



Toward an Aesthetics of Blindness: An Interdisciplinary Response to Synge, Yeats, and Friel (New Studies in Aesthetics)

David Feeney

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Blindness has always fascinated those who can see. Although modern imaginative portrayals of the sightless experience are increasingly positive, the affirmative elements of these renderings are inevitably tempered and problematized by the visual predilections of the artists undertaking them. This book explores a variety of the (dis)continuities between depictions of the sightless experience of beauty by sighted artists and the lived aesthetic experiences of blind people. It does so by pressing a radical interdisciplinary reinterpretation of celebrated dramatic portrayals of blindness into service as a tool with which to probe the boundaries of the capacities of the sighted imagination while exploring the sensory detriment of our visually fixated notions of beauty. Works by J. M. Synge, W. B. Yeats, and Brian Friel are explored as a means of crafting a workable and innovative medium of theoretical and experiential exchange between the disciplines of literature, aesthetics, and disability studies. In addition to appraising previously unexamined aspects of the work of three of Ireland's most celebrated modern dramatists, this book considers the consequences for blind people of the exclusionary and prohibitive elements of traditional aesthetic theory and art education. The insights yielded will be of value to those with an interest in modern literature, differential aesthetics, visual culture, perception, and the experience of blindness.

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