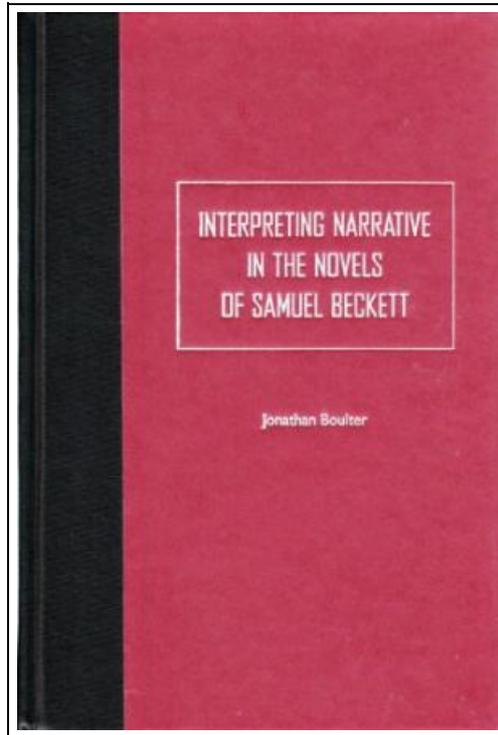


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University Press of Florida, United States, 2001. Hardback. Condition: New. New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Avoiding the pitfalls of the modernist/postmodernist controversy, Boulter goes beyond formalism to situate Beckett's early and mid-career novels on the horizon of understanding. Hermeneutics is brought to bear on Beckett's work in original and previously neglected ways. --Lois Oppenheim, author of *The Painted Word: Samuel Beckett's Dialogue with Art* Jonathan Boulter's study argues that Samuel Beckett's novels not only thematize the reading process but in various ways are about the reader and the process of interpretation, or hermeneutics, as well. Building on seminal work by H. Porter Abbott and others whose first premises have been largely passed over by the Beckett critical community, he reads the early to middle novels of Beckett (*Watt*; *Mercier and Camier*; *Molloy*; *Malone Dies*; *The Unnamable*; and *How It Is*) in the light of phenomenological-hermeneutical theory, primarily that of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Boulter demonstrates how Beckett's novels illustrate and examine issues central to philosophical hermeneutics: the notion that the self inhabits or is inhabited by a linguistic world, that one must understand one's condition through language, that the self is ultimately at a distance from itself because it is mediated by language. Boulter reveals that Beckett's texts are inhabited by narrators and characters who are allegorized versions of the actual reader. Adapting such concepts as Gadamer's conversation and phronesis and Ricoeur's appropriation, Boulter works through the major novels showing how each is, in turn, a stage of Beckett's development of the subject. From an exploration of the relation between the title character's failing language and the obligations of the reader in the face of an unreadable discourse in *Watt* to an explication of a generalized thematization of...



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