



Literature and Rationality: Ideas of Agency in Theory and Fiction

Paisley Livingston

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This book explores concepts of rationality drawn from philosophy and the social sciences, in relation to traditions of literary enquiry. The author surveys basic assumptions and questions in philosophical accounts of action, in decision theory, and in the theory of rational choice. He gives examples ranging from Icelandic sagas to Poe and Beckett, and examines some situations and actions drawn from American and European fiction in order to analyze issues raised by contemporary models of agency. Challenging poststructuralism's irrationalist images of science, this innovative study crosses the boundary between literary and philosophical studies in a bold interdisciplinary spirit.

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