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**Main content**

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The delicate and evocative word "passade" sprays a mist of romance over what our blunter era calls a fling, a one-night stand, a hookup or, more often, an affair. "Passade" derives from a fifteenth-century French term meaning "portion of a game." At various times the same word has described a certain move in fencing, an exercise in horsemanship, and a gift of alms to a stranger. The fourth meaning cited in the OED, the one that appears here and there in literature, is "a brief romance." You can find it in Byron, Edith Wharton, and P. G. Wodehouse. It was a key word in the vocabulary of H.G. Wells, a prolific and grandly successful author in the first half of the twentieth century, also renowned (in a somewhat less public way) for his ambitious and spectacularly extensive sex life.

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W ELLS had sexual relationships with about 100 women (coincidentally, he wrote roughly the same number of books), and he began each affair in the hope of enjoying a passade—a liaison that would be controlled and controllable, ending in happiness all around.

To his dismay, however, the results were often the opposite of what he intended. The most famous case was his tempestuous and at times bitter relationship with Rebecca West, also a writer of great distinction. Over their ten years as lovers she was often disappointed and often angry; he was more or less permanently apologetic. She expected him to abandon his convenient but mostly sexless marriage to marry her—except on those frequent occasions when she insisted, to the contrary, that she wanted only to remain single and independent. By inadvertence they had a son, Anthony West, also a writer, born in 1914, whose furious and increasingly public struggle against his mother lasted for most of the twentieth century and did not end until they both died, she in 1983, he in 1987. Together H.G., Rebecca, and Anthony created a legend in which love and ambition mingled with literature, betrayal, and profound rage.

T HE carefully justified romantic life of Wells provides both the theme and the narrative energy, of an impressive recent book, David Lodge's A Man of Parts (Harvill Secker), a 565-page biographical novel. Lodge absorbed a library of letters and diaries and then unleashed his imagination on the private details, fitting his fictional dialogue and events within the known facts.

He has much to tell us about Wells the prophet, who dreamt of world government, put his faith in human reason and foresaw the internet, aerial warfare, nuclear bombs, and television, among much else. This was the Wells who tried to encompass all that is known about the human past with his 1,324-page The Outline of History, a work of unparalleled clunkiness, unreadable now but a worldwide smash in 1920. Lodge also chronicles Wells the science-fiction novelist, who inspired generations of writers and filmmakers with The Time Machine and The War of the Worlds, and Wells the domestic novelist, who loved making fiction from his own story...
The annual HG Wells Fiction Short Story Competition offers a £500 Senior and £1,000 Junior prize and free publication of all shortlisted entries in a quality, professionally published paperback anthology. How to Enter. Competition Rules 2020. Entries for our 2020 Competition closed on Monday 6th July 2020. Shortlist announcement Monday 21st September, Winner to be announced Sunday 22nd November. For further information, please read the rules and FAQs below. If you cannot find the answer to your query there, you can email hgwellsccompetition@gmail.com. How to Enter. Competition Rules 2020. Adultery is a common factor in many New York divorce cases. New York spouses have the option of pursuing a no-fault divorce or a fault divorce. A no-fault divorce requires the divorcing party to show that the spouses have had irreconcilable differences for at least six months and that they are unable to get along to the point that the marriage cannot be fixed. The judge reviews several criteria when determining how much spousal support to award. This includes the salary and wages of both parties, the length of the marriage and the assets of the couple. Additionally, the court considers the age and health of both parties, where the children of the marriage live and child caring responsibilities. “HG Wells’ seminal novel has been adapted for the screen many times, but it’s always had a contemporary (and American) setting,” director Craig Viveiros said in a statement. “This is the first version to be set in London during the Edwardian period.” Writer Peter Harness added: “The version of The War of the Worlds that I wanted to make is one that’s faithful to the tone and the spirit of the book, but which also feels contemporary, surprising and full of shocks: a collision of sci-fi, period drama and horror.” The 10 best films about aliens. Show all 10.