

# TONI MORRISON

(1931 - Present)



*Photo courtesy of Palmer, Colin A. Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History, (New York: Thomson/Gale, 2006).*

**T**oni Morrison is a prominent African American writer.

After earning her BA from Howard University, she went on to get her MA from Cornell University. Following her graduation from Cornell, she began a career in academia, eventually returning to Howard as a professor.

It was during this early

phase of her teaching career that Morrison came to think of African American culture as something distinctive and worth exploring. She moved back to New York in 1964, taking a position as an editor at Random House, which afforded her the opportunity to work with several prominent African American writers of the time. In 1970, she had her first novel published, *"The Bluest Eye,"* which garnered a great deal of critical acclaim. She would continue teaching and writing about the African American experience for the next four decades. In 1993, she became the first African American female to receive a Nobel Prize for her literary achievements.