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Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the Critical Insights Series; *Critical Insights: Woman Warrior*

Edited by Linda Trinh Moser, Missouri State University, and Kathryn West, Bellarmine University. This collection seeks to analyze *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston. *Critical Insights: Woman Warrior* is a comprehensive collection of essays designed to illuminate the major themes and stylistic features of *The Woman Warrior*, as well as to apprise readers of the debates and controversies surrounding Kingston's memoir—including the debate over whether the piece should be fiction or nonfiction. A number of these essays make connections to Kingston's later writings, with an emphasis on mother/daughter relationships and feminism.

The book begins with an **About This Volume** section by West providing a layout of the book. After this is the **Book and Author** section where Linda Trinh Moser introduces the history and resonance of *The Woman Warrior*. West then provides a biography of the author, Maxine Hong Kingston, which includes an interview by Moser. Following this are four **Critical Context** essays providing contextual, historical, and comparative insights, as well as an overview of the critical reception of *The Woman Warrior*. The section begins with an essay by West, "Twentieth-Century China and US History, Meet Postmodern Sensibility" which seeks out historical references in the text and fleshes out the events to which they refer. The second context essay is Rickie-Ann Legleitner's "*The Woman Warrior: An Examination of Genre, Representation, and Reception*," surveys criticism on the text, after outlining the initial tone, reviews, and issues they raise. Legleitner highlights the recurring issues in the scholarship: genre, authenticity and ethnicity, identity, mother/daughter relationships, and feminism. Moser then employs a transnational lens to read the fourth section of *The Woman Warrior* by comparing the cultures of the United States and China. This section finishes with an essay by David Borman offering a comparative analysis of *The Woman Warrior* and Maya Angelou's *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*—with a focus on the complicated cross-cultural histories of China and Chinese America, and Ghana and African America.

The next section, **Critical Readings**, contains eight essays on a range of topics. The first essays feature explorations of identity, identity formation, mother/daughter relationships, language and life-writing, and the relationship between all those factors. The section opens with an essay by Anne Rüggeheimer interrogating the genres of autobiography and life-writing in "Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* in the Context of Life Writing Studies: An Exploration of Relational Selfhood." Next, Lorna Martens also speaks about the issues of identity in "The Words at My Back': Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* and the Power of Discourse," yet with more of a focus on the roles of words, stories, talk-story, and writing. Jeffrey Westover's "The Mother's Mark on the Daughter's Speech in *The Woman Warrior*" posits selfhood as fluid, an ongoing negotiation, and achieved socially in response to interactions with others. He argues that there is a crucial connection between speech and the development of identity, and proceeds to explicate scenes in *The Woman Warrior* that feature the prohibition, incision, and inscription of words.

Other essay topics include:

- “The Role of Talk-Story in Maxine Hong Kingston’s and Amy Tan’s Versions of the Mother-Daughter Plot” by Susanna Hoeness-Krupsaw
- “Diaspora and its Others: The Woman Warrior and Southeast Asian Diasporic Literature” by Christopher B. Patterson
- “Creating Meaning and Self-Affirmation through Stories: Existentialism and *The Woman Warrior*” by Alex Pinnon
- “Mythopoesis and Cultural Hybridity in Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*” by Nelly Mok
- “Truths and Tellings: *The Woman Warrior* and Kingston’s Transformational Genres of the Real” by Elizabeth Rodrigues

Each essay in *Critical Insights: The Woman Warrior* includes a list of Works Cited and detailed endnotes. Also included in this volume is a **Bibliography**, biographies of the **Editor** and **Contributors**, as well as an alphabetical **Index**.

The concluding section of this volume offers resources designed to provide quick access to facts about Kingston’s life and writing. A chronology of Kingston’s life is followed by a list of her publications, including books and essays and occasional pieces.

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 academia’s most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights: The Woman Warrior* provides authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers will rely on for years. This volume is destined to become a valuable purchase for all.

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Critical Insights: The Woman Warrior

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