



Beckett and Animals

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The animals that appear in Samuel Beckett's work are diverse and unpredictable. They serve as victim and persecutor, companion and adversary, disconcerting observers and objects oblivious to the human gaze. Bringing together an international array of Beckett specialists, this is the first full-length study to explore the significance of the animals that populate Beckett's prose, drama, and poetry. Essays theorize a broad spectrum of animal manifestations while focusing on the roles that distinct animal forms play within Beckett's work, including horses, sheep, cats, dogs, bees, insects, and others. Contributors situate close readings within a larger literary and cultural context, drawing on thinkers ranging from Aristotle to Deleuze, Foucault, and Agamben, and on authors such as Flaubert, Kafka, and Coetzee. The result is an incisive and provocative collection that traverses disciplinary boundaries, revealing how Beckett's creatures challenge conventional notions of species identity and, ultimately, what it means to be human.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Given the range of perspectives and the conspicuous erudition throughout the essays in this extraordinary collection, readers will surely never look at Beckett's animals - now more noticeable and memorable than ever before - or actual animals in the former way ever again."

William Hutchings, James Joyce Literary Supplement

About the Author

Mary Bryden is Professor of French Literature at the University of Reading and Co-Director of the Beckett International Foundation.

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