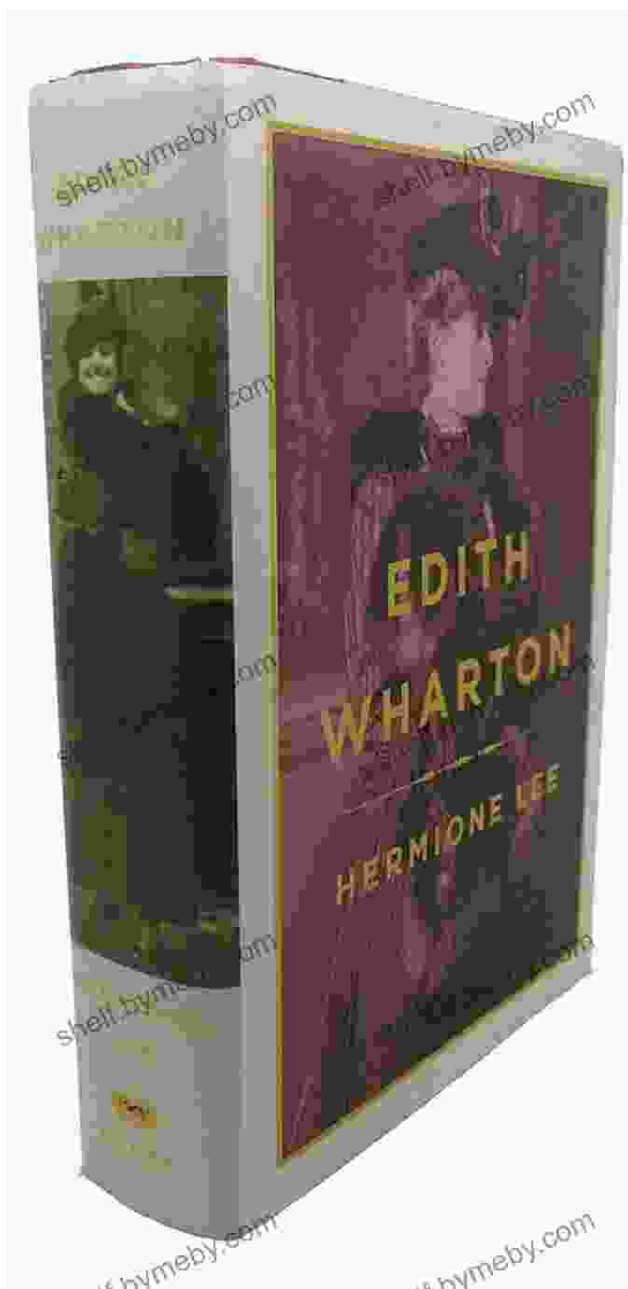


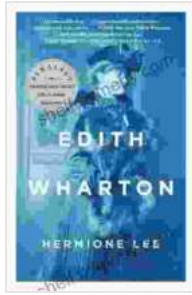
# Delve into the Enigmatic World of Edith Wharton: A Comprehensive Review of Hermione Lee's Masterpiece



**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



In the annals of American literature, few figures loom as large as Edith Wharton. With her piercing wit, incisive social commentary, and timeless prose, Wharton left an indelible mark on the literary landscape. Hermione Lee's meticulously researched and elegantly written biography, "Edith Wharton," offers an illuminating portrait of this extraordinary woman, unraveling the complexities, contradictions, and enduring legacy that have captivated readers for generations.

## **Unveiling the Enigma**

Wharton, born into a wealthy New York family in 1862, led a life of privilege and social prominence. However, beneath the polished veneer lay a restless spirit, a keen observer of the social and cultural mores of her time. Lee skillfully navigates the labyrinth of Wharton's relationships, dissecting her complex marriage, her passionate friendships, and her often tumultuous inner life.

Lee's biography delves into the creative process that gave birth to Wharton's literary masterpieces. We witness the genesis of her classic novels, such as "The House of Mirth," "Ethan Frome," and "The Custom of the Country," each a searing indictment of the gilded society of the Gilded Age.

## **A Woman Ahead of Her Time**

Wharton's writings transcended mere entertainment; they were incisive commentaries on the social and cultural constraints that suffocated women of her time. Lee reveals Wharton as a feminist avant-la-lettre, whose work challenged the prevailing societal norms and explored the complex emotional landscapes of women.

Beyond her literary achievements, Wharton was an active participant in the social and political debates of her era. Lee sheds light on her work as a war correspondent during World War I, her philanthropic endeavors, and her unwavering commitment to intellectual and artistic freedom.

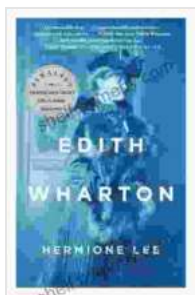
## **Legacy and Impact**

Wharton's influence extends far beyond her own lifetime. Lee traces the impact of her work on subsequent generations of writers, including Henry James, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Virginia Woolf. Wharton's unflinching portrayal of social hypocrisy and her nuanced exploration of human relationships continue to resonate with readers today.

Lee's biography is not merely a chronicle of Wharton's life and work; it is a profound meditation on the nature of creativity, the complexities of human nature, and the enduring power of literature to shape our understanding of the world.

Hermione Lee's "Edith Wharton" is a tour de force of literary biography, a mesmerizing account of a woman who lived, wrote, and defied her time. Through meticulously researched details and penetrating insights, Lee brings Wharton's enigmatic persona to life, illuminating her triumphs, struggles, and enduring legacy.

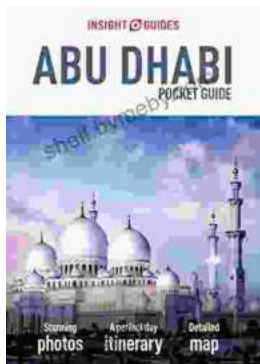
For anyone interested in American literature, social history, or the human condition, this book is an essential read. Hermione Lee's "Edith Wharton" stands as a testament to the transformative power of storytelling and the enduring brilliance of one of the greatest literary figures of the 20th century.



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