

EN 4323/6323: History of Literary Criticism From Plato to the Present

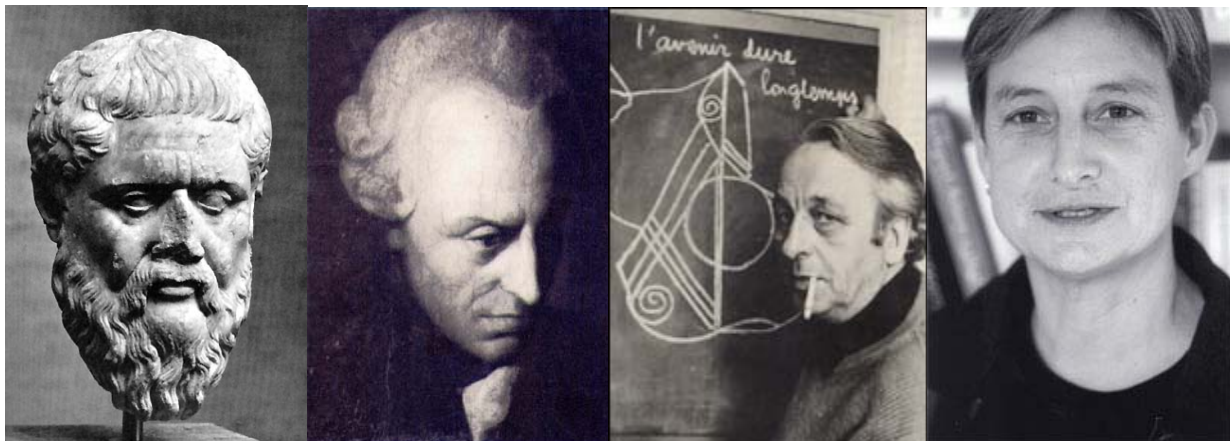
Tues/Thurs 8:30-9:45

Dr. Shalyn Claggett

Since at least c. 360 B.C.E. (the date of Plato's *Republic*), thinkers have attempted to answer the following questions:

- What do works of literature mean?
- How do they establish those meanings?
- Why do (and why should) we care?

This course will explore how the most influential philosophers, writers, and literary theorists in the past 2,368 years have attempted to answer these, and other, questions about literature and its implications. In our study we will examine the prevailing schools of twentieth-century literary criticism with an eye to their intellectual forbearers. Thinkers we will study include Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, E.D. Hirsch, Derrida, Gadamer, Bakhtin, Walter Benjamin, Irigaray, Adorno, Althusser, and Judith Butler, among others. Students will also demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical paradigms examined by conducting critical readings of Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*, Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*.



Course Requirements:

Two exams, three 5-page application essays, and
one class presentation