

Wharton, Edith (1862-1937)

Encyclopedia Article

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Edith Wharton, one of the most successful American novelists of her time, wrote twenty-five novels and novellas as well as eighty-six short stories. Her *Age of Innocence* (1920), about Old New York society, won a Pulitzer prize, and she was the first woman to receive either the honorary Doctor of Letters from Yale University or the Gold Medal of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. Though critics have often over-emphasized Henry James's influence upon her, she has impacted American narrative in many ways, perhaps most notably in her treatment of gender issues and the supernatural.

Further Reading:

Roillard, Douglas, editor. *American Supernatural Fiction: From Edith Wharton to the Weird Tales Writers*. New York, Garland Publishing, 1996.

Singley, Carol J. *Edith Wharton: Matters of Mind and Spirit*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1995.