

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	ix
Introduction	1
1. Critical Joking: The Early Prose	37
Superiority, Sarcasm, Scholarship	38
The Loutishness of Learning	47
Diminishing Laughing Returns	51
Art vs. Book-Keeping	58
S/M: Scholarship and Mimicry	62
Critical Timing	73
2. Gagging in the <i>Trilogy</i>	77
Gagging for It	78
Partial Incorporation	82
An Obligation to Express	86
Tiring Desire	91
Toilet Training, Resistant Material	96
<i>Nihil in Intellectu</i>	104
3. Power Playing in <i>Endgame</i>	113
Perhaps	115
Unhappiness: Nothing Funnier	119
Playing for Time	124
The Play of the Audience	130
Just Play	136
Dialectics at a Standstill	143

4. Comic Tremors: The Late Prose	148
Embers and Ashes	150
Imagination at Wit's End	159
Ill Saying, Ill Said	169
Ill Seeing	178
5. Slapstick Echoes: The Late Plays	185
Limping Gags	186
Deadpan Demands	194
Gravity and Levity	201
'Kindly Tune Accordingly'	209
'Like Something Out of Beckett'	215
Conclusion	230
<i>Works Cited</i>	235
<i>General Index</i>	247
<i>Index of Authors and Works</i>	250