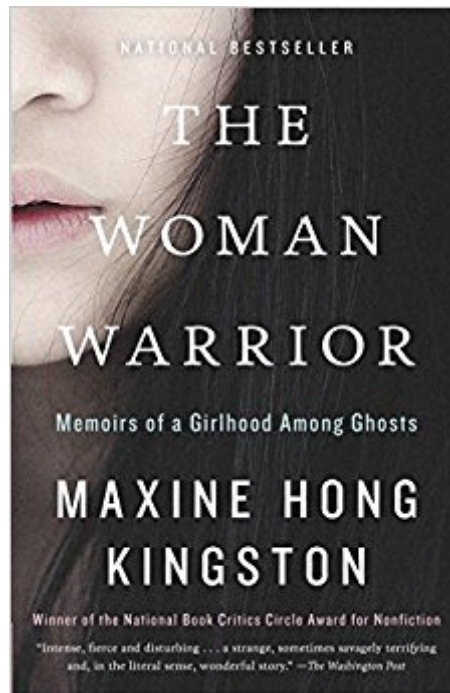




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# The Woman Warrior: Memoirs Of A Girlhood Among Ghosts



## Synopsis

In her award-winning book *The Woman Warrior*, Maxine Hong Kingston created an entirely new form—an exhilarating blend of autobiography and mythology, of world and self, of hot rage and cool analysis. First published in 1976, it has become a classic in its innovative portrayal of multiple and intersecting identities—immigrant, female, Chinese, American. As a girl, Kingston lives in two confounding worlds: the California to which her parents have immigrated and the China of her mother’s “talk stories.” The fierce and wily women warriors of her mother’s tales clash jarringly with the harsh reality of female oppression out of which they come. Kingston’s sense of self emerges in the mystifying gaps in these stories, which she learns to fill with stories of her own. A warrior of words, she forges fractured myths and memories into an incandescent whole, achieving a new understanding of her family’s past and her own present.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Woman Warrior* is a pungent, bitter, but beautifully written memoir of growing up Chinese American in Stockton, California. Maxine Hong Kingston (*China Men*) distills the dire lessons of her mother’s mesmerizing “talk-story” tales of a China where girls are worthless, tradition is exalted and only a strong, wily woman can scratch her way upward. The author’s America is a landscape of confounding white “ghosts”—the policeman ghost, the social worker ghost—with equally rigid, but very different rules. Like the woman warrior of the title, Kingston carries the crimes against her family carved into her back by her parents in testimony to and defiance of the pain. --This text refers

to the Hardcover edition.

“Intense, fierce and disturbing . . . A strange, sometimes savagely terrifying and, in the literal sense, wonderful story. The Washington Post “Remarkable. . . . As an account of growing up female and Chinese-American . . . it is anti-nostalgic. . . . As a dream of the female avenger it is dizzying, elemental, a poem turned into a sword. The New York Times “Superb. . . . We are in the presence of a splendid raconteur, who shares with us the myths and stories that emerge from the lode of a culture’s deepest realities. Chicago Tribune “Triumphant . . . astonishingly accomplished. Time

This collection of Chinese folklore is also a complex soul-searching journey for the author in which she delves into the folklore of her Chinese heritage that has been imparted to her over the years mainly by her mother and assesses how these tales relate to her own inner self in the way that she has been raised by her parents and also in the way that she has grown both within and apart from these cultural boundaries. The stories themselves are fairly interesting and entertaining, but what really makes this book noteworthy is the introspection of the author as a Chinese-American woman growing up within two separate cultures in the 1970’s and the inner strength and courage that she develops throughout this growing-up process. While it was a bit outside of my comfort zone at times, I really appreciated this book for the honesty and sincerity of the author and the courage that it took to put all of her internal feelings and thoughts out into the open for all to see.

I stepped out of my normal reading patterns with this book and was surprised by how much I actually enjoyed it. Kingston paints very vivid images with her words and brings them to life off the page. I was not a fan of the fourth story, "At the Western Palace", but all the others were great. "White Tigers" was my favorite to read in this book.

This book came in a timely manner and was a great read. The stories can be read separately and each carry their own meaning, but are still cohesive and all relate back to the main character. A great read.

This Is A Good Book, Some Parts I Had To Reread To Understand But It Is A Good Book.

I am delighted that a friend suggested that I read Kingston's book, as I'd not read it in college as had so many of my friends. It is a powerful, sobering, wonderful compilation of very powerful stories. I can imagine that this book made a dramatic impact on women and society when it was first published, as it has a lasting effect even now, several decades later. The stories of growing up in a very different time and culture, told with Kingston's strong, burning passion to bring life to these tales, ensures that they are beautifully and powerfully alive the page. The book is timeless.

I felt like I had to struggle a little to understand this book at first, but once I got into the flow, it was very interesting. Still, I feel there was a lot I missed. This is one of those books I will have to read again I think.

Dreams, images, stories, myths, family history all combine and intertwine to give a vivid impression of growing up as a child of Chinese immigrants to the USA.

This was required reading in my literature class. I had difficulty finishing the book. It just did not keep my interest. Good literature engages the reader, regardless of that reader's interests. For example, Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* was enjoyed by readers that were not of Irish ancestry and previously had no real interest in anything Irish. Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha* interested people who usually wouldn't have been drawn to anything that had to do with Japan, or Japanese culture. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is almost two-hundred years old and the themes are still relevant today and it allows the reader to further appreciate the cultural, popular mentality of the time, in England and Western Europe. I was hoping that this book would do the same for Chinese Americans and Chinese culture. It did not. There are certain parts of the book that are very well written, but the imagery often goes a bit over the top and is frequently too heavy-handed. Imagery & symbolism should be somewhat subtle. There is also a bit of repetition of some of the themes, which is usually ok, if a motif is running throughout a book, but only if it is done with considerable intelligence and creativity. The repetitious motifs in this book often seem irritating and even inane. Some parts are very well written, but those parts make up a small portion of the book: still, enough for me to give the book two stars. Just wasn't my cup of tea.

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