

# Edith Wharton on Film and Television: *A History and Filmography*

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by *Scott Marshall*

Edith Wharton lived the first half of her life (38 years) in the nineteenth century and the final half (37 years) in the twentieth century. As she explains in *A Backward Glance*, she "was born into a world in which telephones, motors, electric light, central heating (except by hot-air furnaces), X-rays, cinemas, radium, aeroplanes and wireless telegraphy were not only unknown but still mostly unforeseen" (6-7). A woman who valued the past, she also appreciated many modern conveniences. She loved the motorcar, utilized the convenience of both telephone and telegraph, had electricity and central heating installed in The Mount in 1901, and saw the first airplane fly over Paris seven years later. However, one major new invention that she was never able to come to terms with aesthetically was the motion picture, or the "cinema," as she called it.

Despite her personal dislike of the medium, several of Wharton's most popular novels were filmed during her lifetime, including *The Age of Innocence* (twice, first as a silent movie, then as a sound film), *The House of Mirth*, *The Glimpses of the Moon*, and *The Children* (as "The Marriage Playground").\* Wharton realized substantial income from the sales of these works to film companies, but she apparently never viewed any of them, nor is there evidence that she expressed the slightest interest in seeing them. Shortly after her death one additional film was made: "The Old Maid," with Bette Davis and Miriam Hopkins. Following its

\* To distinguish book from screen titles, film and television adaptations of Wharton's fiction referred to in this essay appear in quotation marks.

release in 1939, no feature film of a Wharton work would appear until the unsuccessful version of "The Children" in 1990—a hiatus of over fifty years.

Wharton may have entered a movie theatre only once in her lifetime. Although in his 1975 biography, R. W. B. Lewis notes that "Edith Wharton herself appears never to have entered a movie theater" (7), the Lewises' 1988 edition of Wharton's letters establishes that the author did see one silent film on a trip to Spain in 1914 with her friend Walter Berry. Wharton describes the event in a letter from Spain to Bernard Berenson:

The other day Walter insisted on going to the Cinema at Bilbao, & I was so glad he did, for the *stupendo dramma di 3 mila metri* was called: "*Comment on visite une ville au galop*" [How to visit a town on the run]. But he only smiled as the panting travellers spun by, & said, when it was over: "Well, we ought to start by 9 sharp tomorrow." (*Letters*, 325)

The earliest mention of film in Wharton's fiction occurs in *Summer* (1917), most likely based on that experience in Spain three years before. In *Summer*, Charity's attendance at a silent movie in Nettleton on the Fourth of July represents an exhilarating expansion of her narrow world:

... for a while, everything was merged in her brain in swimming circles of heat and blinding alternations of light and darkness. All the

world has to show seemed to pass before her in a chaos of palms and minarets, charging calvary regiments, roaring lions, comic policemen and scowling murderers; and the crowd around her, the hundreds of sallow candy-munching faces, young, old, middle-aged, but all kindled with the same contagious excitement, became part of the spectacle, and danced on the screen with the rest. (139)

Two of Wharton's "jazz age" novels, *Twilight Sleep* (1927) and *The Children* (1928), contain numerous references to the cinema. Wharton's portrayal of films in her fiction a decade later became more negative; movies for her had evolved into trendy, mindless experiences to be avoided by serious, intelligent people. In *Twilight Sleep*, the Marchesa, who is excited that an acquaintance is appearing in a film for a great deal of money, justifies the artistic value of making films by equating the process with the production of bathrooms:

And besides, is it ever degrading to create a work of art? I thought in America you made so much of creativeness—constructiveness—what do you call it? Is it less creative to turn a film than to manufacture bathrooms? Can there be a nobler mission than to teach history to the millions by means of beautiful pictures? (295-96)

The author's tone clearly implies that for her the cinema was neither beautiful nor noble—and that it could not be seriously considered as "a work of art." Wharton's final word on film appears in the preface to *Ghosts* (1937), her last collection of stories. Here she scathingly denounces both "cinema" and "wireless" radio as the "two world-wide enemies of the imagination." She further laments: "To a generation for whom everything which used to nourish the imagination because it had to be won by an effort, and then slowly assimilated, is now served cooked, seasoned and chopped into little bits, the creative faculty . . . is rapidly withering, together with the power of sustained attention . . ." (2)." This criticism has a contemporary sound; one need only substitute the concept of television today for the cinema and the radio she despised.

Wharton always preferred the word over the picture. As a child, Edith Jones loved to hear great language beautifully spoken. Wharton remembers in a late memoir, "A Little Girl's New York," that the two

events in which I took an active part were

going to church—and going to the theater. I venture to group them together because, looking back across the blurred expanse of a long life, I see them standing up side by side, like summits catching the light when all else is in shadow. (362)

She explains that in the Old New York of her youth, the Reverend Dr. Washburn of Calvary Church had helped her to discover "the matchless beauty of English seventeenth-century prose" (362). Similarly, theater-going, for Wharton, was "largely a matter of listening to voices" [emphasis Wharton 363]. For an author who was extremely sensitive to words, church-going and the theater were incomparable aural experiences, whereas the cinema was probably judged to be lacking because it was essentially a visual medium. If, in fact, Wharton only saw one silent movie (or even several silent movies), then the medium of cinema for her was only a visual experience, without any enhancement of sound. In that same memoir Wharton expresses personal abhorrence at the thought of sitting in an audience, which may account for her disdain for film: "[S]omething in me has always resisted the influence of crowds and shows, and I have hardly ever been able to yield myself unreservedly to a spectacle shared by a throng of people" (362). Cinema produced for the masses forced a viewer to interact with the "sallow candy-munching" people that Wharton evokes at the movie showing attended by Charity Royall in *Summer*. By contrast, the live theater witnessed during her youth, primarily the great classics of the stage, is rapturously described as "something new, a window opening on the foam of faeryland" (363).

Wharton's thoughts on how actors should perform their roles also suggest why she did not favor the cinema. She asserts: "I am involuntarily hypercritical of any impersonation of characters already so intensely visible to my imagination that anyone else's conception of them interferes with that inward vision." After "five minutes" of watching the actors in a play, she felt the strong desire to "get up on the stage and show them how they ought to act" (363). The even more exaggerated performances of actors in silent films must, understandably, have been anathema to Wharton.

Like Henry James, Wharton desired successful stage adaptations of her stories and novels. Moreover, in her early years, she herself worked on several dramatizations, including a translation of Hermann Sudermann's *Es Lebe das Leben* in 1902 for the actress Mrs. Patrick Campbell. Wharton also collaborated with the celebrated dramatist Clyde Fitch on a dramatic adaptation of *The House of Mirth*, but it failed soon after the Broadway opening in 1906. In later years Wharton worked on drafts of a

dramatization (never produced) of her short story "Confession." In the final decade of her life, three of Wharton's best novels were dramatized for the stage by other writers: *The Age of Innocence* by Margaret Ayer Barnes in the late 1920s, starring Katharine Cornell; *Ethan Frome* by Donald and Owen Davis in 1935, starring Raymond Massey and Ruth Gordon; and *The Old Maid* in 1936, which won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for Zoë Akins, and starred Judith Anderson and Helen Menken. Both *The Age of Innocence* and *The Old Maid* were then made for the cinema (in 1934 and 1939, respectively), primarily from these theatrical adaptations, rather than the original texts.

Unlike the films based on her work, Wharton took an interest in these theatrical versions, which she read but never had the opportunity to see. She wrote several letters detailing manners, customs, and period clothing for the benefit of the productions. In her 1936 foreword to the published play version of "Ethan Frome" by Owen and Donald Davis, she enthusiastically sets aside her concerns regarding actors physically inhabiting the characters that she had originally conceived in fictional terms, as well as her distaste for "that grimacing enlargement of gesture and language supposed to be necessary to 'carry' over the footlights":

It has happened to me, as to most novelists, to have the odd experience, through the medium of reviews or dramatizations of their work, to see their books as they have taken shape in other minds: always a curious, and sometimes a painful, revelation.

She further specified her "admiration for the great skill and exquisite sensitiveness with which my interpreters have executed their task. . . . [It is] an unusual achievement" (viii)—praise only accorded to an adaptation of her work for the theater.

Like these stage successes, all of the Wharton works filmed in her lifetime were drawn from her bestselling novels. The first to be filmed was also her first and greatest success, *The House of Mirth* (1905). Metro Pictures Corporation made a silent film version in 1918, starring Katherine Harris Barrymore, which Albert Capellani directed from a scenario he co-authored with June Mathias. Although the film does not survive, William Larsen, whose ground-breaking 1995 dissertation studies the adaptations of Wharton's works for the screen, has discovered from a published synopsis in *Picture Play* that the novel's ending was radically changed for the movie: Lily takes chloroform, but "in the final shots of the film Selden arrives with a doctor, who announces that Lily will survive the overdose. Clutching Lily in his arms, Selden kisses her as he tells her that all will work out

well for them both: she is safe now from danger and they will remain together" ("A New Lease on Life," 59). Larsen notes that this silent version "clearly affirms the happy marriage ending which was the conventional resolution to the nineteenth-century sentimental domestic female novel and the male pastoral novel that Wharton was writing against in *The House of Mirth*" (59-60). The cinematic revision also actualizes William Dean Howells's comment to Wharton after viewing the 1906 play of *The House of Mirth*: "What the American public always wants is a tragedy with a happy ending" (qtd in Lewis, *Edith Wharton*, 172). The 1918 film version delivered exactly that.

A cinema version of *The Glimpses of the Moon* (1922) quickly appeared in 1923, directed for Paramount by Allan Dwan from an adaptation by E. Lloyd Sheldon. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote film dialogue titles, but apparently his script was not used. Major silent film stars Bebe Daniels, Nita Naldi, and Maurice Costello were featured.

*The Age of Innocence* (1920) was first filmed as a silent in 1924, directed by Wesley Ruggles, with Beverly Bayne as Countess Olenska and Elliot Dexter as Newland Archer. The Pulitzer Prize-winning novel—the only Wharton work filmed three times—was later filmed twice more with sound: in 1934 and 1993.

Unfortunately, all three of these early silent movies are considered lost films, and although major performers and directors were involved, it is difficult to evaluate their quality or their faithfulness to the original texts. However, the first sound film based on a Wharton work does survive: *The Children* (1928), filmed in 1929 by Paramount and released under the title, "The Marriage Playground." Directed by Lothar Mendes, it features rising star Fredric March in the leading role (the actor made his film debut in another 1929 feature). This version imposes a happy ending in which Martin Boyne (middle-aged in the novel, but portrayed by the 32-year-old March) marries the very young Judith Wheeler. The novel has a far darker and more realistic ending in which Boyne is left alone, observing Judith from a distance dancing with young men her own age. The review in *Variety* indicates the successful reception of the changes from the original novel, while recalling Wharton's distaste for being awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1921 "for uplifting American morals" (Lewis, *Letters*, 445):

A peach of a picture, well above the satisfaction-giving average . . . and the kind that leaves a sense of full-hearted human pleasure with it. Can be booked in safety and exploited with confidence. It's packed with children, assumingly impudent, touchingly

warm youngsters who will carry a tremendous appeal to the great home-keeping, family-loving American public. In the midst of the children . . . is Fredric March . . . [A] couple of pictures like this one and March . . . will romp toward pronto. Miss Brian is splendid . . . [I]t is a production characterized by quiet, unostentatious elegance. (qtd. Quirk, *Films of Fredric March*, 52)

Although a 35-millimeter print of "The Marriage Playground" survives in the archives of the film department of UCLA in Los Angeles, its inaccessibility (except to film scholars) effectively renders this another "lost" film for Wharton scholars and the general public.

It would be interesting to know what Wharton would have thought of the 1934 film version of *The Age of Innocence*. Released by RKO Radio Pictures, it stars Irene Dunne (Countess Olenska), John Boles (Newland Archer), Julie Haydon (May Welland), and a fine supporting cast, including Laura Hope Crews and Lionel Atwill, under the direction of Philip Moeller.

The movie also features attractive settings, beautiful costumes designed by Walter Plunkett, and a musical score composed by Max Steiner (both Plunkett and Steiner would work together again five years later on "Gone with the Wind"). William Larsen has discovered that screenwriters Victor Heerman and Sarah Y. Mason originally wrote the script for Katharine Hepburn, but because of a contract difficulty, the part of Ellen Olenska went to Irene Dunne ("A New Lease on Life," 133). *The New York Times* review was respectful, but unenthusiastic:

In an ideal world, Mrs. Wharton's distinguished novel would fill the screen with tragic emotion as it filled the stage six years ago in the impassioned acting of Katherine Cornell. For Philip Moeller's screen drama . . . has been managed with all possible dignity and sincerity. . . . Yet the photoplay at the [Radio City] Music Hall leaves the spectator curiously cold and detached from the raging emotions of the story. . . . In Mr. Moeller's garrulous and faintly ponderous production the tragedy touches you cerebrally rather than emotionally.

"The Age of Innocence" of 1934, although not a great film, is a highly interesting one. Very much a product of the mid-1930s, it reveals surprising choices in both the screenplay adaptation and in its direction. For example, the narrative opens in the present-

day and returns to that setting at the end, rendering the story an extended flashback as told by Newland to his grandson (not his son, as at the conclusion of the novel). The elderly Newland and his grandson now live in a violent world (suggested by a jarring, wildly paced montage sequence immediately following the opening credits), which is set in opposition to the order and supposed harmony of the Old New York of the 1870s. Additional contrast is provided by the information that the grandson, a young man in his twenties, is currently involved in a love affair; however, unlike his grandfather's romance in the "flashback," Dallas's affair is a public scandal. While much less faithful to the original novel in many aspects than the 1993 Scorsese version, the 1934 "Age of Innocence" is respectfully realized, and features appealing performances by Irene Dunne and Julie Haydon. This rare film is unfortunately not available for viewing, although a special screening for the conference, "Edith Wharton at Yale," sponsored by the Edith Wharton Society, took place at Yale University in April 1995.

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Little is known about the 1935 version by Universal Pictures of Wharton's short story "Bread Upon the Waters," released under the title "Strange Wives." The original Wharton story contains direct references to films and to Hollywood; for example, "the world's leading movie star," Halma Hoboe (15), almost certainly refers to Greta Garbo. "Strange Wives," directed by Richard Thorpe with a screenplay by Gladys Unger, is also a lost movie which cannot be properly evaluated as a translation of Wharton to the screen.

The best-known Wharton work on film (due in part to its cast and perhaps to its current availability on videocassette) remains *The Old Maid* (1924). Released as a film in 1939, two years after Wharton's death, the Warner Bros. movie stars Bette Davis (Charlotte Lovell), Miriam Hopkins (Delia Lovell), and George Brent (Clem Spender), under the direction of Edmund Golding.

Larsen has determined that the film began shooting in March 1939 with Humphrey Bogart as the male lead, but the producer and director disliked the result and recast the role of Clem Spender with George Brent ("A New Lease on Life," 207-08).

"The Old Maid" screenplay by Casey Robinson is based on the play by Zoë Akins that premiered on Broadway in 1935. The time period of Wharton's novella, subtitled "The Fifties" (i.e., the 1850s) is reset a decade later in the 1860s, perhaps due to the tremendous popularity of the then-best-selling novel *Gone with the Wind*. The film received both critical and popular acclaim. *The New York Times* reviewer enthused: "The Old Maid" must be reckoned another fine theatrical property to come unimpaired to the screen [note source of film as the play, not the novel]. . . . Miss Davis has given a poignant and wise performance, hard and

austere on the surface, yet communicating through it the deep tenderness, the hidden anguish, of the heartbroken mother" (qtd. in Ringgold 97). The film, which is often effective, might best be classified as a melodramatic "weepie"—a three-handkerchief women's picture. Margaret McDowell compares the adaptation and the resulting film to the original Wharton novella in her 1987 essay "Wharton's 'The Old Maid': Novella/Play/Film." In addition, Larsen details the extensive problems that "The Old Maid" screenwriters, director, and producer faced in adapting Wharton's story to meet Hollywood's strict code requirements of the 1930s.

By the time that "The Old Maid" was released, Wharton was dead. It seems clear that she never experienced or considered an improved cinema—represented by the 1934 "Age of Innocence" and the 1939 "Old Maid"—whether based on literary sources or not. Her knowledge of and her prejudices against the medium must have been based on the often outrageous overacting and the obvious, grimacing melodrama of early silent movies. Rapid advances in film technology and rising standards in the quality of acting, direction, and production in her lifetime were apparently ignored by the author. After her death, most of Wharton's fiction was considered old-fashioned, and for many years the popularity of her novels, with the exception of *Ethan Frome*, waned. Appropriately it became the first Wharton work to be dramatized for the small screen of television. The 1911 novella with a principal cast of three trapped in an isolated wintry farmhouse setting adapted well to the intimacy of the new medium, appearing on February 18, 1960, as the "Dupont Show of the Month." It stars Sterling Hayden (Ethan), Julie Harris (Mattie), and Clarice Blackburn (Zenobia), with narration by Arthur Hill. The adaptation is by Jacqueline Babbitt and Audrey Gellen, with direction by Alex Segal; the producer is David Susskind. It would be almost a third of a century more before *Ethan Frome* finally appeared as a major motion picture in 1993.

The publication of Lewis's biography in 1975 and Cynthia Griffin Wolff's *A Feast of Words: The Triumph of Edith Wharton* in 1977 stimulated new interest in televising both Wharton's life and her works. Twenty years after *Ethan Frome* appeared on television, the Public Broadcasting System (funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities) produced a three-part series on Wharton in 1981, consisting of one segment on her life and two dramatizations of her fiction. Wharton scholars, including Lewis, McDowell, Elizabeth Ammons, and Blake Nevius, are billed as consultants. The first part of the series, "Looking Back," is loosely based on sections from *A Backward Glance* and the Lewis biography. It features Kathleen Widdoes as Wharton, John Collum as Walter Berry, John McMartin as Teddy Wharton, Richard Woods as Henry James, and Stephen Collins as Morton

Fullerton. Directed by Kirk Browning, the teleplay by Steve Lawson envisions Wharton returning to The Mount in Lenox as an older woman as she confides to Berry the momentous events of her life. *The House of Mirth*, directed by Adrian Hall, was this novel's first film treatment since the 1918 silent movie. Written by Hall and Richard Cummings, the adaptation stars Geraldine Chaplin as Lily Bart and William Atherton as Lawrence Selden, with members of the Trinity Square Repertory Company. The final installment is *Summer*, written by Charles Gaines and directed by Dezso Magyar. Filmed in New England, it stars Diane Lane (Charity Royall), Michael Ontkean (Lucius Harney), and John Collum (lawyer Royall). According to a 1937 profile of Wharton that appeared in the Paris edition of the *New York Herald*, *Summer* had previously been under consideration to be filmed by an unnamed company, but the studio heads deemed it "too immoral" for the public. The 1981 television version is the first and only dramatization of this novella.

In 1983, three of Wharton's ghost stories—"The Lady's Maid's Bell" (1902), "Afterward" (1910), and "Bewitched" (1925)—were filmed for the "Shades of Darkness" series by Granada Television of England. All three were seen in America as part of "Mystery," a presentation of WGBH/Boston. The first two, well-directed and performed, sensitively and faithfully realize the tone of the original stories. They rank as the finest screen adaptations of Wharton's works to date.

In the 1990s, Hollywood rediscovered Wharton, coinciding with and perhaps because of an increasing interest in women's issues and a resurgence in the popularity of period films. No longer considered old-fashioned, Wharton's works were recognized to be timely and dramatically compelling; her vivid evocations of a past era defined by manners and mores were also found appealing. A 1992 article, "Hollywood Hears Her Roar—The Year of the Woman," in *The Washington Post*, begins: "How about that Edith Wharton? Dead since 1937, and all of a sudden her books have become hot film, TV and video properties." Wharton's posthumous cinematic revival followed a string of films based on the novels of E. M. Forster. With the film releases of "Ethan Frome" and "The Age of Innocence" in 1993, Wharton was clearly the classical author of the moment (a position currently held by Jane Austen).

"The Children," an international co-production of Isolde Films in 1990, stars Ben Kingsley (Martin Boyne) and features a rare screen appearance by Kim Novak in the role of his fiancée, Rose Sellars. Directed by Tony Palmer and scripted by the playwright Timberlake Wertenbaker, the 1993 film version is far more faithful to the 1928 novel than the early Hollywood version, "The Marriage Playground" (1929), which had substituted a happy

ending for the original one. The reviewer for *Variety* liked the principal performers but felt the film "cries out for a brisker pace and sharper cutting. . . . A beautiful, sad love story might have been made from this material, but 'The Children' comes across as uninvolved and dated. It'll be a hard sell . . ." (n. pag.). The 1993 version failed both critically and financially and did not receive an American theatrical release.

Released in February 1993, the first and only film version of *Ethan Frome* stars Liam Neeson (Ethan), Patricia Arquette (Mattie), Joan Allen (Zenobia), Tate Donovan (the Reverend Smith), and Katharine Houghton (Mrs. Hale). *Ethan Frome* had been announced for filming as a motion picture at least twice previously. In 1948 Warner Brothers planned a film version starring Bette Davis as Mattie and Mildred Natwick as Zenobia.

Davis wanted Gary Cooper to play Ethan, but he declined. The studio then cast British actor David Farrar in the title role, but the film was eventually shelved (Stine, *Mother Goddam*, 228). In April 1987, *Variety Magazine* announced a movie version to be directed and adapted by Adrian Hall of the Trinity Repertory in Providence, Rhode Island; he had previously done *The House of Mirth* for television. This project, too, was never realized. Unfortunately, the 1993 film version, produced by American Playhouse Theatrical Films and Miramax Films, was not a success. *The New York Times* reviewer, although noting it to be "a fairly faithful adaptation . . . with the best of intentions," felt that "in place of a nearly perfect novella is a sad and solemn little film that never has a life of its own. This 'Ethan Frome' is not dead exactly, but rather in a state of suspended animation waiting to be roused, which never happens. . . . *Ethan Frome* deserves better than this." The film did not remain in first run theaters long but did appear the following year on nationwide television for American Playhouse.

Following the appearance of "Ethan Frome" in early 1993, Columbia Pictures released Martin Scorsese's "The Age of Innocence" in the fall of that year amidst tremendous publicity and reviews noting the director's change of pace from previous subjects of mob violence, crime, and New York's Little Italy to the very different world of Wharton's Old New York. *The New York Times* reviewer began: "Taking *The Age of Innocence* . . . Martin Scorsese has made a gorgeously uncharacteristic Scorsese film. It would be difficult to imagine anything further removed from the director's canon. . . . Yet with a fine cast . . . , Mr. Scorsese has made a big, intelligent movie that functions as if it were a window on a world he had just discovered, and about which he can't wait to spread the news. . . . 'The Age of Innocence' isn't perfect, but it's a robust gamble that pays off." In interviews in *Mirabella* and *Premiere* magazines, Scorsese explained that he had been drawn to the story, its characters, and to the violence

under the surface of that 1870s world with its different kinds of punishment and bloodletting. The film, with a screenplay by Scorsese and Jay Cocks, starred Michelle Pfeiffer (Countess Olenska), Daniel Day-Lewis (Newland Archer), Winona Ryder (May Welland), and a strong supporting cast, especially Miriam Margolyes as Mrs. Manson Mingott, who received a British Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance. Despite several Academy Award nominations, the film received only one Oscar—Best Costume Design (Gabriella Pescucci).

The making of the film is documented by an attractive art book, *The Age of Innocence: A Portrait of the Film*, by Martin Scorsese, co-screenwriter Jay Cocks, and the film's visual consultant Robin Standefer. The screenplay adaptation is included in this work, along with discussions of the filmmakers' intentions, preparations, and sources. The fact that "The Age of Innocence," an expensive motion picture, did not do as well financially as Columbia Pictures had hoped has apparently ended several announced film productions of other Wharton works, including *The Custom of the Country* and *Glimpses of the Moon*.

Most recently Wharton's final novel, *The Buccaneers*, left unfinished at her death and published posthumously in 1938, has enjoyed a renaissance. Several new editions of the book (with and without new endings by other authors) preceded a multi-part television dramatization by the British Broadcasting Corporation and WGBH/Boston. Maggie Wadey's adaptation followed the original novel fairly faithfully, for the unwritten ending, Wadey used Wharton's outline of the conclusion as a beginning point for a mostly new finale. "The Buccaneers," shown in the United Kingdom in five installments in March 1995, premiered in America in three installments on "Masterpiece Theatre" during October 1995 to enthusiastic reviews. *The New York Times* review is typical: ". . . ravishing television . . . , 'The Buccaneers' is really a delicious soap opera played out by a superb cast in gorgeous costumes against even more gorgeous settings. . . . Despite the liberties taken, I suspect Mrs. Wharton would not be disappointed."

Wharton scholars and film critics complain that writers and directors unnecessarily update the original texts, often in ways judged inappropriate or destructive to the author's intentions.

One obvious change has been a tendency to lighten Wharton's tone by imposing cinematic happy endings on the original tragic ones, such as in "The House of Mirth" in 1918, "The Marriage Playground" in 1929, and the television dramatization of "Summer" in 1981, which ends optimistically on the outstretched hands of lawyer Royall and Charity as he rescues her from a fate

on the Mountain. Tony Palmer's "The Children" includes Ken Russell-type hallucinations by Martin Boyne, which may or may not have been inspired by the text. John Madden's "Ethan Frome" features consummated sex between Ethan and Mattie (definitely not in the 1911 novella), while Zenobia lies in bed listening in an adjoining room. Martin Scorsese's "The Age of Innocence"—faithful in the use of locations, interior settings, costumes, manners, and other period details—nonetheless reverses the coloring of the two main female characters, affecting textual subtleties, according to scholars. A blonde Michelle Pfeiffer plays the dark Countess Olenska; a brunette Winona Ryder portrays the blonde May Welland.

More recently the television adaptation of "The Buccaneers" adds homosexuality to the plot. As the reviewer for *The New York Times* wrote: "Needless to say, not all Wharton scholars and readers will be pleased. One character, for instance, who is sexually incompetent in the book turns out in the mini-series to be homosexual. Welcome, Mrs. Wharton, to the Gay Nineties."

The scene in question involves Nan's husband, the Duke of Tintagel (renamed Trevenik for television), who is discretely shown in the arms of a groom of his estate.

How might Wharton feel about the renewed interest in her works by film studios and the recent movies that have appeared? She would probably be surprised at the level of interest, but certainly delighted at the financial windfalls from the sales of dramatic rights and film options in the 1990s. In 1934, with the American economy in the throes of depression, Wharton wrote her former sister-in-law Mary Cadwalader Jones concerning the sale of a short story to the movies: "Thank you so much for acting as my substitute in the film contract for 'Bread Upon the Waters.' I wish the sum had more nearly approached the prices I used to get!" (*Letters*, 577). If she were with us today, she would appreciate the income from sales of her works to become films, but, as usual, she would probably completely ignore the cinematic results.

#### Filmography

- 1918 THE HOUSE OF MIRTH (Metro, 6 reels, silent)  
*Director:* Albert Capellani *Screenplay:* June Mathis and Albert Capellani  
*Cast:* Katherine Harris Barrymore (Lily Bart), with Henry Kolker, Christine Mayo, Joseph Kilgour, Edward Abeles, W. D. Fisher, Lottie Briscoe, Pauline Welsh, Maggie Western, Nellie Parker-Spaulling, Sidney Bracy, Kempton Greene, Morgan Jones  
*Status:* lost  
*Notes:* credits from Bodeen (81); also see Lewis, *Edith Wharton*, 7.

- 1923 THE GLIMPSES OF THE MOON (Paramount, 7 reels, silent)  
*Director:* Allan Dwan *Screenplay:* E. Lloyd Shelton and Edfrid A. Bingham *Presented by:* Jesse L. Lasky  
*Cast:* Bebe Daniels (Susan), David Powell (Nick), Nita Naldi (Mrs. Vanderlyn), Maurice Costello (Mr. Vanderlyn), with Rubye De Remer, Charles Gerard, William Quirk, Pearl Sindelar, Beth Allen, Mrs. George Peggram, Delores Costello, Millie Muller, Beatrice Coburn, Fred Hadley, Robert Lee Keeling, Barton Adams, Freddie Veri  
*Status:* lost  
*Notes:* credits from Bodeen (81). Film rights sold for \$13,500 (Lewis, *Edith Wharton*, 444) or \$15,000 (Benstock, *No Gifts*, 372). Both note that F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote the film dialogue; Benstock states Fitzgerald was paid \$500 for this, but "his script apparently was not used" (372). She adds that "Appleton had flooded Los Angeles and Hollywood newspapers with advertisements to create a demand for film rights to her [Wharton's] works" (371).

- 1924 THE AGE OF INNOCENCE (Warner Bros., 7 reels, silent)  
*Director:* Wesley Ruggles *Screenplay:* Olga Printzlau  
*Cast:* Beverly Bayne (Countess Olenska), Elliot Dexter (Newland Archer), with Edith Roberts, Willard Louis, Fred Huntley, Gertrude Norman, Sigrid Holmquist, Stuart Holmes  
*Status:* lost  
*Notes:* credits from Bodeen (81). Wharton netted \$9,000 after agent's fees from the movie contract (Benstock, *No Gifts*, 361)

- 1929 THE MARRIAGE PLAYGROUND (Paramount, 70 minutes, All talking)  
*Director:* Lothar Mendes *Screenplay:* J. Walter Ruben  
*Adaptation and Dialogue:* Doris Anderson  
*Photography:* Victor Milner  
*Cast:* Mary Brian (Judy), Fredric March (Martin), Huntley Gordon (Cliffe), Lilyan Tashman (Joyce), Kay Francis (Lady Wrench), William Austin (Lord Wrench), Phillip de Lacey (Terry), Seena Owen (Mrs. Sellars), with Anita Louise, Little Mitzi Green, Billy Seay, Ruby Parsely, Donald Smith, Jocelyn Lee, Maude Turner Gordon, David Newell, Armand Kaliz, Joan Standing, Gordon De Main  
*Status:* exists  
*Notes:* credits from *Variety* 5/30/90 and Bodeen (81). Wharton received \$25,000 for the film rights from

Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation (Lewis, *Edith Wharton*, 484, and Benstock, *No Gifts*, 407).

Jerome Cowman (Joe Ralston), William Lundigan (Lanning Halsey), with Rand Brooks, Cecelia Loftus, Janet Shaw, William DeWolf Hopper, Marlene Burnett, Rod Cameron, Doris Lloyd, Frederick Burton

*Status:* Available for rental on videocassette, and in 16 mm or 35 mm

*Notes:* credits compiled from *The Films of Bette Davis* (96) and Bodeen (81). See Margaret B. McDowell's "Wharton's 'The Old Maid': Novella/Play/Film" for a full discussion of the various adaptations; also see Lewis, *Edith Wharton*, 7, 436.

1934 THE AGE OF INNOCENCE (RKO Radio, 9 reels, sound, c. 80-90 minutes)

*Director:* Philip Moeller *Screenplay:* Sarah Y. Mason and Victor Heerman (from the novel by Wharton and the theater dramatization by Margaret Ayer Barnes)

*Producer:* Pandro S. Berman *Costumes:* Walter Plunkett *Music:* Max Steiner

*Cast:* Irene Dunne (Countess Olenska), John Boles (Newland Archer), Julie Haydon (May Welland), Lionel Atwill (Beaufort), Laura Hope Crews (Mrs. Welland), Helen Westley (Granny Mingott), Herbert Yost (Mr. Welland), Theresa Maxwell-Conover (Mrs. Archer), Edith Van Cleve (Janey Archer), Leonard Carey (butler)

*Status:* exists

*Notes:* credits from *The New York Times* review 10/19/34 and Bodeen (81). Wharton received \$15,000 for the film rights (Lewis, *Edith Wharton*, 430).

1960 ETHAN FROME (*Television*—aired February 18, 1960 as the DuPont Show of the Month)

*Director:* Alex Segal *Teleplay:* Jacqueline Babbin and Audrey Gellin *Producer:* David Susskind

*Cast:* Sterling Hayden (Ethan Frome), Julie Harris (Mattie Silver), Clarice Blackburn (Zenobia Frome), with narration by Arthur Hill

*Status:* May be viewed at the Museum of Broadcasting, New York City.

*Notes:* First Wharton adaptation on television (Marshall, 16).

1935 STRANGE WIVES (Universal, 8 reels, sound)

*Director:* Richard Thorpe *Screenplay:* Gladys Unger (from Wharton's short story "Bread Upon the Waters")

*Additional Dialogue:* Barry Trivers and James Mulhauser

*Cast:* Roger Pryor, June Clayworth, Esther Ralston, Hugh O'Connell, Ralph Forbes, Cesar Romero, Francis L. Sullivan, Valerie Hobson, Leslie Fenton, Ivan Lebedeff, Doris Lloyd, Claude Gillingwater

*Status:* lost

*Notes:* Wharton to Mary Cadwalader Jones, April 10, 1934: "Thank you so much for acting as my substitute in the film contract for 'Bread Upon the Waters.' I wish the sum had more nearly approached the prices I used to get!" (Lewis and Lewis, *Letters*, 577). Benstock notes that Rutger Jewett sold the story for \$5,000 to the movies (*No Gifts*, 439).

1981 LOOKING BACK (*Television*—biographical sketch of Wharton, 56 minutes)

*Director:* Kirk Browning *Teleplay:* Steve Lawson

*Producers:* Sam Paul and Dorothy Cullman (A Cinelit Production) *Associate Producer:* Jackie Craig

*Photography:* Francis Kenny *Art Direction:* John Kasarda *Costumes:* Jennifer Von Mayrhauser

*CASTING:* Bonnie Timmerman *Executive Producer:* Jack Willis

*Cast:* Kathleen Widdoes (Edith Wharton), John Cullum (Walter Berry), John McMartin (Teddy Wharton), Richard Woods (Henry James), Stephen Collins (Morton Fullerton)

*Notes:* Loosely based on *A Backward Glance and Edith Wharton* by R.W.B. Lewis. The Elms in Newport, Rhode Island, was used for the exteriors of The Mount. Credits transcribed from tape by author.

1939 THE OLD MAID (Warner Bros., 95 minutes, sound)

*Director:* Edmund Goulding *Screenplay:* Casey Robinson (from Wharton's novella and the theater dramatization by Zoë Akins) *Producer:* Hal B. Wallis with Henry Blanke *Photography:* Tony Gaudio *Art Direction:* Robert Haas *Music:* Max Steiner

*Costumes:* Orry-Kelly *Editor:* George Amy

*Cast:* Bette Davis (Charlotte Lovell), Miriam Hopkins (Delia Lovell), George Brent (Clem Spender), Donald Crisp (Dr. Lanskell), Jane Bryan (Tina), Louise Fazenda (maid), James Stephenson (Jim Ralston),

1981 THE HOUSE OF MIRTH (*Television*, 95 minutes)

*Director:* Adrian Hall *Teleplay:* Adrian Hall and Richard Cumming *Producers:* Daniel A. Bohr and Dorothy Cullman *Executive Producer:* Jack Willis

*Photography:* Paul Goldsmith and Hart Perry

*Production Design:* Eugene Lee and Franee Lee

*Costumes:* Karen Roston *CASTING:* Bonnie Timmermann

*Editor:* Charlotte Zwerin *Music:* Richard Cumming



*Cast:* Geraldine Chaplin (Lily Bart), William Atherton (Lawrence Selden), Barbara Blossom (Mme. Regine), Bree (Old Man), Timothy Crowe (Lord Dacey), Barbara Damashek (Nettie Struther), Virginia Donaldson (Alice Wetherall), Tim Donoghue (Ned Silverton), Elaine Eldridge (Mrs. Bart), Monique Fowler (Evie Van Osburgh), Elizabeth Franz (Grace Stepney), Peter Gerety (Jack Stepney), Bradford Gottlin (Percy Gryce), Ed Hall (Paul Morpeth), Judith Harkness (Miss Corby), Richard Jenkins (George Dorset), David Jones (Mr. Bart), Melanie Jones (Mrs. Bry), David Kennett (butler), Richard Kneeland (Simon Rosedale), Marjorie Lee (Duchess of Belshire), Marguerite Lenert (Mrs. Peniston), Howard London (lawyer), Mana Manente (Gerty Farish), George Martin (Gus Trenor), Barbara Meek (Mrs. Haffen), Barbara Orson (Judy Trenor), Julie Pember (Mrs. Peniston's maid), Margo Skinner (Carry Fisher), Lois Smith (Bertha Dorset), Norman Smith (Wellington Bry), William E. Smith (Mr. Wetherall), Amy Van Nostrand (Gwen Van Osburgh). With the participation of the Trinity Square Repertory Company.  
*Notes:* Some scenes filmed in Newport, Rhode Island. Credits transcribed from tape by author.

1983

**THE LADY'S MAID'S BELL** (*Television*, 53 minutes)  
*Series:* Shades of Darkness *Production:* Granada Television of England, in association with WGBH, Boston (shown as part of the "Mystery!" series)  
*Director:* John Glenister *Screenplay:* Ken Taylor  
*Producer:* June Wyndham Davies *Production Manager:* Roy Jackson *Photography:* Tony Caldwell  
*Designer:* Tim Farmer *Music:* Paul Reade *Sound:* Harry Brookes *Editor:* Alan Ringland *Makeup:* Julie Jackson *Costumes:* John Fraser  *Casting:* Malcolm Drury *Research:* Nicky Cooney  
*Cast:* Joanna David (Hartley), June Brown (Emma Saxon), Norma West (Mrs. Brympton), Ian Collier (Mr. Brympton), Charlotte Mitchell (Mrs. Blinder), Roger Llewellyn (Mr. Ranford), Harry Littlewood (Mr. Wace), Diane Whitley (Agnes), Clive Duncan (Bob Burling), Malcolm Raeburn (Ted Roberts), Bernard Atha (pharmacist), Alick Hayes (Vicar)  
*Notes:* Principal location: Arley Hall, Cheshire, England. The 1904 short story—set by Wharton on the Hudson River—works well in an English setting. Credits transcribed from tape by author.

1981

**SUMMER** (*Television*, 87 minutes)  
*Director:* Dezso Magyar *Teleplay:* Charles Gaines  
*Producers:* Daniel A. Bohr and Dorothy Cullman  
*Executive Producer:* Jack Willis *Photography:* Michael Fash, B.S.C. *Art Direction:* Leon Munier  
*Costumes:* Carr Garnett *Music:* Lee Hoiby *Casting:* Bonnie Timmermann *Editor:* Janet Merwin *Sound:* Vincent Stenerson *Hair and Makeup:* Steve Atha  
*Associate Producer:* Walter Rearick  
*Cast:* Diane Lane (Charity Royall), Michael Ontkean (Lucius Harney), John Cullum (Lawyer Royall), Ray Poole (Reverend Miles), Edith Meiser (Miss Hatchard), Jackie Brookes (Verena), Kevin Martin (Liff Hyatt), Kevin O'Connor (Bash Hyatt), Kathryn Dowling (Annabell Balch), Lauralee Bruce (girl in jewelry shop), Pippa Pearthree (Ally Hawes), Jarlath Conroy (gaunt man), Robin Tilghman (Charity's sister), William Preston (old man)  
*Notes:* Filmed in Temple, New Hampshire, and Jaffrey Center, New Hampshire. Credits transcribed from tape by author. *Looking Back, The House of Mirth, and Summer* were Special Presentations in the Humanities under the auspices of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

1983

**AFTERWARD** (*Television*, 53 minutes)  
*Series:* Shades of Darkness *Production:* Granada Television of England, in association with WGBH-Boston (shown as part of the "Mystery!" series)  
*Director:* Simon Langton *Screenplay:* Alfred Shaughnessy *Producer:* June Wyndham Davies  
*Executive Producer:* Michael Cox *Production Manager:* Keith Thompson *Photography:* Tony Caldwell  
*Designer:* Alan Price *Music:* Patrick Gowers *Sound:* Ray French *Dubbing:* John Whitworth *Editor:* Anthony Horn *Makeup:* Lois Richardson *Costumes:* Anne Salisbury *Casting:* Priscilla John *Research:* Nicky Cooney  
*Cast:* Kate Harper (Mary Boyne), Michael J. Shannon (Edward Boyne), Penelope Lee (Alida Stair), John Grillo (Harold Parvis), Meg Ritchie (Trimmle), Rolf Saxon (Robert Elwell), William Abney (Inspector Yates), Merelinda Kendall (Agnes), Arthur Whybrow (Mr. Craig), Eric Francis (Cooper)  
*Notes:* Credits transcribed from tape by author.

1983

**BEWITCHED** (*Television*, 48 minutes)  
*Series:* Shades of Darkness *Production:* Granada Television of England, in association with WGBH-Boston (shown as part of the "Mystery!" series)  
*Director:* John Gorrie *Screenplay:* Alan Plater  
*Producer:* June Wyndham Davies *Executive*

*Producer:* Michael Cox *Production Manager:* Roy Jackson *Photography:* Doug Hallows *Designer:* Peter Phillips *Music:* Geoffrey Burgon *Sound:* Ray French *Dubbing:* John Whitworth *Editor:* Alan Ringland *Makeup:* Julie Jackson *Costumes:* Esther Dean  *Casting:* Malcolm Drury *Research:* Nicky Cooney  
*Cast:* Eileen Atkins (Mrs. Rutledge), Alfred Burke (Reverend Hibben), Ray Smith (Sylvester Brand), Gareth Thomas (Owen Bosworth), Alfred Lynch (Saul Rutledge), Mary Healey (Loretta Bosworth), Martyn Hesford (Andrew), MaryJo Randle (the girl)  
*Notes:* Credits transcribed from tape by author.

1988 SONGS FROM THE HEART (*Television—biographical sketch of Wharton, with scenes from her fiction, 56 minutes*)

*Director:* Dennis Krausnick *Screenplay:* Mickey Friedman from his play *Producer:* John MacGruer/  
Downtown Productions *Photography:* Arnold Beckerman *Editors:* Mickey Friedman and John MacGruer *Sets:* Matthew Larkin *Costumes:* Joan DeGusto *Music:* Lawrence Wallach  
*Cast:* Gillian Barge (Edith Wharton), with Margaret Whitton, Henry Stram, Kathleen Mahoney-Barrett, John Talbot, Caris Corfman, Peter Whittrock, Michaela Murphy

*Notes:* Available on videocassette. Primarily filmed at The Mount, Lenox, Massachusetts, and other Berkshire County locations. Credits compiled by author.

1990 THE CHILDREN (*Isolde Films, in association with Film Four International, Arbo Film & Maram GbmH and Bayerliche Landesanstalt for Aufbaufinanzierung, 115 minutes*)

*Director:* Tony Palmer *Screenplay:* Timberlake Wertenbaker *Producer:* Andrew Montgomery  
*Photography:* Nic Knowland *Editor:* Tony Palmer  
*Sound:* John Murphy *Production Design:* Chris Bradley and Paul Templeton *Art Direction:* Renate Hofer *Costume Design:* John Hibbs *Makeup:* Penny Smith *Co-Producer:* Harald Albrecht  
*Cast:* Ben Kingsley (Martin Boyne), Kim Novak (Rose Sellars), Siri Neal (Judith), Geraldine Chaplin (Joyce Wheeler), Joe Don Baker (Cliffie Wheeler), Britt Ekland (Lady Wrench), Donald Sinden (Lord Wrench), Karen Black (Sybil Lullmer), Robert Stephens (Mr. Dobree), Rupert Graves (Gerald Ormerod), Terence Rigby (Duke of Mendip), Marie Helvin (Princess Buondelmonte), Rosemary Leach (Miss Scope), Mark Asquith (Terry), Anouk Fontaine (Blanca), Ian Ha

Hawkes (Beechy), Harmonie Eyre (Zinnie), Edward Michie (Chippo)

*Notes:* Filmed in Venice, Paris, Bavaria, Switzerland, Italy. Credits: *Variety* 5/30/90 and Isolde Films. Did not receive a U.S. release in theaters; the film did have a limited release on videocassette in an edited version (c. 90 minutes).

1993 ETHAN FROME (*American Playhouse Theatrical Films and Miramax Films, 99 minutes*)

*Director:* John Madden *Screenplay:* Richard Nelson  
*Executive Producers:* Lindsay Law and Richard Price  
*Producer:* Stan Wlodkowski *Associate Producer:* Johlyn Dale *Photography:* Bobby Bukowski *Music:* Rachel Portman *Costume Design:* Carol Oditz  
*Production Design:* Andrew Jackness *Art Direction:* David Crank *Set Direction:* Joyce Anne Gilstrap  
*Editor:* Katherine Wenning *Sound:* Paul Cote  
*Assistant Director:* Allan Nicholls  *Casting:* Billy Hopkins and Suzanne Smith

*Cast:* Liam Neeson (Ethan Frome), Patricia Arquette (Mattie Silver), Joan Allen (Zenobia Frome), Tate Donovan (Reverend Smith), Katharine Houghton (Mrs. Hale), Stephen Mendillo (Ned Hale), Jay Goede (Denis Eady), George Woodward (Jotham), Debbon Ayer (Young Ruth Hale), Rob Campbell (Young Ned Hale)

*Notes:* Available on videocassette. Final credits state: "Filmed entirely on location in the Northeast Kingdom, Vermont," including Peachum, Vermont. A Miramax Release of an American Playhouse Theatrical Films Presentation, in association with Richard Price/BBC Films. Credits transcribed from tape by author.

1993 THE AGE OF INNOCENCE (*Columbia Pictures, 138 minutes*)

*Director:* Martin Scorsese *Screenplay:* Jay Cocks and Martin Scorsese *Producer:* Barbara De Fina  
*Photography:* Michael Ballhaus, A.S.C. *Production Design:* Dante Ferretti *Editor:* Thelma Schoonmaker  
*Costume Design:* Gabriella Pescucci *Music:* Elmer Bernstein *Title Sequence:* Elaine and Saul Bass  
*Co-Producer and Unit Production Manager:* Bruce S. Pustin *Associate Producer:* Joseph Reidy  *Casting:* Ellen Lewis *Art Direction:* Speed Hopkins *Visual Research Consultant:* Robin Standefer *Script Supervisor:* Kathryn M. Chapin *Make-up:* Allen Weisinger *Special Effects Make-up:* Manlio Rocchetti  
*Michelle Pfeiffer's Make-up:* Ronnie Specter *Chief Lighting Technician:* Raymond Quinlan *Dialect Coach:* Tim Monich *19th-Century Music Consultant:*

David Montgomery *Etiquette Consultant*: Lily Lodge  
*Dramaturg*: Michael X. Zelenak *Dance Consultant*:  
Elizabeth Aldrich *Table Decorations Consultant*:  
David McFadden *Chef for 19th-Century Meals*: Rich  
Ellis A Cappa/De Fina Production of a Martin  
Scorsese Picture

*Cast*: Daniel Day-Lewis (Newland Archer), Michelle  
Pfeiffer (Countess Olenska), Winona Ryder (May  
Welland), Geraldine Chaplin (Mrs. Welland), Michael  
Gough (Henry van der Luyden), Richard E. Grant  
(Larry Lefferts), Mary Beth Hurt (Regina Beaufort),  
Robert Sean Leonard (Ted Archer), Norman Lloyd (Mr.  
Letterblair), Miriam Margolyes (Mrs. Mingott), Alec  
McCowen (Sillerton Jackson), Sian Phillips (Mrs.  
Archer), Jonathan Pryce (Riviere), Alexis Smith (Louisa  
van der Luyden), Stuart Wilson (Julius Beaufort),  
Joanne Woodward (Narrator)

*Notes*: Stage Facilities: Kaufman Astoria Studios, New  
York. Filmed in New York City; Troy, New York;  
Long Island, New York; and Paris. Available on  
videocassette. Nominated for five Academy Awards,  
including Best Screenplay (adapted from another  
medium—Cocks and Scorsese), Best Supporting Actress  
(Ryder), Best Art Direction, Best Costume Design, and  
Best Original Score. The film received one Oscar for  
Best Costume Design (Pescucci). The National Board  
of Review named it "Best Picture of the Year," and  
recognized Scorsese as "Best Director" and Ryder as  
"Best Supporting Actress." Ryder also received the  
Golden Globe Award for her performance. Miriam  
Margolyes received the British Academy Award for  
"Best Supporting Actress" as Mrs. Manson Mingott.  
Credits transcribed from tape by author.

1995 THE BUCCANEERS (*Television*, BBC Productions, c.  
330 minutes)

*Director/Producer*: Philip Saville *Screenplay*: Maggie  
Wadey *Executive Producer*: Philippa Giles *Co-*  
*Producer*: Rosalind Wolfes *Associate Producer*: Nigel  
Taylor *Production Manager*: David Mason *Designer*:  
Tony Burrough *Costume Design*: Rosalind Ebbutt  
*Makeup Designer*: Christine Walmesley-Cotham  
*Casting Director*: Sarah Bird *Lighting Cameraman*:  
Remi Adefarasin *Sound*: John Pritchard *Editor*: Greg  
Miller *Art Direction*: Choi Ho Man and John Hill  
*Music*: Colin Towns *Choreography*: Domini Winter  
*Cast*: Cheri Lunghi (Laura Testvalley), Carla Gugino  
(Nan St George), Mira Sorvino (Conchita), Alison  
Elliott (Virginia St George) Rya Kihlstedt (Lizzy  
Elmsworth), Ronan Vibert (Richard), Mark Tandy

(Lord Seadown), James Frain (Julius, Duke of  
Trevenik), Dinsdale Landen (Lord Brightlingsea),  
Rosemary Leach (Lady Brightingsea), Greg Wise (Guy  
Thwaite), Michael Kitchen (Sir Helmsley Thwaite),  
Sophie Dix (Honoraria), Sienna Guillory (Felicia), Emily  
Hamilton (Georgina), Connie Booth (Miss March),  
Jenny Agutter (Idina Hatton), Gwen Humble (Mrs. St  
George), Peter Michael Goetz (Col. St George), E.  
Katherine Kerr (Mrs. Parmore), Conchata Ferrell (Mrs.  
Elmsworth), Elizabeth Ashley (Mrs. Closson), James  
Rebhorn (Mr. Closson), Sheila Hancock (Dowager  
Trevenick), Richard Huw (Hector Robinson), Gresby  
Nash (Miles Dawnley), Diana Blackburn (Gertrude  
Trevenick), Matt Patresi (Lord Percy), Vicky Blake  
(Rose), David Neilson (Blair), Richard Cubison  
(jeweller), Valerie Minifie (Miss French), Karen Ascoe  
(Mrs. Lindfry), Roger Brierley (Tory MP for Lincoln),  
Lloyd McGuire (Tory MP for Bath), Martin Milman  
(Mr. Firle), William Tapley (Thomas), Christopher  
Owen (Speaker, House of Commons), Stephen Reynolds  
(Hogwood), Alister Cameron (Longlands butler), Bev  
Willis (Fisher), Stephen Billington (Lieutenant James)  
*Notes*: Credits supplied by the BBC. United Kingdom  
premiere: March 1995, in five segments. U.S.  
premiere: Masterpiece Theatre, October 8-10, 1995, in  
three parts (Part I: 90 minutes; Part II: 120 minutes;  
Part III: 120 minutes). Filmed in Newport, Rhode  
Island, and at various English country house locations.

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Lenox, MA

