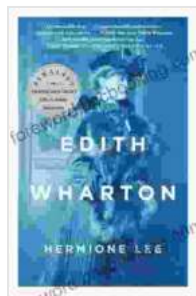


Edith Wharton: The Life and Work of an American Master

Biography

Edith Wharton was born on January 24, 1862, in New York City. She was the daughter of George Frederic Jones, a wealthy lawyer, and Lucretia Stevens Rhineland, a member of one of New York's oldest and most prominent families. Wharton grew up in a world of privilege and luxury, but she was also exposed to the realities of poverty and social injustice. These experiences would later shape her writing.



Edith Wharton by Hermione Lee

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 6359 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 912 pages



Wharton began writing at a young age, and she published her first novel, *The Valley of Decision*, in 1902. The novel was a critical and commercial success, and it established Wharton as a major literary figure. Over the next two decades, Wharton published a number of novels and short stories that explored the lives of the upper class in New York City during the Gilded Age. These works included *The House of Mirth* (1905), *Ethan Frome* (1911), and *The Custom of the Country* (1913).

In addition to her novels, Wharton also wrote a number of short stories, essays, and travel books. She was a keen observer of human nature, and her writing is often characterized by its realism and its insights into the human condition. Wharton was also a talented designer, and she created a number of gardens and interiors for her homes in New York City and France.

Wharton died on August 11, 1937, in France. She was 75 years old. She is buried in the Cimetière des Gonards in Versailles, France.

Major Works

Edith Wharton is best known for her novels about the upper class in New York City during the Gilded Age. These works include:

- The House of Mirth (1905)
- Ethan Frome (1911)
- The Custom of the Country (1913)

The House of Mirth tells the story of Lily Bart, a beautiful and ambitious young woman who is trying to marry into the upper class. However, Lily's plans are thwarted by her own recklessness and the social conventions of the time. The novel is a scathing indictment of the hypocrisy and materialism of the Gilded Age.

Ethan Frome is a tragic love story set in rural New England. The novel tells the story of Ethan Frome, a farmer who is trapped in a unhappy marriage. Ethan falls in love with Mattie Silver, a young woman who is boarding with him and his wife. However, their love is doomed from the start, and the novel ends in tragedy.

The Custom of the Country is a satirical novel that tells the story of Undine Spragg, a beautiful and ambitious young woman who marries into the American aristocracy. However, Undine is not content to be a mere wife and mother. She wants to be a successful businesswoman, and she is willing to do whatever it takes to achieve her goals. The novel is a sharp critique of the materialism and social climbing of the Gilded Age.

In addition to her novels, Wharton also wrote a number of short stories, essays, and travel books. Her short stories often explored the themes of love, loss, and the social constraints faced by women in the early 20th century. Wharton's essays and travel books are also insightful and often witty.

Literary Style

Edith Wharton's writing is characterized by its realism and its insights into the human condition. She was a master of social satire, and her novels often explored the hypocrisy and materialism of the Gilded Age. Wharton's writing is also known for its psychological depth. She was able to create complex and believable characters, and her novels often explore the inner lives of her characters.

Wharton's writing style is also notable for its elegance and precision. She was a master of language, and her writing is often praised for its beauty and clarity. Wharton's work is also known for its wit and humor.

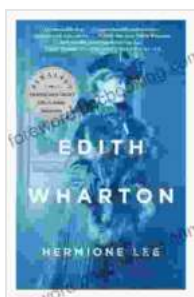
Legacy

Edith Wharton is considered one of the most important American writers of the 20th century. Her novels and short stories have been praised for their realism, their insights into the human condition, and their beautiful writing.

Wharton's work has also been influential on other writers. Her novels have been adapted for film and television, and her work has been studied by scholars around the world.

Edith Wharton is a major figure in American literature, and her work continues to be read and enjoyed by readers today

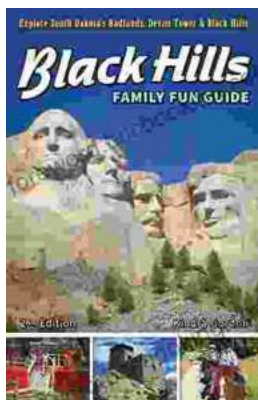
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