



# The Singularity of Literature

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**Winner of the ESSE (European Society for the Study of English) Book Award for Literature 2006**

Literature and the literary have proved singularly resistant to definition. Derek Attridge argues that such resistance represents not a dead end, but a crucial starting point from which to explore anew the power and practices of Western art.

In this lively, original volume, the author:

- considers the implications of regarding the literary work as an innovative cultural event, both in its time and for later generations;
- provides a rich new vocabulary for discussions of literature, rethinking such terms as *invention*, *singularity*, *otherness*, *alterity*, *performance and form*;
- returns literature to the realm of ethics, and argues the ethical importance of the literary institution to a culture;
- demonstrates how a new understanding of the literary might be put to work in a 'responsible,' creative mode of reading.
- *The Singularity of Literature* is not only a major contribution to the theory of literature, but also a celebration of the extraordinary pleasure of the literary, for reader, writer, student or critic.

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