When Jacques Derrida appeared at Johns Hopkins University in 1966 to present a paper on what he called deconstruction, there was little reason to think that his reading of that paper would qualify as an "event" that would topple an entire theory of current literary discourse called structuralism. But not all professors of literature and philosophy jumped onto the deconstructive bandwagon. The underlying intent of deconstruction is to assault this traditional status by upending it. A single word may thus play endlessly against a very nearly infinite number of other and related words with each of them accumulating an evanescent tendril of a synaptic memory data bit, which in any event is both "there" and "not there" simultaneously. [l’autrui] (see Jacques Derrida, “Deconstruction and the Other,” in Dialogue with. Contemporary Continental Thinkers, ed. by Richard Kearney [Manchester: Manchester. University Press, 1984], 118). Along this line, Simon Critchley discusses that the sense of ethics in both Levinas and Derrida is hinged on the description of ethics as a questioning of the ego's freedom and spontaneity by the other (see Simon. Critchley, The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas [West Lafayette: Purdue. University Press, 1999] and his “Is Derrida a Private Ironist or a Public Liberal” in. deconstruction. (See Michel Foucault, Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other. Writings, 1977-1984, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. Jacques Derrida (/ˈdɛrida/; French: [sak dəʁيدa]; born Jackie Élie Derrida; July 15, 1930 – October 9, 2004) was an Algerian-born French philosopher best known for developing a form of semiotic analysis known as deconstruction, which he discussed in numerous texts, and developed in the context of phenomenology. He is one of the major figures associated with post-structuralism and postmodern philosophy. Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), a leading figure in French post-structuralist philosophy, is renowned for having developed deconstruction. His prolific writings treat both philosophical and literary works, and do so in various ways, of which deconstruction is the most philosophically significant. The following account will explicate what deconstruction involves by sketching some of its strategies and discussing its import for philosophy. Derrida's early (1967–72) writings deconstruct the philosophy of presence, which includes the metaphysics of presence and logocentric philosophy. Founded by Jacques Derrida, deconstruction has been and remains a controversial issue, not only in philosophy, but stretching into many other areas of academics as well. Simply put, deconstruction is a method of textual analysis designed to question the stability of meaning. As in the above example, if we draw the words individually out of the sentence, we see that the meanings of the words become ambiguous, or so Derrida would claim. And the popular media and the field of advertising have been quick to pick up on deconstructionist themes as well. While Derrida's ideas have caught on more in America than in Britain, his influence is growing and can be felt around the world. But what does that mean? © Matt Williams 2002.