



Literature and Fascination

Sibylle Baumbach

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This book explores literary fascination. Why do some texts capture us more than others; how do concepts of fascination evolve; what part does literature play in this; and how can literary fascination be pinpointed and conceptualised? Offering detailed case studies that include texts by William Shakespeare, S.T. Coleridge, Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker, Oscar Wilde, Joseph Conrad, Don DeLillo, and Ian McEwan, this study investigates various mechanisms of fascination across different verbal media of attraction. It illuminates the ways in which these texts are designed, presented, and received and develops fascination as a key concept of aesthetic attraction that provides insight into our understanding of how perception functions with regard to literature and how it has evolved. Synthesizing these analyses, the book argues that narratives of fascination essentially work with *medusamorphosis*, a concept that takes its cue from the Gorgon Medusa and aids the analysis of key mechanisms used to elicit fascination.

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