: "Sewed on Crooked: Millinery and *The House of Mirth*"

**Julia Ehrhardt**, Yale University: "Who's Steering the Sled?: The Challenge of Creating a Cross-Cultural Wharton"

**Gianfranca Balestra**, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan: "Edith Wharton's Exercise in Italian: An Unpublished Short Story"

**Dismantling Wharton's Houses of Mirth II: LC 203**

**Karin W. Jackson**, University of Maine, Augusta: Chair

**Niki Parisier**, Yale University: "Staging the Female Self: Edith Wharton and Lily Bart"

**Joseph Coulombe**, University of Delaware: "Man or Mannequin--Edith Wharton's Selden"

**Laure Goldstein**, Yale University and the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris: "'The Scene of Some Far-off Bazaar': The Orientalization of Europe in *The Age of Innocence*"

**Mary Suzanne Schriber**, Northern Illinois University: "*Fighting France*: Travel Writing in the Grotesque"

**Contending Cultures: LC 105**

**Katherine Joslin**, Western Michigan University: Chair

**Annette L. Benert**, Allentown College of Saint Francis de Sales: "Edith Wharton at War: Civilized Space in Troubled Times"

**Brian Edwards**, Yale University: "The Out of Bounds in *In Morocco*"

**Julie Olin-Ammentorp**, Le Moyne College: "Edith Wharton after the War: The Failure of *A Son at the Front*"

\* **Marcia McGowan**, Eastern Connecticut State University: "'Into the Hands of the Enemy': Family Battles in *The Children*"

**Constructing Culture: LC 206**

**Penelope Vita-Finzi**, Independent Scholar, London: Chair

**Heather Hirschfeld**, Duke University: "Survival of the Feminist: Edith Wharton, Charles Darwin and Sexual Selection"

**Carole Shaffer-Koros**, Kean College: "Edith Wharton and the Concept of Universal History"

**Ellen Pifer**, University of Delaware: "*The Children*: Wharton's Ambivalence to Self, Society, and the 'New World'"

**Dale M. Bauer**, University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Mary V. Marchand, Goucher College: "Wharton's Competition with her Contemporaries"

**10:45-11:45 a.m. Plenary session: Justice to Edith Wharton: The Need for a Scholarly Edition**  
Rose Alumni House  
232 York St.

**Alfred Bendixen**, California State University, Los Angeles: Chair

**Alfred Bendixen**, California State University, Los Angeles: "Proposing, Planning, and Developing a Scholarly Edition of Wharton's Writings"

**Kenneth M. Price**, Texas A&M University: "The Need to Edit Wharton's Unpublished Writings: The Example of 'Literature'"

**Abby Werlock**, St. Olaf College: "Visions and Revisions: The Need to Edit Wharton's Fiction"

**12:00 Farewell brunch:** Rose Alumni House

*Handwritten notes:*  
Send Verber  
Bendixen

*Handwritten notes on a separate sheet:*  
"Did she take her children into her home during the war?"  
(source?)  
PPIC Goldman @ BSU  
BSU - EDU