

# Introduction to Literary Theory

COLT 302, Class #22024, Fall 2007, Mon & Wed, 2-3:20, THH 108



What does it mean to respond to a work of literature *as* literature? Not as a representation of this or that, a story about something or other, but first of all as something apart from anything that is narrated or dramatized there? This question opens onto distinctive ways of thinking about literature and the experience it provides. To explore the paths of thought that literature traces out often means letting ourselves challenge what seem to be unshakeable assumptions about the nature of language, meaning, intention, the human subject, limits of interpretation, the difference of truth from non-truth, etc. With help from contemporary theorists of literature, this course will examine how literature disturbs many such assumptions and beliefs, and opens up ever new possibilities for thought.

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