

Literature review on the other two by edith wharton

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Describe each of the three men to which Alice has been married. How are they alike? How are they different? Do Wharton's sympathies seem to lie with one more than the other two? How do you know?

Response: The three men in the story are interconnected by the mere fact that they were all once, or currently, married to one and the same woman, who uses them all for the purpose of advancing in life, finally ending up with the adequate husband who perceives her as one of his possessions, even referring to her "as easy as an old shoe - a shoe too many feet had worn" (Wharton).

Alice's first husband, with his shabby hat and umbrella, and a "made-up tie attached with an elastic" immediately evokes images of a simple home and a simple life (Wharton). Thus, in order for society to accept her divorce, everyone "had been allowed to infer that Alice's first husband was a brute" (Wharton). Gus Varick offers a "passport to the set whose recognition she coveted," but not even that was enough for her, because she ends up with yet another divorce, finally marrying her third husband, Waythorn (Wharton).

Haskett seems to be the most humane one, having followed his ex-wife and daughter he adores from Utica to New York, refusing to be away from Lily, which proves there is much more to this man, other than simply the fact that "it was easy to believe the worst of him" (Wharton). Varick was "fond of good living," lively and chatty, "easy without being undignified," and he appears to be the middle between the shy and down-to-earth Haskett and the possessive Waythorn (Wharton). Simultaneously, Varick and Waythorn "had the same social habits, spoke the same language, understood the same

allusions," while Haskett seems to belong to a completely different world, the world of the working classes, poor and uneducated, which makes him an outcast in everyone's eyes (Wharton).

Thus, it appears that a reasonable choice for a husband who would love, honor and respect his wife is the unaggressive and solemn Haskett.

However, seeing that Alice wants only social prestige, the only way she can get it is by marrying a man who has similar outlooks on life, and who will, instead of loving and honoring her for who she is, simply find her beautiful and will keep "yielding to the joy of possession" (Wharton).

Works Cited:

Wharton, Edith. The Other Two. n. d. Web. 11 Jul. 2012. .