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Contact: Jessica Moody, VP Marketing
(800) 562-2139 x101
jmoody@greyhouse.com

Salem Press Announces A New Addition to the Critical Insights Series; *Critical Insights: The American Multicultural Identity*

Edited by Linda Moser, Professor of English at *Missouri State University* and Kathryn Wes, Professor and Chair of the English Department at *Bellarmino University*, *Critical Insights: The American Multicultural Identity* features American literature that explores the implications for one's sense of identity while living within and between two or more cultures, whether that arises from immigration, being the child of immigrants, being mixed race, or some other circumstance.

The cultural diversity of the United States makes it impossible to describe American identity as homogenous or monolithic. While some prioritize one culture over another, others emphasize the space in between, to insist on a balance between the two, or to express a feeling of being in-between, or the inability to participate in either side, as so brilliantly evoked in Sui Sin Far's description: "I give my right hand to the Occidentals and my left to the Orientals, hoping that between them they will not utterly destroy the insignificant connecting link."

In multicultural America, identity can be complicated, confusing, even frustrating while at the same time inspiring new perspectives, creativity, and a rich source of pride. This volume features studies of works as diverse as Sherman Alexie's National Book Award-winning *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Gish Jen's *Mona in the Promised Land*, and the lesser known but equally powerful *Real Women Have Curves* by Josefina Lopéz. Also offered are 10-14 essays exploring cultural and historical contexts including one by Annette Harris Powell on the changing politics of hyphenation in the United States and its literature over the course of the 20th century.

Other topics include:

- Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart*, a play set in New York City at the start of the AIDS epidemic.
- Michael Gorman considers the effect of trauma and loss on male identity as depicted in works by Chang-rae Lee.
- Joanna Davis-McElligatt's article picks up and continues the discussion of struggles between generations that so often occur when a family has immigrated to the United

States, looking in particular at a young woman who must struggle with the very different cultural ambitions of her parents in Paule Marshall's *Brown Girl, Brownstones*.

- Tina Powell's essay analyzing Bich Minh Nguyen's memoir *Stealing Buddha's Dinner* examines the context of Vietnamese American life.
- Linda Tinh Moser examines *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* and *The Inferior Woman* by Edith Eaton, to portray an Asian American identity.
- Leanne P. Day considers land rights and ownership as a marker of cultural identity when analyzing Kauai Hart Hemming's *The Descendants*.
- Plus many more multicultural identity topics

The *Critical Insights* Series distills the best of both classic and current literary criticism of the world's most-studied literature. Edited and written by some of academe's most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights* provide authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers have relied on for years. This volume will be a valuable purchase for all.

Free Online with Print Purchase

Critical Insights: The American Multicultural Identity is available at no additional cost to buyers of the print volume online through Salem's online platform, Salem Literature. A single purchase of the printed version is all it takes to gain access to this important title online.

Praise for Salem Press' Critical Insight Series

"The text is written at a level appropriate for high school and undergraduate-level students, precisely the age that would be reading these titles and authors' works and needing resources to write critical papers for class. These resources will be useful for high school and undergraduate library collections. Online access is available with purchase of the print volume, which will be a huge benefit for classroom use since many students will be able to access the same information at one time." — ARBA

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