



Amy Tan: A Literary Companion (McFarland Literary Companion)

Mary Ellen Snodgrass

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In the mid-1980s, Amy Tan was a successful but unhappy corporate speechwriter. By the end of the decade, she was perched firmly atop the best-seller lists with *The Joy Luck Club*, with more hugely popular novels to follow. Tan's work - once pigeonholed as ethnic literature, a niche market with limited appeal - resonates with universal themes that cross cultural and ideological boundaries, and proved wildly successful with readers of all stripes. Tender, sincere, complex, honest and uncompromising in its portrayal of Chinese culture and its affect on women - Amy Tan's work earned her both praise and excoriation from critics, adoration from fans, and a place as one of America's most notable modern writers. This reference work offers an introduction to and overview of Amy Tan's life, her body of literature, and her characters, motifs and themes. The main text is comprised of entries covering characters, dates, historical figures and events, allusions, motifs and themes from Tan's works, among other topics. The entries combine both critical insights with generous citations from primary and secondary sources. Each entry concludes with a selected bibliography. There is also a chronology of Tan's family history and her life. Appendices provide an overlapping timeline of historical and fictional events in Tan's work; a glossary of foreign terms found in her writing; and a list of related writing and research topics. An extensive bibliography and a comprehensive index accompany the text.

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