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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- CONTENTS -- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS -- NOTE ON TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS -- INTRODUCTION -- PART ONE: METAMORPHOSES OF THE REFERENTIAL FUNCTION, 1956-1984 -- Chapter One. Vertiginous Storytelling: Camus's La Chute, 1956 -- Chapter Two. Reappearing Man in Robbe-Grillet's Topologie d'une cité fantôme, 1976 -- Chapter Three. Narrative Leveling and Performative Pathos in Claude Simon's Les Géorgiques, 1981 -- Chapter Four. The Self as Referent: Postmodern Autobiographies, 1983-1984 (Robbe-Grillet, Duras, Sarraute) -- PART TWO: "PURE FICTION" AND THE INEVITABILITY OF REFERENCE -- INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO -- Chapter Five. Blanchot and Narrative -- Chapter Six. Beckett and the Ethics of Fabulation -- CONCLUSION -- NOTES -- WORKS CITED -- INDEX
Sommario/riassunto	Here David Ellison explores the problems encountered by France's best experimental authors writing between 1956 and 1984, when faced with the question: "What should my writing be about?" These years are

characterized by the rise of the "new novelists," who questioned the representational function of writing as they created works of imagination that turned in upon themselves and away from exterior reality. It became fashionable at one point to affirm that literature was no longer about the world but uniquely about the words on a page, the signifying surface of the text. Ellison tests this assumption, showing that even in the most seemingly self-referential fictions the words point to the world from which they can never completely separate themselves. Through close readings Ellison examines the novels and theoretical writings of authors whose works are fundamental to our perception of contemporary French writing and thought: Camus, Robbe-Grillet, Simon, Duras, Sarraute, Blanchot, and Beckett. The result is a new understanding of the link between the referential function of literary language and the problematic of the ethics of fiction.
