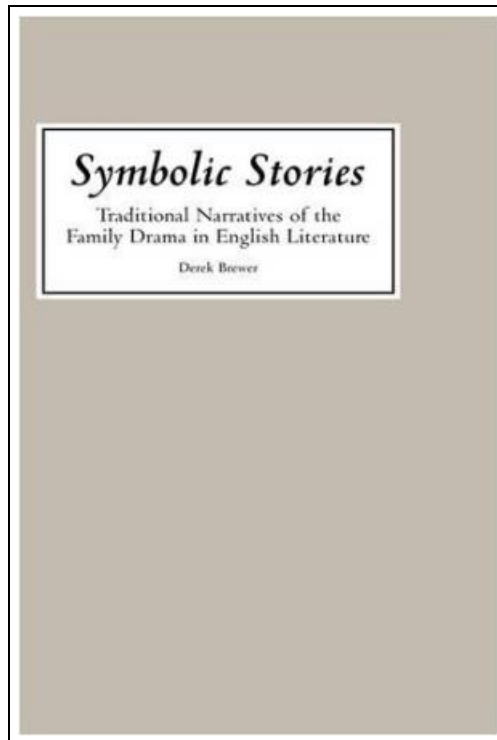


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SYMBOLIC STORIES: TRADITIONAL NARRATIVES OF THE FAMILY DRAMA IN ENGLISH LITERATURE



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D.S.Brewer. Hardcover. Condition: New. 200 pages. Dimensions: 9.3in. x 6.2in. x 0.7in. Many famous stories, from the Old Testament, medieval romance and folktale, to Shakespeares tragedies and comedies and even some great novels, present apparent inconsistencies or absurdities when judged as plausible representations of reality. Yet the experience of many generations of readers and listeners is that such stories take a powerful hold on the imagination and memory, and create a strong impression on coherent significance. Symbolic Stories shows why the structure of these tales is so significant, and why they are repeated, both in the original and with variations, down the ages. Professor Brewer reveals new aspects of the stories themselves by elucidating the implicit and symbolic meanings that lie below the literal narrative. The stories discussed are those that are especially concerned with the processes of growing up and coming to maturity. They are told from the point of view of the emerging individual as he or she passes through the rites de passage that allow disengagement from parents, self-realisation, the establishment of new relationships, and integration with society. The book demonstrates certain characteristic themes and structures in these traditional stories, but is far from reducing them to a single formula. One of the main purposes is to show how selected stories of great artistic value establish their own individual meanings within the general pattern. There are new interpretations of the famous romances, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and Malorys Tale of Sir Gareth, and of other romances. Shakespeares remarkable portrayals throughout his career of various aspects of the family drama are discussed, and the essence of a new theory of tragedy and comedy is suggested. The extreme type of traditional story in Europe is seen as the fairy tale, which is analysed to show how fundamentally such...



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