

**Philosophy 139**  
**Proseminar: Late Heidegger**  
**Fall 2008**

**Wednesday 4-6; 310 Emerson Hall**

**Draft of 9/17/08**

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**Course Description**

A selection of readings from Martin Heidegger's late work, focusing on his discussion of thinking, poetry, gods, works of art and things. Late Heidegger was consumed with the question how cultures in the modern West can gather and preserve meaningful possibilities of existence for the people who live in them. We will focus for some time especially on Heidegger's reading of the German poet Hölderlin, whom he interprets as the paradigm of a poet who resonates with and preserves meaning in "destitute times". We will also examine Heidegger's difficult views concerning technology and its role in our modern world.

Enrollment limited to 20. A written application may be required at the beginning of the semester.

**Prerequisites**

Late Heidegger's work is so unprecedented that little can prepare one for it. Background in Kant, German Idealism, or early Heidegger may help some.

**Course Requirements**

Approximately 50 pages of difficult reading per week. The written requirement consists in a final paper of 15-20 pages, due on January 12<sup>th</sup>, the final day of Reading Period. I will read and comment on a rough draft of 10-15 pages if it is handed in by Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>. Attendance at the weekly seminar meetings is also required.

**Required Texts**

Heidegger, Martin, Poetry, Language, Thought, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York: HarperCollins, 2001).

Heidegger, Martin, The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays, tr. William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

Heidegger, Martin, Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry, tr. Keith Hoeller (New York: Humanity Books, 2000).

A few additional texts may be made available later in a reader or on the course website.

## **Tentative Schedule**

Introduction	Sept. 17
Origin of the Work of Art	Sept. 24, Oct. 1
The Question Concerning Technology	Oct. 8, 15
What are poets for?	Oct. 22
Hölderlin	Oct. 29, Nov. 5, 12
The Thing	Nov. 19, 26, Dec. 3
The Last God	Dec. 10