



Resisting Representation

Elaine Scarry

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Renowned scholar Elaine Scarry's book, *The Body in Pain*, has been called by Susan Sontag "extraordinary...large-spirited, heroically truthful." The *Los Angeles Times* called it "brilliant, ambitious, and controversial." Now Oxford has collected some of Scarry's most provocative writing. This collection of essays deals with the complicated problems of representation in diverse literary and cultural genres--from her beloved sixth-century philosopher Boethius, through the nineteenth-century novel, to twentieth-century advertising.

qWe often assume that all areas of experience are equally available for representation. On the contrary, these essays present discussions of experiences and concepts that challenge, defeat, or block representation. Physical pain, physical labor, the hidden reflexes of cognition and its judgments about the coherence or incoherence of the world are all phenomena that test the resources of language. Using primarily literary sources (works by Hardy, Beckett, Boethius, Thackeray, and others), Scarry also draws on painting, medical advertising, and philosophic dialogue to probe the limitations of expression and representation.

Resisting Representation celebrates language. It looks at the problematic areas of expression not at the moment when representation is resisted, but at the moment when that resistance is at last overcome, thus suggesting a domain of plenitude and inclusion.

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