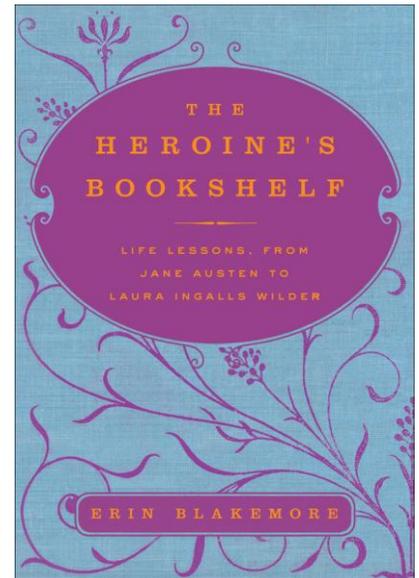


The Heroines of Literature Walking Tour

In Celebration of *The Heroine's Bookshelf*:
Life Lessons, from Jane Austen to Laura Ingalls Wilder
by Erin Blakemore

Hosted by Erin Blakemore and Jessica Seigel, *Glamour* columnist
and NYU adjunct professor of journalism

www.theheroinesbookshelf.com/walking-tour



The trouble with me...is that I have the tastes and the instincts of a perfect lady, and yet somehow I've missed having quite the mind of one....

Rose Wilder Lane (1886-1968) moved to 31 Jones Street near the end of World War I. A confirmed “bachelor girl” with a blooming career in journalism, she could never feel at ease in her bohemian surroundings (and no wonder – she reportedly went without heat for an entire winter!). She later went on to collaborate with her mother on the Little House books.

Learn more about Rose's relationship with her mother in Chapter 9 – Simplicity



Go to New York; am rather lionized, and run away....

Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888) is thought to have stayed at her uncle's house at 130 MacDougal Street during one point of the writing of *Little Women* (most certainly the second portion). Frantic to support her family, she only attained literary success later in life when she began writing saccharine novels for girls. Unimpressed with her own success, she was forced out of the limelight by chronic health problems.

Learn more about Louy in Chapter 11 – Ambition



Washington Square Park has long been a center of intellectual activism and a hotbed for New York's elite class. At the turn of the century, you'd kill to have a home or promenade here...in midcentury New York, you'd take to a park bench to get creative (or flirtatious) with your fellow literary renegades.



Life is always a tightrope or a feather bed. Give me the tightrope.

Edith Wharton (1862-1937) was born in New York City and set many of her most famous tragedies of the pampered class there. **20-year-old Edith lived briefly at 7 Washington Square North** along with her mother. Edith's stifling life among the uber-rich provided fodder for a book a year throughout her adult life. She was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize in literature.

Meet another author who couldn't stand mannerly society in Chapter 8 - Compassion



"Ah—your dress-maker; just so," he said blandly. "I didn't know there were any dress-makers in the Benedick."

(5) **Located at 80 Washington Square East, The Benedick** was an exclusive apartment building just for bachelors (Benedick himself being a famous bachelor from *Much Ado About Nothing*). Lily Bart's downfall in *The House of Mirth* begins there when she visits a man in his apartments – alone.

Meet a literary sister of Lily Bart in Chapter 7 - Fight



...a frivolous young woman, with a brand-new pair of dancing slippers and a mouth like a valentine...

(6) **Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)** was as famous for her steamy love life as her sonnets. She lived in the tiny house at 75 ½ Bedford Street from 1923 to 1925 – and won a Pulitzer prize for her poems during that time. The redheaded feminist garnered scorn and intrigue for her pansexual affairs and her outspoken political views.

Meet a heroine as indulgent as Edna St. Vincent Millay in Chapter 6 – Indulgence



Faith

(7) Founded by Edna St. Vincent Millay, the **Cherry Lane Theatre** at 38 Commerce Street is New York's longest-running off-Broadway theatre. Breeding ground for theatrical movements like the Theatre of the Absurd and home to some of America's greatest playwrights, actors, and dramatic properties, this theater is a literary and theatrical landmark that has helped write the story of American drama.

Meet a heroine born of another bohemian New York author in Chapter 2 -



(8) Spanning history from speakeasy to all-American writer's pub, **Chumley's** used to be located at 86 Bedford Street. Opened in 1926, the bar was a sanctuary for anarchists, writers, and artists of all stripes, from Edna St. Vincent Millay and Willa Cather to Edna Ferber, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Eugene O'Neill, Mabel Dodge, and many more. They say "there will be a new Chumley's" soon, but for now this legendary watering hole is a mere hole in the ground.

Meet a heroine who knew how to work a crowd in Chapter 1 – Self

Other Literary Heroine Sites in New York City:

The Algonquin Hotel (59 West 44th Street) – Dorothy Parker's pithy haunt; perfect for a martini and a bit of malicious gossip.

Zora Neale Hurston (St. Nicholas Terrace and West 135th Street, Harlem) – Zora stayed with friends in the middle house of the southeast buildings on St. Nicholas during the 1930s Harlem Renaissance.

Mademoiselle Magazine (575 Madison Avenue) – Sylvia Plath famously wrote about her experiences as an intern at "Ladies' Day" in *The Bell Jar*.

Brooklyn Public Library – Williamsburgh Branch (240 Division Avenue, Brooklyn) – This Carnegie library is rumored to be where Francie checked out her weekly book in *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*.

Visit theheroinesbookshelf.com to learn more about literary heroines and for podcasts, book club questions, and more!