



What is There to Say?

By Ann Smock

University of Nebraska Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, What is There to Say?, Ann Smock, Herman Melville's *Bartleby*, asked to account for himself, "would prefer not to." Tongue-tied Billy Budd, urged to defend his innocence, responds with a murderous blow. The *Bavard*, by Louis-Rene des Forets, concerns a man whose power to speak is replaced by an inability to shut up. In these and other literary examples a call for speech throws the possibility of speaking into doubt. What Is There to Say? uses the ideas of Maurice Blanchot to clarify puzzling works by Melville, des Forets, and Beckett. Ann Smock's energetic readings of texts about talking, listening, and recording cast an equally welcome light on Blanchot's paradoxical thought. Ann Smock is a professor of French at the University of California, Berkeley and the author of *Double Dealing*. She translated Maurice Blanchot's *The Space of Literature* and *The Writing of the Disaster*, as well as Sarah Kofman's *Rue Ordener*, *Rue Labat*, all published by the University of Nebraska Press.



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