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## **Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the *Critical Insights* Series: *Critical Insights: The Pearl***

John Steinbeck's *The Pearl* is one of the most popular and most frequently taught of all American novellas. Although it began its life as a brief parable, an allegorical novella about a poor fisherman finding a pearl, becoming greedy, and subsequently suffering a Job-like loss, it has remained in the literary conversation for nearly three-quarters of a century for reasons that seem to exceed its original goals. Its Mexican setting, in a location not far from California, gives it a particular interest today as the United States becomes increasingly multicultural. The present volume examines the book from numerous perspectives – historical, cultural, social, economic, ethnic, and literary. This book in the *Critical Insights* series explores the many factors that have made Steinbeck's short novel so enduringly appealing, examining the history of the work's critical reception while also contributing new insights that have not been pursued before.

For all these reasons and more, this latest contribution to the *Critical Insights* series may be of special interest to many readers. A collection of four critical contexts essays are intended to treat Steinbeck's novella (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 other important works. This section opens with an essay by Melinda Knight that discusses Steinbeck's vision of Mexico in the context of *The Pearl*. This is followed by a survey of critical reception, also by Melinda Knight, and an essay by Kyler Campbell, closely and critically examining Steinbeck's work. James Plath closes this section by using a comparative approach to continue the discussion on *The Pearl*, particularly in comparison to Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Next comes the **Critical Readings** section of this book, which contains the following essays:

- Of Mollusks and Men: An Ecocritical Approach to *The Pearl*, Lowell Wyse
- "This Is the *Whole*": Ecological Thinking in John Steinbeck's *The Pearl*, Christopher Brown
- Steps to a Littoral Ecology: Community and Nature in John Steinbeck's *The Pearl*, Michael Zeitler
- The Song of Inequality: Sickness and Wealth in Steinbeck's *The Pearl*, Jericho Williams
- "The Detachment of God": A Theopoetic Reading of Steinbeck's *The Pearl*, Kelly C. MacPhail
- Surrendering: Steinbeck's *The Pearl* as an Artistic Failure, John J. Han
- Who Stole Kino's Cheese? Socioeconomic Determinism in *The Pearl*, Arun Khevariya

- The Portrayal of “Poverty People” in John Steinbeck’s *The Pearl* and *Tortilla Flat*, Emily P. Hamburger
- A Comparative Exploration of Devaluation of Women, Ownership, and Violence in John Steinbeck’s *The Chrysanthemums* and *The Pearl*, Elisabeth Bayley
- Culture, Identity, and Otherness: An Analysis of Kino’s Songs in John Steinbeck’s *The Pearl* and Pilate’s Melody in Toni Morrison’s *Song of Solomon*, Tammie Jenkins

In the final section, **Resources**, a Chronology of John Steinbeck’s Life and a list of other Works by John Steinbeck are provided. 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: The Pearl* 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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