

## Derrida, Jacques (b. 1930)

Born in Algeria, the foremost living French philosopher, whose work encompasses literature, linguistics, and psychoanalysis; could be described as the Hegel of our time, inasmuch as he opposes Marx's analysis of commodity fetishism as a form of alienation having its roots in bourgeois society, like Hegel, asserting rather, that alienation is a characteristic of *all* production.

Derrida studied at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, where he taught the history of philosophy from 1965. His first work was a translation, with introduction, of a section of a work on geometry by [Edmund Husserl](#), followed in 1967 by a study of Husserl called **Speech and Phenomena**, the essays, **Writing and Difference** and, probably his most important work, **Of Grammatology**.

In line with the post-modern current of which he is part, Derrida rejects the search for certainty or meaning in the world. Derrida coined the word "Deconstruction," which is a development of the work of Roland Barthes, a method of literary criticism which seeks to undermine an writer's argument by uncovering unstated assumptions within the text, and in particular focusses on "binary" determinations which are challenged with the effect of calling the meaning of the text into question.

See his article **Speech & Writing according to Hegel** and an excerpt from **Specters of Marx** in which he argues against Marx from the standpoint of Hegel.

His later works include **Glas** (1974), **Truth in Painting** (1978), and **The Postcard** (1980).