

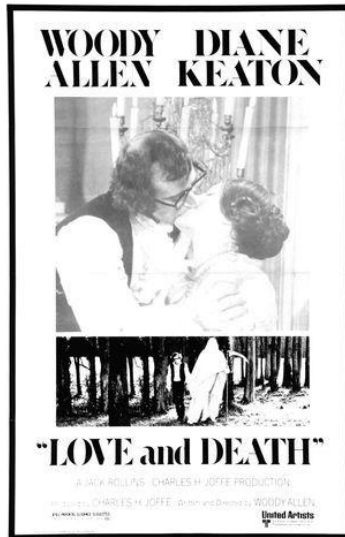
The Same Thing Only Different: Nympholepsy in Woody Allen's Art and Affairs

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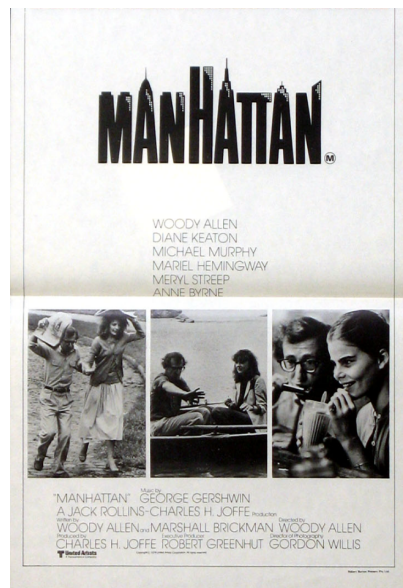
Woody Allen has written and/or directed at least nine films that contain the theme and/or motif of an age-discrepant relationship and nympholepsy:



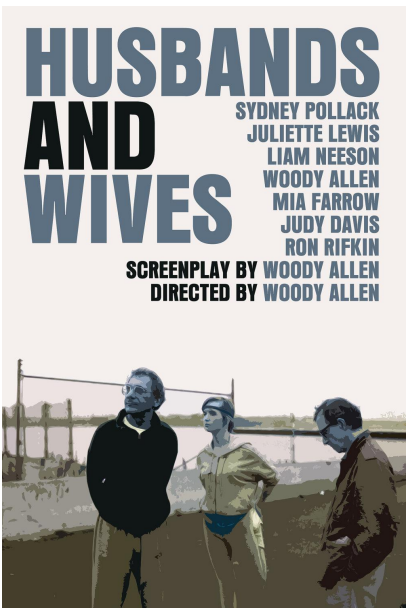
Play It Again, Sam (1972): A female character shared with Allan (Woody Allen), "Allen, I won't deny it. I'm a nymphomaniac. I discovered sex very early. I slept with everybody. My school teacher."



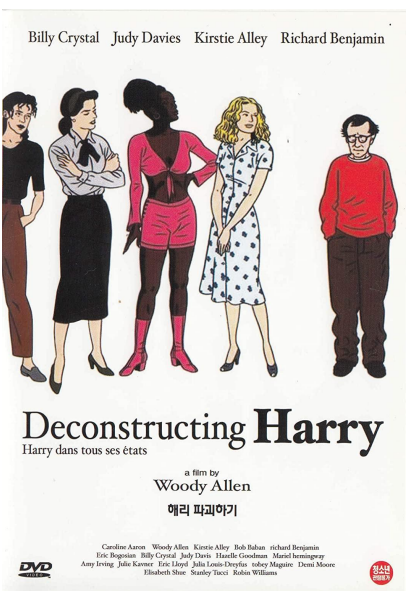
Love and Death (1975): 90-year-old Father Andre, the “Holiest of Holies, Ancient and Wise” shared, “I have lived many years. And after many trials and tribulations. I have come to [the] conclusion that the best thing is blonde 12-year-old girls. Two of them, whenever possible.”



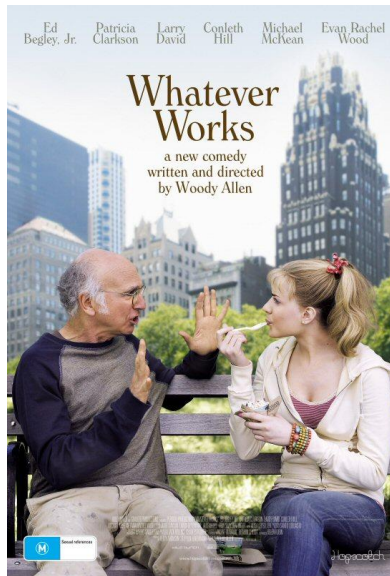
Manhattan (1979): 42-year-old Isaac (Woody Allen), a comedy writer and aspiring novelist, ends his affair with a 17-year-old Manhattan prep school student (Mariel Hemingway) to be with an older woman (Diane Keaton) - only to regret it later.



Husbands and Wives (1992): Gabe Roth (Woody Allen), a literature professor, began a relationship with Rain (Juliette Lewis), one of his students, after she read and praised the manuscript of his new novel. However, prior to taking Roth's class, Rain had previous relationships with three much older men: her father's close friend, her father's business partner, and her analyst. #teleiophile



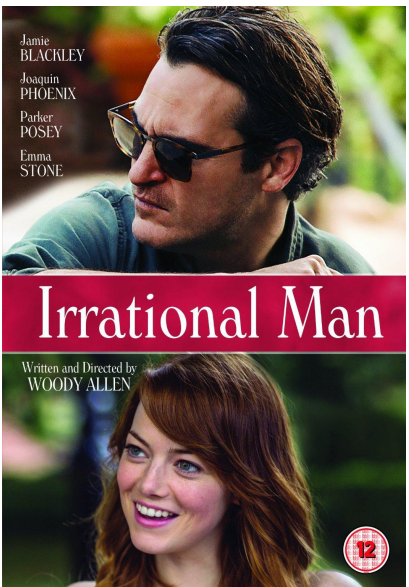
Deconstructing Harry (1997): writer Harry Block (Woody Allen) drives a prostitute, a friend, and his kidnapped son to his former university to receive an honorary degree. One of the sub-plots involves Harry's relationship with Fay (Elisabeth Shue), a young fan whom turns into a follower, then a pupil - Eliza Doolittle style, and finally into a roommate. Despite warning Fay to avoid falling in love with him and confessing his intention to “fuck” her before moving on to the next fan, Harry fell in love with Fay and was distraught to learn that she got engaged to Larry (Billy Crystal) - Harry's “alleged” friend.



Whatever Works (2009): Boris Yellnikoff (Larry David), a middle-aged professor of quantum mechanics at Columbia University, reluctantly married Melodie Saint Ann Celestine (Evan Rachel Wood), a much younger runaway from Mississippi.



You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger (2010): Alfie (Anthony Hopkins), an elderly man, leaves his wife to marry a young call girl, while Roy (Josh Brolin), a middle-aged novelist, becomes engrossed by Dia (Freida Pinto), a beautiful young woman, while desperately trying to get his second book published.



Irrational Man (2015): Abe Lucas (Joaquin Phoenix), a philosophy professor at Braylin, finds himself in a life crisis, but he gains a new purpose in life after he begins a relationship with one of his students, Jill Pollard (Emma Stone), and becomes a one-man vigilante.



A Rainy Day in New York (2019): Like *Rain of Husbands and Wives*, Ashleigh Enright (Elle Fanning), a Yardley college student, was involved in not one, not two, but three, age-discrepant affairs. For example, after *Gatsby* (Timothée Chalamet) and Ashleigh visit New York City, Ashleigh becomes infatuated with Roland Pollard (51-year-old Liev Schreiber), a famous film director, whom she is interviewing for the school's paper.

Ashleigh says referring to Roland, "I can see why all the leading ladies fall in love with him."

Subsequently in the film, Gatsby ran into Chan (Selena Gomez), a fashion student at New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, whom has a date with a "[...] very handsome, very rich [and] very clever" dermatologist. In addition, Chan is Amy's younger sister, and Amy was Gatsby's gorgeous and sexually advanced Jewish high school sweetheart.

Gatsby shared, "Amy was gorgeous and so sexually advanced. Word on Amy was she performed oral sex at a Bar Mitzvah. I think they should make that a part of every Jewish holiday [...] And what a great Hanukkah gift."

While accompanied by Ashleigh, Ted Davidoff (46-year-old Jude Law), a writer, gets into an argument with his wife whom assumes that Ashleigh is Ted's 15-year-old concubine.

Later, Ashleigh meets the actor Francisco Vega (39-year-old Diego Luna). Francisco asked, "Do you have a boyfriend?" To which Ashleigh replied, "He's a mere youth." Consequently, after a bit of cannabis and whiskey, the age-discrepant couple proceeds to have sex until Francisco's girlfriend arrives - unexpectedly.

In the end, Gatsby summed up the film well when he said to Ashleigh, "You were loved spiritually, emotionally, and physically by three different gifted [much older] men."

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Let's discuss *Manhattan* (1979) in more detail. Katie Duggan wrote in "The Women of the Woody Allen Papers" published in *The Nassau Weekly* that a draft of *Manhattan's* script, which is archived in one of 56 boxes in the rare-books wing in Princeton's Firestone Library, relates that Hemingway's character was originally 16 - an "infant". (In addition, Duggan reported that Allen wrote in his notes that Ashleigh Enright of *A Rainy Day in New York*: "[...] should not be 20 or 21. Sounds more like 18—or even 17—but 18 seems better.")

And Stacey Nelkin shared in 2011 on *The Howard Stern Show* that *Manhattan* was based on her relationship with Allen, which began after they met on the set of *Annie Hall*. Nelkin was a 17-year-old student at the prestigious Stuyvesant high school in Manhattan and Allen was 42. Allen confirmed the relationship in "Woody Allen Speaks Out" a 2014 *New York Times* Op-Ed piece.

In the "Allen, Woody: Director" section of the *New York* magazine cover story "Who Was Jeffrey Epstein Calling? A Close study of his circle [...] reveals a damning portrait of elite New York" it states that Allen had three-ways with Farrow and Babi Christina Engelhardt - a 16-year-old nymphet:

"For years before his relationship with Mia Farrow, Allen had carried on with a 16-year-old girl he'd met at Elaine's named Babi Christina Engelhardt [...] Engelhardt had sex with Allen more than 100 times, she says, sometimes with [Mia] Farrow [or with two other "beautiful young ladies" in his Central Park facing 930 Fifth Ave bedroom]."

Interestingly, Engelhardt stated in Gary Baum's *Hollywood Reporter* piece "Woody Allen's Secret Teen Lover Speaks: Sex, Power and a Conflicted Muse Who Inspired 'Manhattan'" that Stacey Nelkin was not the sole inspiration for *Manhattan* (1979). Engelhardt purported that she, Nelkin and two "beautiful young [lipstick lesbian] ladies" were the inspiration for the award-winning film.

Engelhardt shared the details of her age-gap relationship with Baum whom wrote that “confident” Engelhardt “brazenly” initiated the sexual affair with Allen:

Sixteen, emerald-eyed, blond, an aspiring model with a confident streak and a painful past: Babi Christina Engelhardt had just caught Woody Allen's gaze at legendary New York City power restaurant Elaine's. It was October 1976, and when Engelhardt returned from the ladies' room, she dropped a note on his table with her phone number. It brazenly read: "Since you've signed enough autographs, here's mine!"



Soon, Allen rang, inviting her to his Fifth Avenue penthouse. The already-famous 41-year-old director [...] never asked her age. But she told him she was still in high school [...] Within weeks, they'd become physically intimate at his place. She wouldn't turn 17, legal in New York, until that December. The pair embarked on, by her account, a clandestine romance of eight years [...]

In addition, Engelhardt shared that she “liked” Woody and finds him “so interesting” because “his wit is magnetic” and that “[...] he was charming and alluring.” And Baum wrote of Engelhardt:

She's proud of her teenage self as an up-by-her-bootstraps heroine who successfully beguiled a "celebrated genius." Even now, she holds herself largely responsible for remaining in the relationship as long as she did [...]. She considered him then, and still considers him now, a Great Man.

In reference to the article, Engelhardt related: "I'm not attacking Woody," she says. "This is not 'bring down this man.' I'm talking about my love story. This made me who I am. I have no regrets."

The most surprising part of Baum's piece may be that Engelhardt began: "[...] working as a personal assistant to Jeffrey Epstein [...]". And the most interesting item in the article is a letter that Woody sent Engelhardt in 2001. In the snail mail, after Woody thanked Engelhardt for sending him a copy of the documentary *The Voice of the Moon*, he wrote:

"If you're ever in New York I would love you to meet my wife [i.e., Soon-Yi Previn] — she'd like you. We get out to California every so often. If you'd like I'd call and perhaps we could all get together."

Engelhardt presumed that Woody was inviting her to another threesome - this time with Soon-Yi, but Engelhardt declined.

Interestingly, *Variety's* Antonio Ferme reported that "Manhattan' Star Mariel Hemingway Says the Woody Allen Film [*Manhattan* (1979)] '100% Couldn't Come Out' Today". It appears that Hemingway, the granddaughter of Ernest, hasn't seen Woody's subsequent films. Nor has she seen *Red Rocket* (2021) or any of the many other theatrical releases that have been screened since 1979. And she must not have seen any of the cable movies like Lifetime's *High School Lover* (2017), she must not have seen any television episodes like *Law & Order: SVU's* "The Good Girl" (2019), and, apparently, she hasn't seen any of the streaming shows like HBO Max's *The Sex Lives of College Girls* (2021) - that all depict age-discrepant relationships slash nympholepsy.

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Richard Morgan, who was the first to read Allen's archives at Princeton "cover to cover", wrote in the *Washington Post* piece "I read decades of Woody Allen's private notes. He's obsessed with teenage girls" that Allen has a "vivid obsession" with nymphets:

Allen's work is flatly boorish. Running through all of the boxes is an insistent, vivid obsession with young women and girls: There's the "wealthy, educated, respected" male character in one short story ("By Destiny Denied: Incident at Entwhistle's") who lives with a 21-year-old "Indian" woman. First, Allen's revisions reduce her to 18, then double down, literally, and turn her into two 18-year-olds.

There's the 16-year-old in an unmade television pitch described as "a flashy sexy blonde in a flaming red low cut evening gown with a long slit up the side."

There's the 17-year-old girl in another short story, "Consider Kaplan," whose 53-year-old neighbor falls in love with her as the two share a silent, one-floor-long elevator ride in their Park Avenue co-op. [...] who ends up sending his 17-year-old neighbor a valentine. The contents of that love note are instructive to Allen's sense of courtship and, in creative terms, to his sense of how chemistry forms between two characters. It reads, in full: "I saw you only briefly the other day and have not stopped thinking of you. Though we shared a casual and fleeting elevator ride — one floor, to be exact — I fear my life can never be the same. Please meet me for cocktails one night this week. I live in the penthouse. I implore you not to say no. If it turns out for one reason or another you can never share my feelings than [sic] the worst you will suffer is that I will tell you how lovely you are for the duration of a single martini." [...]

Another of Allen's male characters, in a draft of a 1977 *New Yorker* story called "The Kugelmass Episode," is a 45-year-old fascinated by "coeds" at City College of New York. In the margin next to this character's dialogue, Allen wrote, then crossed out, "c'est moi" — it's me.

[...] in a draft of "My Apology," a short story: "Of all the famous men who ever lived, the one I would most like to have been was Socrates. Not just because he was a great thinker, because I have been known to have some reasonably profound insights myself, although mine invariably revolve around two eighteen year old cocktail waitresses and some rope handcuffs." (In the published version, the object of desire has become a stewardess whose age is omitted.)

In another draft, titled "My Speech to the Graduates," he complains that "science has failed us. True, it has conquered many diseases, broken the genetic code, and even placed human beings on the Moon. And yet when a man of eighty is left in a room with two eighteen-year-old cocktail waitresses, nothing happens.

Thus, like Nabokov, which we elaborated on in *Nymphalis carmen: Nympholepsy in Nabokov's Oeuvre*, even Allen's short stories are liberally peppered with nympholepsy.

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Lastly, we would be remiss not to discuss Allen's age-discrepant affair with Soon-Yi Previn. Mia Farrow related in *Allen v. Farrow* (2021) that Allen began having age-gap sex in his Fifth Avenue residence with Soon-Yi when the (adopted) daughter of his wife was a student at the Marymount [High] School of New York.

Farrow, "The thing is, I don't know when it started with Soon-Yi. I do know that it was while she was at Marymount - in high school. When I went to talk to people like doormen and people that worked in his house, they said she had been coming there for a long time. She would come. She'd be in her school uniform at lunch. The doormen would show her up. The maid would change the bed after she left. The maid told me about the condoms in the wastebasket, and the sheets that needed changing. All of that."



However, per the *Allen v. Farrow* documentarians, Allen asserts that his affair with Soon-Yi didn't begin until after her first semester at Drew University (i.e., \approx 18-years-old), but Allen's doorman, building manager, and housekeeper testified otherwise:

"Allen claims his relationship with Soon-Yi began after her first semester of college in December 1991. [However] [c]ourt testimony suggest their relationship may have begun much earlier. Both Allen's doorman and the building manager testified in court to having seen Soon-YI visit Allen many times during her senior year of high school and first year of college."

"Allen's housekeeper testified she found what she believed to be semen stains on the sheets and condom wrappers in the wastebasket after Soon-Yi's visits, while Soon-Yi was still in high school. Seven months after Soon-Yi graduated high school, Mia discovered explicit photos of her in Allen's apartment [that led to their bitter divorce]."



Per the 33-page decision from the presiding judge in the Woody Allen v. Mia Farrow case, there were six graphically nude photographs (e.g., teen "legs spread apart") of Soon-Yi on a mantelpiece in Allen's UES apartment.

We know that Farrow is no stranger to age-discrepant relationships, because, per Engelhardt, Allen had three-ways with Farrow and the nymphet. In addition, according to J. Randy Taraborrelli's *Sinatra: Behind the Legend*, 19-year-old Farrow lost her virginity to 48-year-old Frank Sinatra at his ultra-modern glass and metal house in Palm Springs - after their flight on a private jet.

“They had dinner on the terrace, served by an army of servants, and then he swept her into his bedroom.” Farrow described the night as “magical”.



In the end, we can confidently surmise that Allen's filmography fulfills the request of the Hollywood executive, which is, “Give me the same thing, only different.” Like Nabokov, Allen's short stories are littered with nymphets. And as far as we know, Allen has had at least four age-discrepant affairs: with Engelhardt, a New Jersey high school student, with a Stuyvesant High School student, with a Marymount schoolgirl, and with two "beautiful young [lipstick lesbian] ladies". But the *Daily Mail* reported that “Woody Allen [was] spotted with millionaire convicted child sex-offender Jeffrey Epstein on [an] Upper East Side stroll”. Thus, we may never know the extent of the nympholepsy in Allen's art and affairs.

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