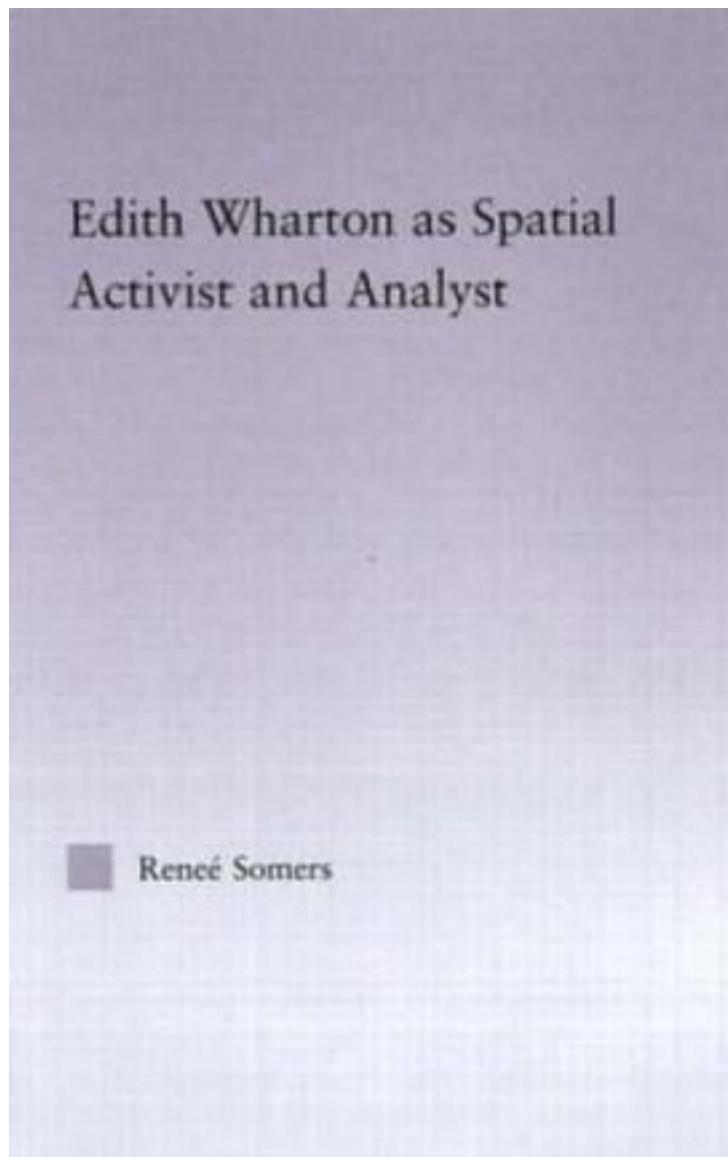


# Edith Wharton As Spatial Activist And Analyst



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Because she devoted much of her life to exploring the relationships that exist between people and their built environment, Edith Wharton developed a set of philosophies that she expressed in many arenas, including interior design, architecture, and landscaping. Her theories of space were practiced and materially executed, in addition to being expressed in her writing. This book explores Wharton's theories of space in Newport, Rhode Island during the Gilded Age when the town was transformed from a rustic seaport to a playground for the fabulously wealthy. The built environment played a pivotal role as social, economic and personal conflicts were enacted among private and public spaces. As a cultural worker and as an author, Wharton stood squarely in the middle of these conflicts and directly participated in them. Accordingly, the book shows Wharton in a new light by exploring texts such as *The Decoration of Houses* and *The House of Mirth* as well as by examining the architecture and aesthetics of three of Wharton's primary homes.

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