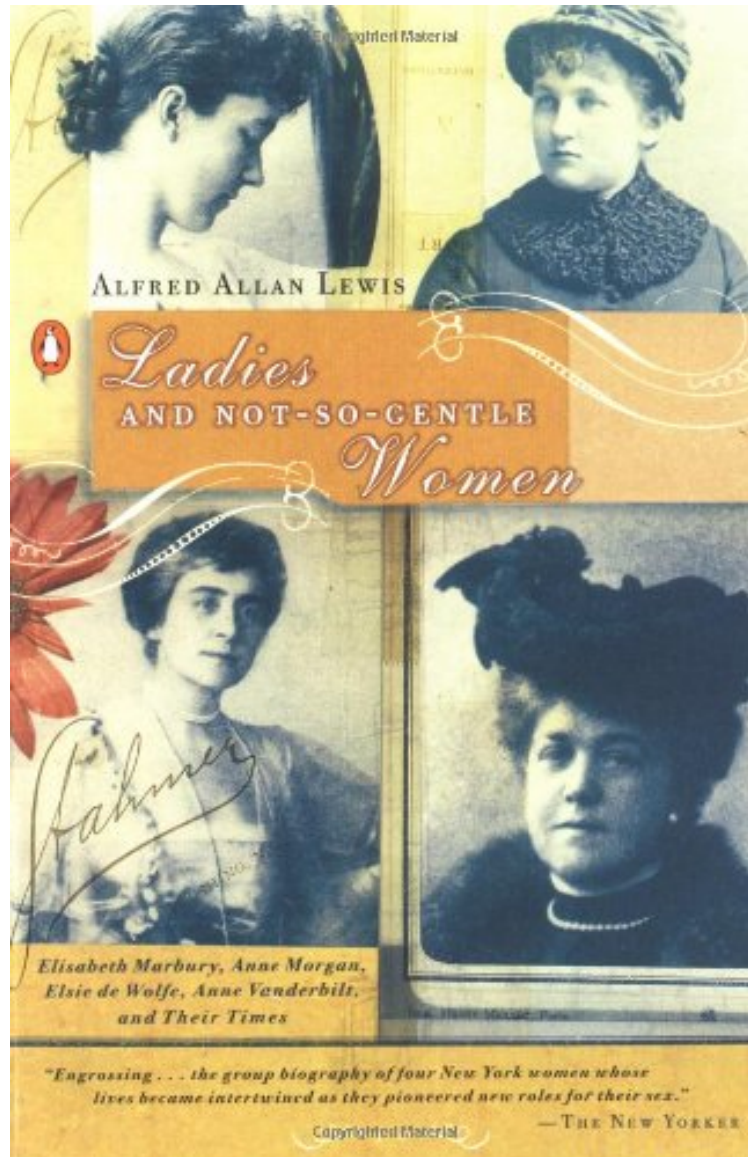


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## Ladies and Not-So-Gentle Women: Elisabeth Marbury, Anne Morgan, Elsie de Wolfe, Anne Vanderbilt, and Their Times

Alfred Allan Lewis

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Alfred Allan Lewis : Ladies and Not-So-Gentle Women: Elisabeth Marbury, Anne Morgan, Elsie de Wolfe, Anne Vanderbilt, and Their Times before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ladies and Not-So-Gentle Women: Elisabeth Marbury, Anne Morgan, Elsie de Wolfe, Anne Vanderbilt, and Their Times:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Escaping From Their Gilded Cages By Connie Nordhielm Wooldridge  
Four big-spending Gilded Age women would seem to have nothing to contribute to the rough and tumble politics of women's rights near the turn of the 20th century. Yet it was their very wealth which trapped them in lives of dependence on often-exploitive men, idleness, boredom, and lack of purpose and drew them to escape from their Gilded Cages. They did so by finding creative careers and by agitating on behalf of their disadvantaged sisters who were suffering ill-treatment in prisons, alternately sweating and freezing in tenement buildings, and working under deplorable conditions in factories. The life stories of Bessy Marbury, Anne Morgan, Elsie de Wolfe, and Anne Vanderbilt intertwine both personally and professionally and take the reader from lavish parties to places like the 1911 fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Condescendingly referred to as the mink brigade by the press and simultaneously (and often accurately) accused of condescension by the very women they sought to help, these four - through both courage and cluelessness - did their bit as women across the economic spectrum fought their way to a less vulnerable and more effective position in society. By turns shocking and illuminating, this is a must-read for anyone interested in the early years of feminism.  
16 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Where was the editor? By Patricia Holder  
As a voracious reader of everything, but especially social history and even more of olde New York, I was so excited to discover this book. But, it is hard to plow through the verbiage, repetition, and confusion of this book. Each of these women could have been the subject of her own book and Lewis has done little in the first three quarters to give us anything so we may understand connections that merit their lives being twined together in this fashion. Also, Lewis has tried hard to develop mystery and suspense where there doesn't need to be any - these ladies are great just the way they are, the endless foreshadowing, broad hinting and leaving a story just when it gets interesting is rather silly. The author has obviously done detailed research, but I found it confusing enough to have to jump back and forth between the narratives about the four subjects, but threw up my hands as chapter after chapter began with three pages on someone new who turned out to be the sister or next door neighbor of one of the subjects. Whew, I finally deconstructed the thing by reading each woman's story through by picking it out of the morass. What a shame, because these are interesting women.

Ladies and Not-So-Gentle Women is a group biography of four talented-and wealthy-New York women at the turn of the twentieth century whose lives became intertwined as they pioneered new roles for women. With dash, wit, intelligence, and industry, Elisabeth Marbury, her partner Elsie de Wolfe, Anne Morgan (daughter of J. P. Morgan), and Anne Vanderbilt had the courage to use their privileged status to transform their world. From attending lively society balls and Europe's royal courts to marching in labor-organizing protests and nurturing great talents such as Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, and Cole Porter, their activities open an illuminating window onto the worlds of art, culture, politics, science, and finance at the beginning of the twentieth century.

A rich and engaging social history. -- Miami Herald  
Compelling . . . thoroughly enjoyable. -- Chicago Tribune  
About the Author  
Alfred Allan Lewis is the author of numerous nonfiction books, plays, and television shows.