

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-62938-6 — Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy, and Theory

Edited by Jane Adamson, Richard Freadman, David Parker

Frontmatter

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Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy, and Theory

Is it possible for postmodernism to offer viable accounts of ethics? Can these accounts be coherent and stable? Or are our social and intellectual worlds now too fragmented to provide any broad consensus about the moral life? These issues have emerged in recent decades as some of the most contentious in literary and philosophical studies. In *Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy, and Theory*, a distinguished international gathering of philosophers and literary scholars addresses some of the major reconceptualisations involved in this so-called 'turn towards ethics'. An important feature of this 'turn' has been a renewed interest in the literary text as a focus for the exploration of ethical issues. Exponents of this trend include Charles Taylor, Bernard Williams, Iris Murdoch, Cora Diamond, Richard Rorty, and Martha Nussbaum – a contributor and a key figure in this volume. The book tries to assess the significance of this development for ethical and literary theory. *Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy, and Theory* also attempts to articulate an alternative postmodern account of ethics which does not rely on earlier appeals to universal truths.

JANE ADAMSON, formerly Senior Lecturer in English at the Australian National University, is the author of *Othello: Some Problems of Judgement and Feeling* and *Troilus and Cressida*.

RICHARD FREADMAN, Professor of English at La Trobe University, is the author of *Eliot, James and the Fictional Self: a Study in Character and Narration*; (with Seamus Miller) *Re-thinking Theory: a Critique of Contemporary Literary Theory and an Alternative Account*, and editor of *Literary Theory and Philosophy: A Cross-Disciplinary Encounter*.

DAVID PARKER, Reader in English, Australian National University, is author of *Ethics, Theory and the Novel*, and editor of *Shame and the Modern Self*.

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