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Salem Press Announces a Newest Addition to the *Critical Insights* Series: *Literature in Times of Crisis*

Almost since its inception, literature has emphasized and explored crises of various sorts, including political upheavals, social turmoil, destructive warfare, familial and personal conflicts, and devastating external dangers, especially those involving disease, the environment, the economy, and natural disasters. This book explores a wide range of kinds of crises and the ways they have been written about in literature of various genres and time periods. It also emphasizes the artistry involved in the various works it examines.

This volume, like all others in the *Critical Insights* series, is divided into several sections. It begins with an introductory piece, “Why Study Premodern Pandemic Experience?” by Rebecca Totaro which introduces the topic of through a documented “self-interview”, explaining how she became interested in the theme.

Following the introductory essay, a collection of four critical contexts essays are intended to treat the novel (1) from a historical vantage point, (2) in terms of its critical reception, (3) using a specific critical lens, and (4) by comparing and contrasting it with another important work. This section opens with an article by Matthew Thiele titled, “‘Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she’: Inheritance, Reproduction, and Plague in *Romeo and Juliet*.” This essay examines *Romeo and Juliet* in light of plague literature from the early modern period. This is followed by a piece also written by Thiele, “Commentary on Plague and Disease in the Early and Later Modern Periods.” The following two articles are written by Edwin Wong and Brandon Schneeberger respectively. The first, “Greek Tragedy, Black Swans, and the Coronavirus: The Consolation of Theatre,” offers a particular critical lens by viewing literary tragedies as “black swan” events, or incidents that at first seem highly improbable but have major consequences. The final essay, “Learning in Wartime: Samuel Johnson and Spiritual Transcendence in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*,” compares and contrasts writings by Samuel Johnson and C. S. Lewis dealing with crises brought forth by war or other perilous events.

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

- Key Ancient Crises: Construction of Plot and the Story of the Trojan War in the *Iliad*, by Fabian Horn
- Crises in Sophocles’s *Antigone*, by Kenneth Kitchell

- Crisis and Conspiracy in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, by Robert C. Evans
- Charles Brockden Brown's "The Man at Home": Crisis, Isolation, and Narrative, by John C. Harvard, et al.
- Apocalypse and Postapocalypse in Nineteenth-Century Literature, by Brett Stifflemire
- Crises in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Especially Grampa's Death, by Robert C. Evans
- Apocalypse and Postapocalypse in Fiction and Film, 1945-1970, by Brett Stifflemire
- The Crisis of the Archives: Susan Howe's "Articulation of Sound Forms in Time," by Joyce Kelley
- Crises in Margaret Atwood's *Penelopiad: The Dramatic Adaptation*, by Robert C. Evans
- The Film Version of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road: A Survey of Reviews*, by Kelsie Kato.
- Crisis and Crises in Homer's *Iliad* and Pat Barker's *The Silence of the Girls*, by Maria Antonietta Struzziero.

In the final section, **Resources**, a select bibliography of additional works that are pertinent to the theme is provided. Each essay in *Critical Insights: Literature in Times of Crisis* includes a list of **Works Cited** and detailed endnotes. Also included in this volume is a Bibliography, biographies of the **Editor** and **Contributors**, and an alphabetical **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: Literature in Times of Crisis* 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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