

# SALEM PRESS

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## **Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the *Critical Insights* Series** ***Critical Insights: Going Into the Woods***

The relationship between humans and the wilderness has been explored in literature for centuries. Notable writers throughout history have featured forest exploration in their writings as a way to sculpt and enrich their stories. This theme remains popular in modern day literature.

The woods have traditionally symbolized mystery, the unknown, and even danger as countless brave characters have ventured into the forest. In contrast, forests have also symbolized a place where literary figures have sought refuge, sanctuary, freedom, and escape.

This new addition to the *Critical Insights* series guides readers through the historical, philosophical, and sociological perspectives of the forest as a setting in literature, examining the topic broadly and metaphorically. The ways in which literary depictions wilderness journeys have been translated into various forms of media including film and art are also explored.

In the introductory essay, volume editor Robert C. Evans discusses the organization of the essays within the text, providing brief summaries. The introduction also suggests valuable ways to approach the study of the woods as a theme in literature.

A collection of four Critical Contexts essays is intended to view forests in literature:

- 1) From a historical vantage point
- 2) In terms of its critical reception
- 3) Using a specific critical lens
- 4) And by comparing and contrasting it with another important work.

The four **Critical Context** essays include:

- The Once and Future Wizard: Arthurian (and Anti-Arthurian) Themes in the *Harry Potter* Series
- Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods* on Broadway and TV:
- Mystery and Sacrament in Flannery O'Connor's *A View of the Woods*
- "Out of this wood do not desire to go": The Woods in Six Productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Following these four Critical Context essays is the **Critical Readings** section of this book, which contains the following essays:

- The Matter of the Greenwood and Otto Bathurst's *Robin Hood*
- The Forest Scenes in the 1981 BBC Production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- Forest Imagery in Four Illustrations of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*
- Finding a Voice in the American Woods: Henry David Thoreau
- Mark Twain in the Woods
- Wilderness, Forest, and Jungle: The Woods and the Rhetoric of Colonialism in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- Wilderness Survival in Jack London's *In a Far Country*
- "How do we know?": Mystery and Ambiguity in the Narnian Forest in C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*
- Responses to Christopher McCandless in Sean Penn's Film *Into the Wild*

Each essay in *Critical Insights: Going Into the Woods* includes a list of **Works Cited** and detailed endnotes. In the final section, **Resources**, provides a list of Additional Works on The Supernatural for those who wish to further explore this theme followed by a **Bibliography**. Finally, this section closes with an **About the Editor** section, **Contributors**, and a detailed **Index**.

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: Going Into the Woods* 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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