

Critical Insights: Beloved

“Published in 1987, Toni Morrison’s Pulitzer Prize winning novel *Beloved* brought about a new and profound contemplation of slavery and its legacy. With its somewhat mythical style and intense narrative, the book inspires continuous critical debate. *Critical Insights: Beloved* gathers **a good range of essays helping to advance the critical conversation into new areas, while at the same time providing significant context for the novel’s success.**

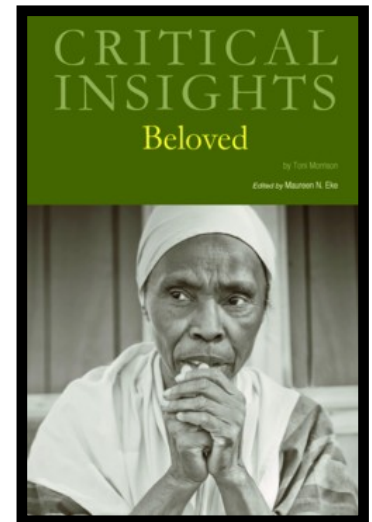
A Critical Contexts section presents **four essays which provide excellent background for approaching the novel.** Kristine Yohe, for example, revisits the true case of Margaret Garner, an escaped slave who allegedly murdered her own child rather than have her return to slavery (an incident said to inspire *Beloved*). Touria Khannous then surveys 30 years of *Beloved*’s critical reception; pointing to many spokes—African American, feminist, modernist, etc., on the theoretical wheel.

Critical Readings then offers **nine essays examining the book’s themes and structure.** In her piece “A Gathering of Trees: An Examination of Memory, Trauma and Embodiment in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*,” Kokahvah Zauditu-Selassie writes of the healing influences of West African spirituality upon the book’s afflicted characters. Lynne Simpson then points to the importance of regarding slavery as stories versus statistics in her essay “The Psychological Impact of Slavery and Separation in *Beloved*.” Two closing essays propose interesting ways in which to teach and disseminate the complex novel.

Concluding with a chronology of Toni Morrison’s life, a listing of her works and a bibliography, *Critical Insights: Beloved* **helps to confirm the novel’s emotional appeal and universal importance.”**

—ARBA

Text Reviews



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