

Critical Insights: Henry James

“Henry James is no doubt considered to be a literary icon of the nineteenth century: a touchstone by which other writers of his time and beyond are compared. Prolific in many literary forms from novels to criticism, James is naturally an inspiring source of lively discussion. **This volume is the Critical Insights series gathers contemporary analysis of James, his era, and his works, offering a variety of fresh and learned insight.**

Two opening essays discuss James from a personal perspective. The pieces describe James’ “untypical life” as the son of a religious intellectual whose insistence on a European education was a likely source of the prevailing themes in James’ fiction. They also make clear James’ whole commitment to his art via his constant analysis of it.

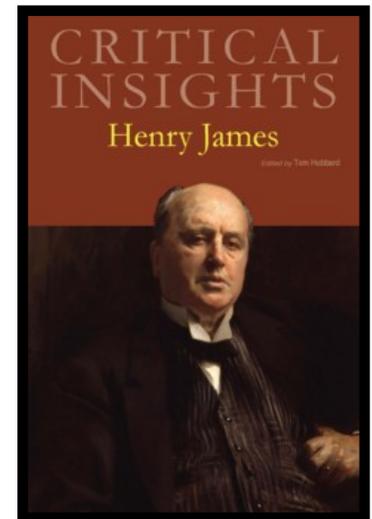
Like other volumes in the Critical Insights series, the bulk of the essays are collected into two sections. **Critical Contexts features a discussion of the general environment in which James wrote, the impact of his personal history, and, in Tom Hubbard’s essay titled “Intensely American,” Henry James and Stephen Crane,” the (obligatory) comparison to a contemporary writer.**

Critical Readings presents **10 essays delving more deeply into James’ specific works.** Essays are arranged chronologically by the date in which the discussed work was published. Glenda Norquay provides a piece called “The Art of Fiction: Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson,” which describes the respectful relationship between writers of vastly different styles. “A Native Gone Tourist? Henry James, Travel and The American Scene,” by Carlo Martinez discusses James’ relationship to travel writing. Pieces in this section also discuss James’ novels *The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Princess Casamassima*, and, arguably his most popular novel, *The Turn of the Screw*, in addition to short stories like “Collaboration” and “The Altar of the Dead.” Each essay concludes with a list of works cited.

A closing resources section includes a chronology of Henry James’ life, works by Henry James (reflecting his many different mediums of choice), a bibliography, notes on the contributors, and an index.”

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Text Reviews



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