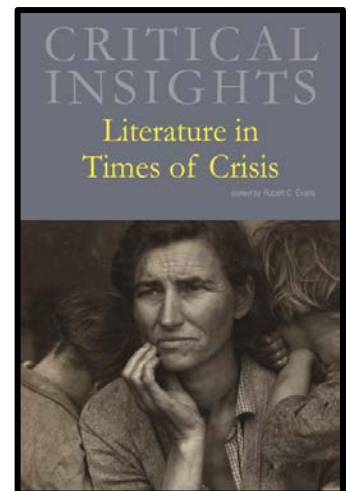


# *Critical Insights: Literature in Times of Crisis*

“A number of books have come out recently on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority being nonfiction analyses. How, one wonders, will the pandemic be reflected in literary works? This volume in the *Critical Insights* series addresses the question by looking at past crises resulting in social change, from plagues to war, from Homer to Cormac McCarthy. **Defining “crises” variously and broadly, this collection of informed, scholarly essays is divided into three major sections: an introduction** (written, interview-style, with scholar Rebecca Totaro on themes of plague literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and similarities to the world created by COVID-19 response) **and two critical essay sections, comprising 11 essays in all.** The first essay section treats ancient and Renaissance literature and themes, and the second addresses more-modern literature, film, and theater. **Each essay gives a historical perspective, an overview of relevant secondary writings, an analysis of the work(s) under consideration, and (if applicable) a comparative analysis of two authors or works.** Essays end with notes and works cited, and some are extended by black-and-white reproductions. The volume concludes with a list of additional work (books examining both literature and the impact of crisis); a bibliography that broadens the focus to related topics; notes on the editor and contributors; and comprehensive indexes of persons, characters, works, time periods, places, topics, and writers. As contributor Joyce Kelly notes, “We recognize crisis as potentially damaging, [but] it can also bring necessary change.” **An excellent addition for college and university collections with a focus on literary criticism.”**

– *Booklist*, 2021

**FULL  
TEXT  
REVIEW**



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