

# EDITH WHARTON IN FLORENCE

## A SESQUICENTENNIAL CONFERENCE

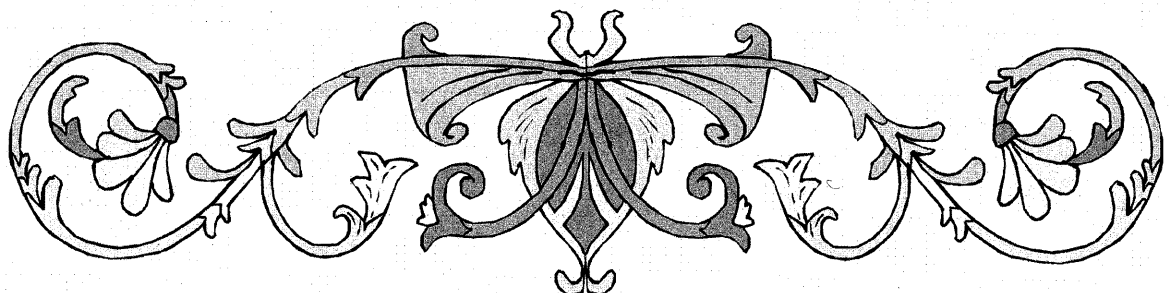
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THE EDITH WHARTON SOCIETY



Marist College-Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici  
Via del Giglio 6 50123  
Firenze, Italia

**JUNE 6~8, 2012**

Conference Directors:  
Meredith Goldsmith, Ursinus College  
Emily Orlando, Fairfield University



**Edith Wharton in Florence:**  
**A Sesquicentennial Conference Sponsored by the Edith Wharton Society**  
and made possible through the generosity of Marist College and Lorenzo de' Medici Institute

June 6-8, 2012

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Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici  
Via del Giglio 6 50123  
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Registration, 8:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, June 6, 2012**

**9:00-10:15 am -- Session 1**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

✕ Session 1A: Italian Beginnings: Revisiting Edith Wharton's *The Valley of Decision* (Palladio)

Chair: Emily Orlando, Fairfield University, USA

1. "Odo's Education in *The Valley of Decision*," Elsa Nettels, College of William and Mary, USA (Emerita)
2. "Wharton's Italian Women," Rita Bode, Trent University, Canada
3. "Iconic Allusions, References, and Contexts in *The Valley of Decision*," Rita Severi, University of Verona, Italy

Session 1B: Edith Wharton and Images of the Traveler (Raffaello)

Chair: Meredith Goldsmith, Ursinus College, USA

1. "Foregrounds and Backgrounds: Wharton, Description and Travel," Maureen Montgomery, University of Canterbury, New Zealand
2. "Wharton, the Traveler's Affect, and the Politics of Hyperbole," Gary Totten, North Dakota State University, USA
3. "Edith Wharton, Mary Cadwalader Jones, and European Travel (for Women)," Sharon Shaloo, Massachusetts Center for the Book, USA

**10:30-11:45 am -- Session 2**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 2A: Domestic Values: Home Matters in Wharton's Writing (Palladio)

Chair: Rebecca Jaroff, Ursinus College, USA

1. "Home Thoughts': Wharton's Short Stories and the Location of Home," Bonnie McMullen, Independent Scholar, UK
2. "Family and Social Change in Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth*," Ritu Sharma, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, India

Session 2B: Matters of Soul and Spirit: Edith Wharton's Journey of Self (Raffaello)

Chair: Laura Rattray, University of Hull, UK

1. "Edith Wharton and Anna Bahlmann: Companions for Forty-two Years," Irene Goldman-Price, Independent Scholar, USA
2. "Harsh Realities: The Final Fictions of Edith Wharton and Willa Cather," Julie Olin-Ammentorp, Le Moyne College, USA

**12:00-1:15 pm -- Session 3**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 3A: Cultural Constructs in Wharton's New York Novels (Palladio)

Chair: Sharon Kehl Califano, Hesser College, USA

1. "The Use of Attempting the Impossible: Edith Wharton's Backward Glance in *The Age of Innocence*," Myrto Drizou, SUNY, Buffalo, USA
2. "Adipose But Affable: Fat Catherine Mingott," Seth Rosenbaum, Harvard University, USA
3. "Life as 'a moving stairway revolving on itself?': Edith Wharton's *Mother's Recompense*," Elena-Syssoeva, Fairfield University, USA

Session 3B: The Personal as Political: Edith Wharton and Social Reform (Raffaello)

Chair: Julia Ehrhardt, Honors College, University of Oklahoma, USA

1. "No Fear of the Threshold: Wharton's Transatlantic Anarchist Children," Ferda Asya, Bloomsburg University, USA
2. "Edith Wharton and the Trans-Atlantic Debate over Marital Reform," Clare Eby, University of Connecticut, USA
3. "Ferdinand Tönnies and Edith Wharton: Common Concepts of Community and Society," Reiner Kornetta, University of Education Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany

1:15-2:15 pm  
Lunch on your own

*200 Part 2  
I Villa I Ta Hi*

**2:30-3:45 pm -- Session 4**  
**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 4A: Edith Wharton and Architecture (Palladio)

Chair: Susan Tomlinson, University of Massachusetts-Boston, USA

1. "Edith Wharton and the Tenements of New York," Hildegard Hoeller, College of Staten Island and The Graduate Center, CUNY, USA
2. "'Unlike Any Room He Had Known': Edith Wharton's Single-Occupancy Architectures," Katherine A. Fama, Washington University in St. Louis, USA
3. "The Architecture of Unhappiness: Place and Affect in Edith Wharton's Short Fiction," Mary Goodwin, National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan

Session 4B: From Pilgrimages to Motor-Flights: Edith Wharton and Her Travels (Raffaello)

Chair: Maureen Montgomery, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

1. "Italian Villas, New England Hills: Edith Wharton and Clara Endicott Sears Curate the American Past," Cecilia Macheski, LaGuardia Community College / CUNY, USA
2. "The Woman, the Writer, the Way: Wharton's Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, 1925," Patricia Fra-Lopez, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain
3. "In the Italian Background: Wharton's Rediscovery of the *Sacri Monti*," Medina Lasansky, Cornell University, USA

Session 4C: Edith Wharton and Influential Men (Donatello)

Chair: Alan Price, Pennsylvania State University, USA (Emeritus)

1. "His Example & His Influence': Edith Wharton, Theodore Roosevelt, the Great War and Public Voice," Sue Barker, The Graduate Center, CUNY, USA
2. "The Colonel and Mrs. Wharton, 1910," Katherine Joslin, Western Michigan University, USA
3. "The Gentleman Behind the *Vanadis*: Images of James J. Van Alen and His Friendship with Edith Wharton," Sarah Littlefield, Salve Regina University, USA

**4:00-5:15 pm -- Session 5**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 5A: Wharton's Literary Legacies (Palladio)

Chair: Julie Olin-Ammentorp, Le Moyne College, USA

1. "She made such a scene as you can not possibly imagine': Carl Van Vechten, Edith Wharton, and Jazz Babies," Susan Tomlinson, University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA
2. "The Influence of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche on Wharton's Fiction," Maria-Novella Mercuri, University College London, UK

Session 5B: Objects and Space in Wharton's Writing (Raffaello)

Chair: Gary Totten, North Dakota State University, USA

1. "Critique and Transformational Encounter in Edith Wharton's Ekphrastic Poetry," David Kennedy, University of Hull, UK, & Christine Kennedy, Poet and Independent Scholar, UK
2. "A Break in the Continuity: Beyond the Aesthetic Frames in Wharton's Work," Krystyna Michael, The Graduate Center, CUNY, USA
3. "Edith Wharton and Orientalism," Margaret A. Toth, Manhattan College, USA

Session 5C: The "Hot Ethan": Reconsidering Edith Wharton's *Summer* (Donatello)

Chair: Cecilia Macheski, LaGuardia Community College / CUNY, USA

1. "Interrogating a Complex Intertextuality: Wharton's *Summer* and Jewett's 'A White Heron,'" Martha Billips, Transylvania University, USA
2. "'Down from the Mountain': Charting Charity's Fateful Journey in *Summer*," Rebecca Jaroff, Ursinus College, USA
3. "'Mrs. Wharton struggles with Masculinity'?: Symbolic Spaces and Ambivalent Masculinities in *Summer* and *Ethan Frome*," Sophie Spieler, Dresden University of Technology, Germany

5:45-6:45 pm

Aperitivo

Via Faenza 43: San Jacopo Church (#2 on your map)

7:00-8:15 pm

Via Faenza 43: San Jacopo Church (#2 on your map)

Distinguished Keynote Speaker:

Donna Campbell

Keynote Address:

“The Next 150 Years: Wharton Goes Digital”

**Thursday, June 7, 2012**

**8:30-9:45 am -- Session 6**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 6A: At Home and Abroad: Edith Wharton and Cosmopolitanism (Palladio)

Chair: Katherine Joslin, Western Michigan University, USA

1. “‘Better to be an American’: Wharton, Europe, and the American Traveler,” Tarah Demant, Mills College, USA
2. “Neither Here Nor There: Wharton as Cultural Historian, *Old New York* as Ambivalent Cosmopolitanism,” June Howard, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA
3. “Rome as Order and Disorder: Located and Dislocated Cosmopolitanism in Edith Wharton’s and Elizabeth Bowen’s Roman Travelogues,” Nels Pearson, Fairfield University, USA

X Session 6B: Placing Women: Female Maneuvering in Wharton’s Fiction (Raffaello)

Chair: Elsa Nettels, College of William and Mary, USA (Emerita)

1. “Hell’s Fury: Female Mate-Guarding in “<sup>1436</sup>Pomegranate Seed” and *Ethan Frome*,” Judith Saunders, Marist College, USA
2. “Moving Pictures: A Wilde Woman in *The House of Mirth* and *The Portrait of a Lady*,”  
Patrick Páraic Finnerty, University of Portsmouth, UK
3. “Lily Bart and Undine Spragg: Sister Outsiders,” Joseph Zeppetello, Marist College, USA

**10:00-11:15 am -- Session 7**

→ **Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

X Session 7A: Edith Wharton and Artifacts (Palladio)

Chair: Gary Totten, North Dakota State University, USA

1. "Wandering from one picture gallery to another in happy talk': Edith Wharton and Italian Art," Emily Orlando, Fairfield University, USA
2. "Intensity of Vision': Transnational Artifacts in Wharton's Wartime France," Mary Carney, Gainesville State College, USA
3. "Edith Wharton's Collectors' Real Life Models: From Close Relations to Front Page Newsmakers," Elisabetta Mezzani, Independent Scholar, USA

Session 7B: Dramatic Situations: Staging Edith Wharton's Work (Raffaello)

Chair: Sharon Shaloo, Massachusetts Center for the Book, USA

1. "Wharton and the Musical Medium: Adapting *The Age of Innocence* for the Operatic Stage," David Carpenter, Temple University, USA
2. "*The Old Maid* and Maternal Melodrama," Carol Dole, Ursinus College, USA
3. "Through Italian Eyes: Martin Scorsese's Adaptation of *The Age of Innocence*," Alberto Lena, University of Valladolid, Spain

→ **11:30-12:45 pm -- Session 8**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 8A: Edith Wharton and the Marketplace (Palladio)

Chair: Ann Patten, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

1. "Meetings Between the Best-sellers and the Best-dressers": Forging Celebrity in *The Gods Arrive*," Meredith Goldsmith, Ursinus College, USA
2. "*Femina Non Economica*: Lily Bart's Akrasia and the Gendering of Risk," Ali Chetwynd, University of Michigan, USA
3. "Assets Abroad: Wharton and Women's International Economies," Deborah Clarke, Arizona State University, USA

X Session 8B: Channeling Legends: Edith Wharton and Echoes of the Past (Raffaello)

Chair: Judith Saunders, Marist College, USA

1. "The Long Shadow of Beatrice Cenci," Melanie Dawson, College of William and Mary, USA
2. "'As Dark As Egypt': Alchemy in Wharton's *Ethan Frome*," Carole Shaffer-Koros, Kean University, USA
3. "Irish Hauntings?: Appropriations of the Comic Gothic in the Supernatural Fiction of Edith Wharton and Joseph Sheridan le Fanu," Sarah Whitehead, Kingston University, UK

1:30-3:00 pm

Group Lunch, LdM Fashion Building Garden, Via Faenza 44/A (#1 on your map)

**3:15-4:30 pm -- Session 9**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 9A: Edith Wharton and *Fighting France* (Palladio)

Chair: William Blazek, Liverpool Hope University, UK

1. "*Fighting France* Revisited: Looking for Pathways to a Forgotten Text," Teresa Gómez Reus, University of Alicante, Spain
2. "'Threaded with Invisible Currents': Echoes of Romanticism in *Fighting France*," Susan Barile, The Graduate Center, CUNY, USA
3. "'Doing War *en Touriste*': The Guilt of Spectatorship in Edith Wharton's *Fighting France* and *The Age of Innocence*," Stephanie Byttebier, Boston University, USA

Session 9B: The Firebird and The Master: Edith Wharton and Henry James (Raffaello)

Chair: Sharon Kehl Califano, Hesser College, USA

1. "Edith Wharton, Henry James and the Romance of Letter Writing," Jill Kress Karn, University of Rochester, USA
2. "Jamesian Psychology in Edith Wharton's *The Fruit of the Tree*," Stephen Brennan, Louisiana State University in Shreveport, USA
3. "Becoming Woman: Portraits of Ladies by Wharton and James," Elaine Toia, SUNY Rockland Community College, USA

Session 9C: Edith Wharton and *Ethan Frome* (Donatello)

Chair: Melissa Pennell, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, USA



1. "Pathological Instances: Disability and Narrative in *Ethan Frome*," Jennie A. Kassanoff, Barnard College, Columbia University, USA
2. "Edith Wharton's Tragic Vision," Radmila Nastic, University of Kragujevac, Serbia
3. "Everyday Aestheticism in Wharton's *Ethan Frome*," Maya Higashi Wakana, Ritsumeikan University, Japan

**4:45-6:00 pm -- Session 10**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 10A: Edith Wharton and Fashion (Palladio)

Chair: Emily Orlando, Fairfield University, USA

1. "Cloche Call: Material Matters and Millinery Work in *The House of Mirth*," Monica Miller, Louisiana State University, USA
2. "Edith Wharton & Coiffure: Hair as Symbol of Morality and Social Order in Her Fiction," Denise Mok, Independent Scholar, Canada
3. "Edith Wharton, Fashion, and the Fictions of Modernity," Vike Martina Plock, University of Exeter, UK

Session 10B: Women and Writing: Edith Wharton, Vernon Lee, and Gertrude Stein (Raffaello)

Chair: Irene Goldman-Price, Independent Scholar, USA

1. "The Garden as Extension of Self: Italian 'Garden-Magic' in the Work of Vernon Lee and Edith Wharton," Sharon Kehl Califano, Hesser College, USA
2. "Backward Glances: Literary Relations between Edith Wharton and Vernon Lee," Patricia Pulham, University of Portsmouth, UK
3. "Self-Writing and Writing Lives: Wharton, Stein, Foucault," Joshua Zajdman, Independent Scholar, USA

Session 10C: Cultural Contexts in Edith Wharton's *Twilight Sleep* (Donatello)

Chair: Melanie Dawson, College of William and Mary, USA

1. "'the blind dread of physical pain': Edith Wharton's *Twilight Sleep*, Literary Realism, and Cultural Critique," Cynthia Davis, University of South Carolina-Columbia, USA
2. "Studying Dance Theory as Feminist Strategy in Edith Wharton's *Twilight Sleep*," Alix Miller, University of Georgia, USA
3. "New Women, New Men: The Future of American Society in Edith Wharton's *Twilight Sleep*," Natasha Story, University of Melbourne, Australia

6:00-7:00 pm  
Break time on your own

7:00-8:00 pm  
Via Faenza 43: San Jacopo Church (#2 on your map)  
Special Guest Speaker: Lev Raphael  
"Rosedale Revisited: A Reading from *Rosedale in Love*"

8:30 pm  
Dinner at Ristorante Riflessi (Via Cavour 86 -- "J" on your map)

**Friday, June 8, 2012**

**9:00-10:15 am -- Session 11**  
**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 11A: Edith Wharton, Widows and Old Maids (Palladio)

Chair: Laura Rattray, University of Hull, UK

1. "Surveillance and the Dynamics of Power in ~~*Madame de Treymes*~~ and *The Old Maid*," Melissa Pennell, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, USA
2. "'There are terrors in the name': Sedgwick's and Wharton's Old Maids," Deborah Gussman, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, USA
3. "'Stand Up, Mrs. Ansley, Stand Up': Positions of Power in 'Roman Fever,'" Alan Price, Pennsylvania State University, USA (Emeritus)

Session 11B: The Teaching and Critical Reception of Edith Wharton's Works (Raffaello)

Chair: Elaine Toia, Rockland Community College / SUNY, USA

1. "Is It 'Better to Be An American'?: Teaching Wharton's Short Stories in Italy," Julia Ehrhardt, University of Oklahoma Honors College, USA
2. "'Duking it Out': On Teaching 'Comparative Readings of Two Authors: Edith Wharton and Toni Morrison'" Jeslyn Medoff, University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA
3. "Hesitant Appreciation: The early critical reception of Edith Wharton in the Netherlands," Els van der Werf, University of Groningen, Netherlands

*July - Hof M. opera*

**10:30-11:45 am -- Session 12**

**Piazza Strozzi 2 (#10 on your map)**

Session 12A: "The great old adventuress": Sex, Satire and Beyond in Edith Wharton's Late Novels (Palladio)

Chair: Hildegard Hoeller, College of Staten Island and The Graduate Center, CUNY, USA

1. "Sex, Satire and the Older Woman in Edith Wharton's Late Novels," Janet Beer, Oxford Brookes University, UK, & Avril Horner, Kingston University, UK
2. "Transatlantic Liberation and Constraint in Edith Wharton's *The Buccaneers* and Theodore Dreiser's *The Stoic*," Jude Davies, University of Winchester, UK
3. "'Like their native country, they could stand only if they were united': American Femininity and Co-operation from Wharton's *The Buccaneers* to *Sex and the City* and Beyond," Carol Smith, University of Winchester, UK

Session 12B: Edith Wharton and Italian Influences (Raffaello)

Chair: Meredith Goldsmith, Ursinus College, USA

1. "Reading Wharton through Charles Eliot Norton's *Historical Studies of Church Building in the Middle Ages*," William Blazek, Liverpool Hope University, UK
2. "Italy and the Saturation of Being in *The Custom of the Country*," Sharon Kim, Judson College, USA
3. "Writing to Italy: Wharton's Correspondence with the Berensons," Laura Rattray, University of Hull, UK

12:00-1:45 pm

Lunch on your own

2:00-3:00 pm

Via Faenza 43: San Jacopo Church (#2 on your map)

Coffee Talk with Special Guest Speaker Jennie Fields

A Reading from *The Age of Desire*

The Conference Directors wish to thank the following persons for their invaluable help and support, which made possible "Edith Wharton in Florence": Christie Alfaro, Mark Bergman, Donna Campbell, Melanie Dawson, Jennie Fields, Sue Fitzgerald, Meg Franklin, Carla Guarducci, Claire Hennessy, Julianne Homola, Joanne Maddux, Ryan McLaughlin, Brad Miller, Margaret Murray, Julie Olin-Ammentorp, Nels Pearson, Lev Raphael, Laura Rattray, Anne Schuyler, Carole Shaffer-Koros, Sharon Shaloo, Gary Totten, Christine Triantos, Susan Wissler. A very special thank you is extended to: Sharon Kehl Califano and Sloan Kelly of Hesser College; Mary Alexander, Judith Saunders, and Thomas Wermuth of Marist College; Rebecca Jaroff and Annette Lucas of Ursinus College; and James Simon and Robbin Crabtree of Fairfield University.