

**American Literature & Culture**  
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**Mod 08 Lecture Number 40**  
**Edith Wharton An Introduction (Lecture 34)**

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(Professor – student conversation starts)

Professor: Now when she was very young, you can imagine what was major, quite a monumental event in American History that was going on when she was born.

Student: Civil War

Professor: Civil War, good. 1861 to 1865 so she was born during the Civil, in the midst of the Civil War. And of course when she was very young, it was over and then what happened immediately in America, in the aftermath of the Civil War. You are of course familiar; you have read the novels of the so-called American South, the literature of the so-called American South. For example, *Gone with the Wind*, most popular work where you know what happened to the American South and Edith Wharton belonged to the so-called American North. Ok, the side that won the war, Ok.

Margaret Mitchell, the novelist, the author of *Gone with the Wind*, she belonged to the period she belonged to the side that lost the war. Therefore *Gone with the Wind* is from her perspective. Tennessee Williams, another major playwright that we often refer to, we know he too belonged to the south. The South lost, it was devastated. And what happened to the so-

called, we don't talk, it is not South America and North America, I know, I am very sure that you know the geography of America by now.

So when we talk about the American North, and the south, we talk about states that are north of North America. Ok, so Edith Wharton belonged to that side, and what happened to that particular class or society. The South was devastated, north really flourished. And she already belonged to a very wealthy aristocratic class. Now having given you this much background of Edith Wharton, my question to you is how much of Edith Wharton do you know about? Who was she and what did she write, apart from this?

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Student: The House of Mirth

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Professor: Yes good. The House of Mirth, which is also a very popular movie, recently made I think in 2000, so that is something you should watch, House of Mirth. When we talk of The Age of Innocence, I want you to ponder over, take a moment and think about the title of the novel, The Age of Innocence. What kind of innocence could that be? Now a writer who belonged to this particular period in American History, she is writing somewhere in early part of, early twentieth century Ok, the novel called The Age of Innocence, so how many ages do we have? I mean we have Elizabethan age, very restoration age. Do we have anything, age of, we have Age of Anxiety, I think. In literature we call the period the Age of Anxiety, the Age of Reason, right, The Age of Reason; could there be a literary Age of Innocence? In literature do you have come across The Age of Innocence? Are you aware of that? The age reminds, means a period. Think over that. That is your question. I will come back to the title.

Now she was born in the so-called old New York. She was born in a very wealthy family. Her ancestors were of English and Dutch origin, the colonists who had come to America from Europe and made huge fortune and they were basically in business, real estate, shipping, banking so all these money making industries. So the family had huge fortune for generations.

Now you, I want you to keep connecting all these texts to whatever you have done either in this course or in some other course. Now in this course particularly you have done something called Daisy Miller. Ok we have also done Henry James' A Portrait of a Lady. So Daisy Miller, the nouveau riche, so this is important to remember. Edith Wharton herself belonged to the old rich, the so-called old money and

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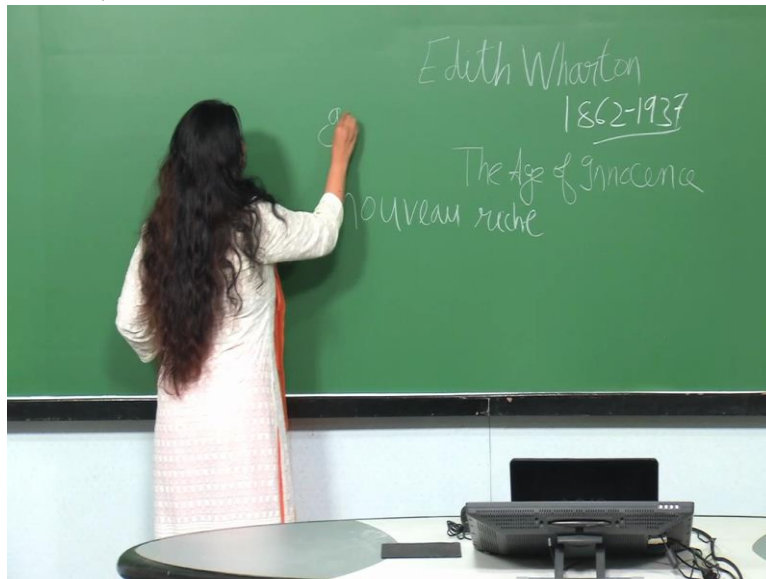
Professor: that made all the difference in the world; so old money and nouveau riche, the new rich. Daisy Miller belongs to the new wealthy, there she is not really accepted in this particular social class to which Winterbourne and his very snooty aunt belong. You have also done Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*. Now we are told that Clyde Griffiths' very snooty uncle and aunt, Samuel Griffiths, yeah, they belong to an old established wealthy class and in some way, they look down upon Sondra's kind, the kind of social class that Sondra belongs to. Have you done anything else that corresponds to similar ideas? You have done *The Great Gatsby*?

In *The Great Gatsby*, Gatsby has lot of money to throw about but Tom and Daisy, especially Tom and Daisy Miller's and also, Jay Gatsby. They are newly rich and what do they do with their newly rich or newly earned money? Conspicuous consumerism, they throw about wealth, they show off a lot and what are the ways and means of showing off wealth?

Student: Throwing party

Professor: Throwing lavish parties, going on exotic picnics, yeah, shopping sprees of course, owning a vehicle, automobiles, all those suggest, symbolize conspicuous consumption and of course the kinds of houses they build for themselves. Remember? Yeah, the kinds of houses, the kind of decoration, the kind of artwork they would collect. In Edith Wharton's world, in her own charmed world this was not the done thing. You may have all the money in the world but you have to, and this is very important from the context of *The Age of Innocence*, the emphasis always

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Professor: on good taste. Now taste is of extreme significance in *The Age of Innocence*. Therefore we also call it *The Novel of Manners*. Edith Wharton extensively travelled to Europe and that was something very common among the very rich. Ok, they travelled a lot. Ok, they travelled a lot and you have done *Daisy Miller*. Again I will keep coming back because Edith's, Henry James was also a kind of Guru for Edith Wharton. When we were talking about, when we were discussing Henry James I think I have touched upon this. What a close bond they shared! She looked up to him. She thought... he was called the Master. Colm Toibin has written

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Professor: book called *The Master* which is about life and times of Henry James. So he was the Master. Everybody looked up to him, sit at his feet and learn something. So Edith Wharton's master was Henry James.

So you know how much travelling is done in *Daisy Miller*. People travel all the time. Yeah. And they just don't go for a week or so. They stay on in Europe, various parts of Europe for months and sometimes years together. Winterbourne has been in Europe for several years; that is what, so he has lost touch with the American way of life. Therefore he has taken; he is fascinated by Daisy Miller. Otherwise a true genteel aristocratic American wouldn't be. That's the idea. Old moneyed class wouldn't be but then his aunt tells him.

You have lived too long in Europe, you have forgotten what's a nice American girl, remember? All those are very ironically used terms. You have to understand the irony Edith Wharton and Henry James is extremely subtle. It is not a crude sarcasm. It is very subtle. You have to read a lot between the lines. So they travelled a lot and we were talking about Daisy Miller and Henry James' cosmopolitanism. I don't know if you remember that. We have been talking about the cosmopolitan element in Henry James which is more conspicuous in Edith Wharton. She is one of the most cosmopolitan writers of her times. You can't compare her with today's times, Ok but I am talking about the time when she was writing, actively writing and her first major book came out in 1902. How old must she have been then; 1902, nearly 30, in 1902, or 40? 40, almost 40 yeah, before that she was doing lot of apprenticeship, writing a lot but first major work came out quite late, alright.

So she travelled a lot and she came back to her Fifth Avenue apartment in Manhattan after travelling a lot and the family owned a Brownstone in the very upper class Madison Square. So why is the neighborhood so important in Edith Wharton? Where you live is extremely important. Remember that. Your locality, your address is extremely important. What is your postal address? Your first thing, your asset in the society where class matters a lot, addresses mean a lot. Your name, titles and your family and surnames do matter. But then where you live, how much, what kind of locality is that, that matters a lot. So therefore it was important to understand where she lived and what kind of people she mingled with. It was always Madison Square, Park Avenue types, Manhattan types. We are not talking Brooklyn here

anymore. We are not talking Arthur Miller's working class people anymore. Arthur Miller and Edith Wharton coming face to face would have been a very interesting study, yeah.

Now again this is the house that Edith Wharton first, I mean this is her girlhood address. Look at the house and it is called a Brownstone, very classical, very subdued you can say. Not much ostentation at least from the outside, Ok. Why I am emphasizing so much on the word Brownstone? Because later in the novel, you will come across a very interesting character who is our heroine's grandmother.

Who is she? Catherine Mingott, Ok, Mrs. Mingott, she is often called Catherine the Great after the Russian Empress, yeah. Catherine Mingott has flouted all the social norms. You must go to that section where it said that she has, she had flouted all the norms and she had taken a house in not exactly the most fashionable Madison Square and Manhattan Park but somewhere else, Ok and also more audaciously it was a pale cream house. Not a Brownstone. That was considered scandalous and audacious. Yeah, a house is not painted the way, the people from your status, the kind of houses the people from your own status should be living in. It is supposed to be Brownstone, so why are you living in a pale, cream house. That was being non-conformist.

Now *The Age of Innocence* is all about conformity versus non-conformity, Ok. So Ellen Olenska, she has that blood, the kind of blood runs through her veins. So whatever her, the conflicts she faces, the opposition she faces in the novel is because of her non-conformist behavior. She was very much a part of that society. Daisy Miller is not. Daisy Miller is not born in that world. Ellen Olenska was but in spite of that, she is a non-conformist. Why she is, that the novel tells us.

Now Edith Wharton married someone called Eddie Wharton, whose nickname was Teddy and she lived in New York, Newport and they built a house in Massachusetts, The Mount. The house is called The Mount. Ok, this is important because we are going to talk about The Mount also which was such an important part because she wrote all her major work sitting in The Mount and you have to be a little familiar with The Mount in order to understand the kind of how the settings shape or inform a writer's creative process, alright. they moved a lot, they travelled a lot, they took a flat in Paris also.

Paris also occurs very frequently in *The Age of Innocence*. Ok, several places. Now Teddy during this time, he had several affairs. He was also supposedly a little too fond of drinking, women and all and naturally there was a rift between husband and wife. They never had any children. She decided to divorce him in 1913, eventually settled down in France. Now does this remind you of someone; Olenska herself. Yeah, she, in the novel she is married to a Polish Count Ok, Count Olenski, therefore she is Madame Olenska, so and the Count is half-paralyzed, sadistic, perverted and that's all you are going to hear about him.

He is sadistic and perverted, he is brutish, half paralyzed. No one has seen him except one character. I mean of course Olenska has seen him, he is her husband of course but one of the major characters, the only one who has actually seen and talks about him and describes him, who is that? Not Newland, Newland is the hero; he has never come face to face with the Count. Who has actually met him from their social circle?



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Professor: He is the one who says he is half paralyzed; it is a very vague term,

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Professor: it's certainly touched upon that why did Countess Olenska leave her husband? Why did she want a divorce in that time in The Age of Innocence where divorce was not the right thing to do? This is important. Again think of the novel from the social context; when it was written that divorce was an absolute taboo. Women who divorced on their own, who took initiative in divorcing their husbands, they were more or less ostracized. We are talking about the, even women of the status of Edith Wharton.

Therefore it is very important that after her divorce she has to leave America and she had to settle down in Paris which was more cosmopolitan. Understand the social context. Therefore

Countess Olenska, people, scholars say much of Countess Olenska is Edith Wharton. See I am not going to get into that affective fallacy and biographical or autobiographical fallacy but there are parallels. Definitely that cannot be ignored. She died in Paris in 1937.

In between she came to America just once. Between her divorce and her death, she visited America just once and that was to receive an honorary degree from University of Yale, Yale University. She was never formally educated. That doesn't really matter for creative writing. You don't need all the big degrees around your neck to write beautifully. So she was very much a product of her time and her class. There were private tutors for such class of people. They didn't really go and attend colleges. Ok, anyway she wrote what she did and she won the Pulitzer for *The Age of Innocence*.

She had a very interesting take on America and she says the American landscape has no foreground and the American mind no background. Now what do you understand? American landscape has no foreground. She always thought it; it's a very uncivilized way of life. People are not really as cultured and polished as the people in the other parts of the world. Now what is Henry James' take on Americans, and Europeans?

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Student: The old Europe and the new world.

Professor: Yeah, so

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Professor: they are more innocent, Americans but when they come in contact with Europeans extended periods of contact leads to contamination and decay. That's what happens to many of American characters when they live with the Europeans. Madame Merle's character in *A Portrait of a Lady*, please do watch *A Portrait of a Lady* also and people come in contact with European for a lengthy span of time, they become jaded, they become cynical, they become sinister.

That is what Henry James says. For Edith Wharton, people become more liberated, more cosmopolitan when they travel from America which for her was little provincial. Therefore the scenery has no foreground and mind has no background because you don't have a history. During that period America didn't really have much history to write about, right? But Europe with its thousands of years of heritage, culture and history, that had a lot to offer and that's what charmed Edith Wharton about Europe. Now any question or comments you would like to make at this point?

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Professor: Anything that you just can think of?

Student: In *(The Age of Innocence)* which was set in 1980s is extremely similar. His observation of society, you notice that the distinction almost remained intact. There is

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Professor: Absolutely so there is old money and there is new money. The people who are born in money like Shannon McCoy, old money yeah but there are people who have made more money than Shannon McCoy's father and I mean he takes a lot of pride in his family's old world charm, yeah. We have a country house, we have this, yeah we are members of this elite club. These are the things that matter to that strata of society. It is not like how much money you have in the bank, your bank balance. See now, you can even connect it to what is happening in our country today.

Yeah. There is a term called the Gilded Age. We are going through the Gilded age right now. There is another great play by John Guare. You can also refer to that, Six Degrees of Separation that I oft refer to. That's also about class system in America. So one Fire of Vanity, this is a very pertinent example. You can contextualize with that. Nothing much has changed. The novel has been set in the 80s but nothing much has changed. What Dreiser said then, what Edith Wharton said then, it is still there, yeah what Fitzgerald said then, it is still very relevant today.

She wrote a book called A Decoration of Houses along with association with a very eminent interior designer Ogden Codman; this was her first book in the sense, not a novel but an illustrative book and the decoration of houses. Why it's so important because here is one author whose personal lifestyle or whose creative writing was extremely informed by her personal lifestyle. The way she, and especially the houses she lived in, she was immensely fond of interior designing. Ok, she has kind of, control a mastery over interior designing and also gardening. She said that my house, The Mount, which she had designed and she had cultivated and she had decorated and what not, she said this is my, I would rate this any day better than The House of Mirth. And The House of Mirth is a classic, I mean, it is a fantastic piece of literature but she took greater pride in her house.

Now we will also talk about what is meant by the Gilded Age in New York which started immediately after the, it is generally referred to the period after the Civil War. Civil War ended in 1865 and the period henceforth is called the Gilded Age. You remember the Roaring Twenties? What happened during the Roaring Twenties, who was roaring?

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Student: The Paris expats

Professor: Like

Student: Stein, Fitzgerald and Hemingway

Professor: Ok, what was happening in the Roaring Twenties in America?

Student: Economic boom

Professor: Economic boom

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Professor: just before the Great Depression. So the people were getting rich. Wall Street soaring, rapid industrialization and of course, all innovations and all, whatever you see in a period, in a decade, there is a lot of, there is big difference, a huge difference between the preceding generations and the current, present generation. This is what was happening during

the Gilded Age immediately after the War, the north of so called north, just boomed economically.

Conspicuous consumption, it was marked by conspicuous consumption, rampant capitalization and many would argue, at the cost of the lost South. The South had lost everything and North had become, now Mark Twain is the one who coined the word Gilded Age Ok and he has also written a book called The Gilded Age where he criticizes the conspicuous consumption and other resultant corruption in American society. Naturally conspicuous consumption, over development, all these things have, corruption finds a very fertile soil in these things, so naturally that was happening, according to Twain, America was glittering on the surface but was very corrupt underneath and the old South wanted to preserve its integrity ferociously. Integrity not just financial integrity, but also its moral integrity as well as the values it cherished so much; so old way of life.

And remember these new, these old Americans were not some Yankees who had become rich overnight; they were the descendants of the English and the Dutch colonists. Therefore names like, who is those, who that couple to whom Newland Archer appeals to when Olenska is, during the early part of the novel, the Countess is just snubbed, nobody wants to dine with her, Catherine Mingott throws, her granny throws a dinner party for her, but everybody refuses. New York turns down regretfully, regretfully turns down the invitation. The van der Luydens, the van der Luydens and van der Luydens occupies top of the social pyramid. So there is a pyramid. Edith Wharton tells us, there is a pyramid. What happens at the pyramid? At the top, is there lot of space at the top of a pyramid?

One or two people, that's what, at the top of the hierarchy there are just one or two people, there are just one or two people and the van der Luydens are those people. So they haven't got their money through bootlegging and petty shopkeeping and all. Ok they were not the kind. They had inherited that money. Therefore they were important; therefore they were called aristocrats in the true sense. Ok, this is a period of greed and the rise of robber barons, who are the robber barons; carpetbaggers, bootleggers in *Gone with the Wind*, who is the hero? Rhett Butler is referred to as a carpetbagger and a robber baron.

He has made his money through dubious means, Ok but Margaret Mitchell is floored by him and she expects us to see, he is a very attractive figure. Ok, that wouldn't happen in Edith Wharton because she didn't belong to that class. That class looked down on new money like anything and people who had made their money through some dubious means and now there is a character, very important character in the novel, who is he?

They are very critical, very but they are still attracted to him because of his money, good, Julius Beaufort. Julius Beaufort is a mysterious Englishman who has just arrived but he has married the right girl. See this is important. To get respectability it is not just money, but also marrying the right person which is so true even in our society. It is not just money people marry but also the right family and Julius Beaufort marries the right kind of girl from the right family and therefore his meteoric climb up the social ladder.

Ok, they were, you know they were, the Gilded Age and the critics, they criticized the vulgar and scandalous display of wealth and manners by these people who have just got in their money through all kinds of, you know ill-begotten means and then particularly the Gilded Age is also remembered for several advent of new communication technologies including the phonograph. You know what is a phonograph, the telephone, the radio and if you remember, if you have read the novel you will find that by the end of the novel, there are so many new innovations and inventions.

Newland Archer actually talks to his son on the telephone and his son is somewhere in the other part of America, right and he says, Edith Wharton tells us that, it never failed, Newland was never short of any surprise. Whenever he would talk to someone over the phone, it would always strike him something so wonderful, so miraculous because it never happened when he was here, these things were not there but suddenly we are talking about the turn of the century.

So in the late nineteenth century all these technological innovations which changed the mindscape and landscape of America and then also we have mass circulation of newspapers and magazines and people who wrote for newspapers and magazines, see again remember there is a character in a novel, who is he, a journalist, Newland's friend, American friend, character called Winsett, not Vincent, Winsett Ok and he is the one who tells Newland that



people like you should get into politics because you have the connections. You are also a good man. You will make a difference. That means that politics was already getting corrupted.

There was corruption in social and political life and therefore the journalist friend encourages Newland to get into civic society, become a Mayor of sorts because he says you are the one who can clean up the society but the journalist himself, he is shown absolutely down and out on his luck but with the advent, so much of progress in mass media, newspapers and magazines, even people who wrote, they started coming up the social ladder. There is a point when Ellen Olenska, she finds a, she sets her establishment in New York after leaving her husband, she takes a very small house in some less fashionable part of the, of the city and this is the, this is one time when Newland makes one of his rare visits to that part of New York. Winsett would never dare

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Professor: to invite Newland Archer. Olenska can because they are also relatives, because there is (()) between and she comes from the same social class. She may not have money but she was born in that class, so she can invite. Ok, so we are talking of the low status of journalists and it is said Newland's mother, the supreme diva, Mrs. Archer, Ok she has contempt for people who wrote. It is given in quotation, Ok, people who wrote, how despicable that kind of people write.

We are talking about that and then also you know the advent of cinema and new kind of sports and all, and all these kinds were happening and of course something that made a huge

difference, electric trains that made mobility so fluid and also automobiles. So people, at the beginning at the age of innocence, do you remember, the Opera scene. It begins with opera. What is she singing? What is the diva singing?

R :(())

Professor: What?

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Student: It is Faust.

Professor: It is Faust, good.

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Professor: Madame Nilsson, she is singing, so on a January evening of the early 70's, 1870's  
Ok, Christine Nilsson was singing in Faust at the Academy of Music in New York.

Though there was already talk of the erection, in remote metropolitan distances "above the Forties," above the Forties is the address. New York has all numbered streets; of a new Opera House which should compete in costliness and splendor with those of the great European capitals, the world of fashion was still content to reassemble every winter in the shabby red and gold boxes of the sociable old Academy. Conservatives cherished it for being small and inconvenient, and thus keeping out the "new people".

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Professor: So the old music Academy may be a little inconvenient, crammed up and not as grand as lavish and opulent but it keeps, at least it keeps out the old; the new people, that is more important, Ok

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Professor: whom New York was beginning to dread and yet be drawn to There is a contradiction here. You are dreading this class of people but because of their money, you are still attracted to them, the kind of Beaufort types, and the sentimental clung to it for its historic associations, and the musical for its excellent acoustics, always so problematic a quality in halls built for the hearing of music.

Here is an irony, Ok and now go down a bit and look at the means of transport. the, that winter and what the daily press had already learned to describe as "an exceptionally brilliant audience" had gathered to hear her, transported through the slippery, snowy streets in private broughams, Ok private broughams, in the spacious family landau, or in the humbler but more convenient "Brown coupe." To come to the Opera in a Brown coupe was almost as honorable a way of arriving as in one's own carriage; and departure by the same means had the immense advantage of enabling one, with a playful allusion to democratic principles, again this is sarcasm, this is ironical, to scramble into the first Brown conveyance in the line, instead of waiting till the cold-and-gin congested nose of one's own coachman gleamed under the portico of the Academy. It was one of the great livery-stableman's most masterly intuitions to have discovered that Americans want to get away from amusement even more quickly than they want to get to it.

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Professor: Yeah, so now the means of transport, the brougham, the Brown coupes, the landaus, what are these things? These are carriages and I am sure you have seen *Gone with the Wind*, you know they travel in carriages but by the end of the novel, people are travelling in automobile so there is a, she covers a, time span of the novel is huge. She covers at least 40

to 50 years and gives you a very panoramic view of development and social, political change, not political exactly, social and cultural changes. So the newly rich of the Gilded Age, people they were often criticized, people who have made money during the Gilded Age and her world, Edith Wharton's world of old money, it looked down upon on the newcomers and the ostentatious display of wealth, for example people like Julius Beaufort.

Her first novel was published, it was called the The Valley of Decision in 1902 and there is a movie based on it with Gregory Peck playing the hero. This was her first major, major success. 1905, The House of, there is an excellent movie and it is all available on the internet. You must watch it. , so The Custom of the Country, 1913, along with The House of Mirth, The Custom of the Country and The Age of Innocence, three of these novels, they constitute the so-called the New York novels, the New York novels.

She has written a great deal, she was very prolific. In all she has written over 40 books of all kinds but they are not about, even though they are mostly about the aristocrats. There is a novel called Ethan Frome, there was a novel based on Ethan Frome with Liam Neeson playing

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Professor: the titular role but it is about the poor New England farmers but about the rich aristocrats, these are the three, The Custom of the Country, The House of Mirth and The Age of Innocence and this still is from Martin Scorsese's The Age of Innocence, a brilliant film, very faithful to the novel; one of the, one of the very few novels which are very, very,

extremely faithful, one of the few movies which are extremely faithful to the novel; so Michelle Pfeiffer doing Ellen Olenska and Daniel Day-Lewis as Newland Archer, and Winona Ryder, the so-called wronged wife. Her last work is 1938 *The Buccaneers*, now what do you mean, there is a TV series, I understand based on *The Buccaneers*, what is the meaning of *The Buccaneers*?

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Student: Original meaning is pirates

Professor: Pirates, yes. Here in this context

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Professor: those who arrived, the arrivists during the Gilded Age who made the money, the newly rich people, so almost like the pirates, the robber barons and it's about the set of three beautiful girls whose parents have made, whose parents have made money through so-called,

they have not inherited but they are new moneyed people and these girls actually find it difficult to get married. Remember, *The Sun also Rises*, there are Counts and Lords and Nobles all over Europe and they all are now ruined and they marry these girls. It is a wonderful TV series.

I have watched a few episodes and it is something you really must watch and some of our major contemporaries and this will give you a sort of overview, a sort of idea of the literary influences that informed her writings so Henry James of course was a major, major source. She chased him and chased him till he relented, Ok to become her mentor. They had a very close bond where she was, she learnt a lot from him. Then Mark Twain was another contemporary and acquaintance. He also coined the term *The Gilded Age*. Now Dreiser was also writing at the same time. His novel *Sister Carrie* which is about dismal poverty of the working class and *The American Tragedy*, you are already familiar with.

So there are influences surprisingly of Dreiser also, particularly in *The House of Mirth*. So Dreiser's depiction of poverty in *Sister Carrie* finds a resonance in *The House of Mirth*. Then Willa Cather and Hemingway and Fitzgerald, they had already shot on the scene, arrived on the scene. Eugene O'Neill, he won the Nobel in 1936 and he has been writing quite prolifically throughout. Kate Chopin's novel, this is important, it was published in 1899, *The Awakening* which is one of the foremost document of feminism, foremost examples of, have you read *The Awakening*?

Ok, then Stephen Crane's naturalist *The Red Badge of Courage* in 1895, so these were her contemporaries but apart from litterateurs and writers she was immensely influenced by people who wrote, journalists and also painters. There are lots of paintings in *The Age of Innocence*. People are, and even women are compared to a painting, that Newland had. See Newland is a very interesting character. He hasn't, he is a product of his social set or society and what is his society? The old New York, the old money, he reads a lot, he is a voracious reader. There are so many references to books. Can you recall some of the books that these people read?

Student: (())

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Student: (())

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Professor: Actually he is asking her to read Robert Browning and Tennyson and she hasn't yet started appreciating Idylls of the King and The Lotus-Eaters. He wants her to appreciate the beauty of these poems and he is very sure that once they are off to the honeymoon, off to their honeymoon, he is going to instruct her, Ok with better quality of (()), it turns out that she will take over and she will take him in hand after their marriage. So again, The Age of Innocence, it is a very nice, very ironic type. I was talking about her relationship with Henry James and once she drew him in her circle, she famously said, they wrote a lot of letters to each other and to the publishers and to their friends, many letters have survived.



When you were doing Henry James I mentioned that he wrote at least 10000 letters. They were pre-email and texting times, Ok. If you count the number of emails you people have written or text messages you people have, it will far exceed and it will make for another class of literature. Ok, you must save all those things. Who knows! So she said, no longer afraid to talk to Henry James of the things we both cared about, that is literature and society and they wrote, this is important, they both wrote about sexual longing and the secrecy in which these feelings have to operate.

So this is not a world where, this is not the Hemingway of it's (()) World where sexual longing can be out in the open. Ok it has to operate, so they were both very clandestine, and in certain codes. Emotional secrecy, sexual longings, sensuality, repressed desires, those are the common themes in both Henry James, particularly in *The Wings of the Dove*, I keep referring to that novel quite frequently and also *The Golden Bowl* and what is *The House of Mirth* as well as *The Age of Innocence*, alright? So thank you very much, we will continue tomorrow.

(Professor – student conversation ends)