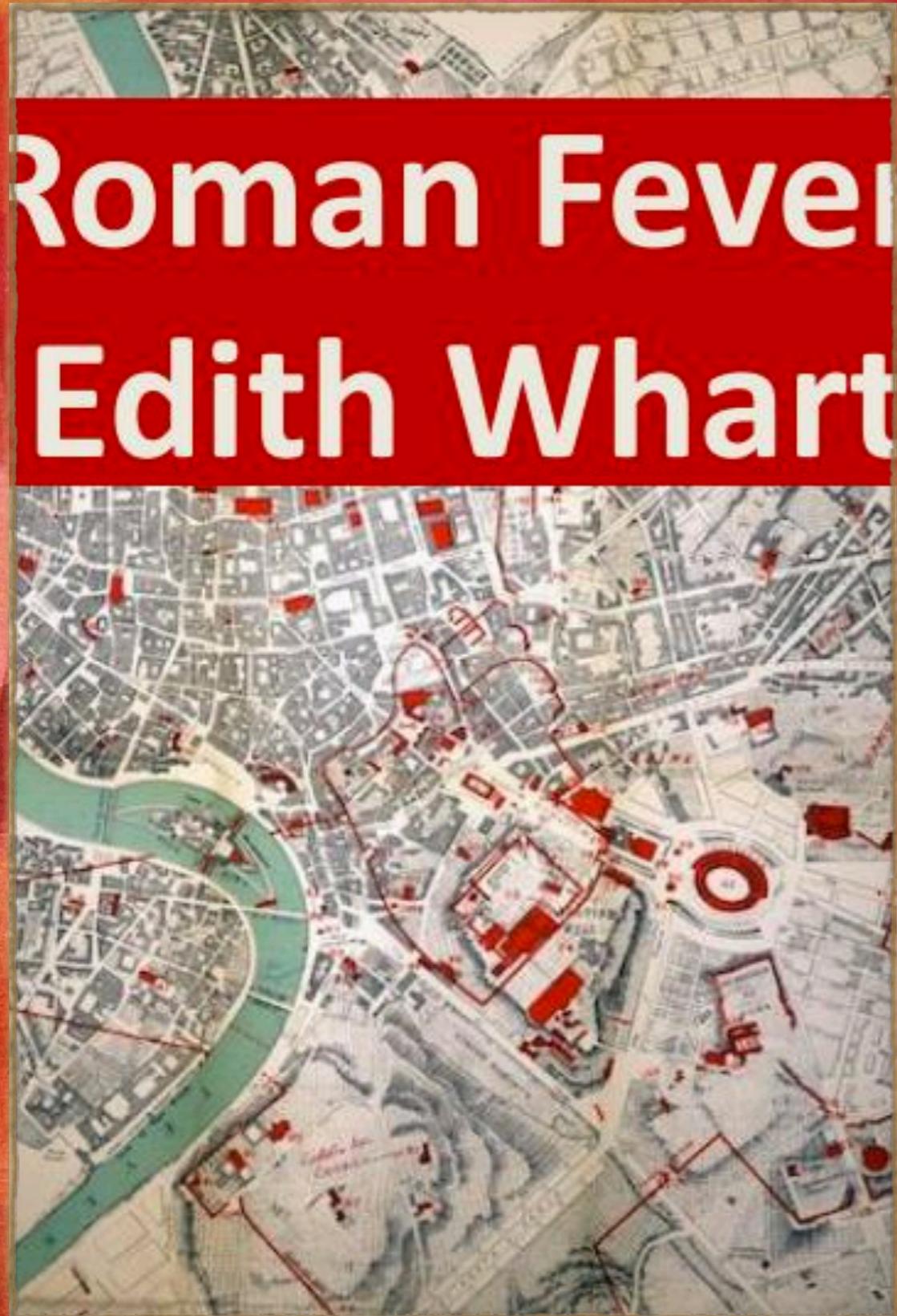


NOTES ON “ROMAN FEVER” & “WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?”

Professor Caroline S. Brooks
English 1102



ROMAN FEVER BY EDITH WHARTON

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- Alisa reveals she wrote a letter in her husband's name, asking Grace to meet him at the Colosseum. She meant it as a joke. She has been looking down on Grace ever since.
- Grace reveals that she replied to the letter and that she and Delphin did indeed meet. Alisa cannot believe it until Grace says she has proof - her's and Delphin's daughter Barbara

ROMAN FEVER BY EDITH WHARTON

- **Setting:** Two ladies (Grace Ansley and Alida Slade) lunching in Rome, while their daughter's Barbara Ansley and Jenny Slade go to Tarquinia with two young Roman pilots.
- Alida's perceptions of Grace are recounted as an interior monologue, interspersed with passages of dialogue. They are superficial friends, living across from one another in New York city.
- Alida is proud of her hostess capabilities and brilliant personality.
- Both women were widowed months before the story began, and in Rome they renewed their superficial friendship

ROMAN FEVER BY EDITH WHARTON

- Alida is envious of Grace, and wonders how Grace and Horace Ansley produced such a dynamic, vivid, charming daughter as Barbara while her own daughter Jenny seems dull by comparison.
- Grace views Alida as a brilliant woman who is over-impressed with her own qualities, and she views Alida's life as one that is full of failures and mistakes. Grace feels sorry for Alida.
- In reality, the women both pity each other.
- Alida reveals she cruelly wrote the note to Grace, pretending to be Delphin, asking for a rendezvous at the Colosseum. She gloats and laughs thinking about how Grace waited there alone in the darkness, and how Grace was then bedridden for weeks after with roman fever (pneumonia).

ROMAN FEVER BY EDITH WHARTON

- At first Grace is crushed to learn Delphin's letter was fake, but she turns the tables and tells Alida she was not alone that night.
- Alida's jealousy and hatred are rekindled because she failed to humiliate Grace.
- Grace feels sorry for Alida because her cruel trick failed. Alida says that at least she was Delphin's wife for 25 years, while Grace only had one letter that Delphin never wrote.
- Grace responded by saying that she didn't come away with nothing - that she had Barbara as a result of meeting Delphin that night at the Colosseum.

ROMAN FEVER BY EDITH WHARTON

- This story is a battle between both women and their status in life.
- There is an undercurrent of hostility between the two women and their social interactions.
- Graces demonstrates that she is a woman who defied conventional morality and social restrictions by spending the night with the man she loved, even though they were not married.
- Is it better to know the truth about something or are some things better left unsaid?

WHERE ARE YOU
GOING, WHERE HAVE
YOU BEEN?"
JOYCE CAROL
OATES

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? BY JOYCE
CAROL OATES

- This story is framed inside the 1960's women's rights where sexuality was more open and social norms were pivoting.
- How have social norms changed since the time this story was written?
- The main character Connie represents the teenage experience - the struggle between fantasy and reality, the struggle for independence and the associated confusion that accompanies it.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? BY JOYCE CAROL OATES

- Connie is inexperienced but maintains a fake persona of sophistication and seduction.
- Arnold is presented as a dark and ominous character who is also projecting a false persona, and he is out of touch with reality.
- This story was inspired by the 1966 Arizona murders committed by Charles Schmidt, a serial killer known as the “Pied Piper of Tucson”. Schmidt preyed on adolescent girls, and a number of teenagers from good families aided and abetted his crimes, helping to conceal his murders.

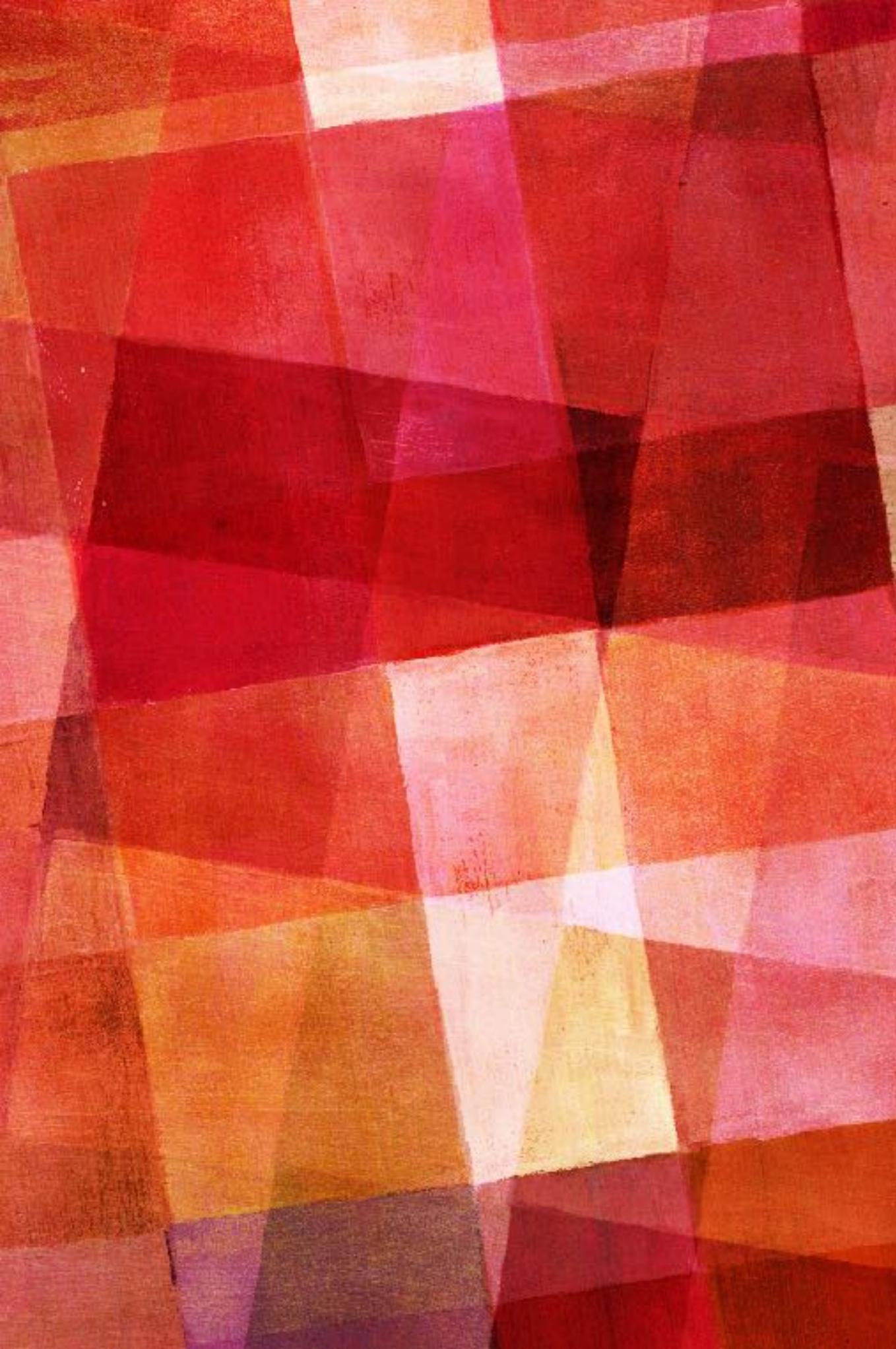
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? BY JOYCE CAROL OATES

- In the 1960's, moral and social conventions were being challenged and American optimism and materialism was being questioned.
- Oates has described Connie's actions at the end of the story as an "unexpected gesture of heroism," a decision to sacrifice herself so that her family would remain unharmed.
- Is Arnold Friend Connie's punishment for having sexual feelings for boys?
- Connie's submission to Arnold Friend stands for the ways women are oppressed in patriarchal society.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? BY JOYCE CAROL OATES

- And what is it about love or sexual desire that makes people susceptible to violence and even murder?
- This drama, this story, it continues to resonate within society today because it continues to play out, tragically everyday within our culture. We are constantly hearing about the deaths of young women, regardless of class or race.





WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? BY JOYCE
CAROL OATES

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- Why is Connie's fate left unknown at the end of the story?
- What role does music play in this story?
- What necessary changes must be made when an author borrows real events for works of fiction?