Genesis
Kant, “Conjectural Beginning of Human History”
Plato, Gorgias

Essay topics
Arts One, Fall 2013, Remake/Remodel

1) What is the significance of the repetition of motifs in Genesis? You might consider, for example, sibling rivalry, parental deception, female seduction, encounters at the well, or example(s) of your choice.

2) Focusing on the story of Jacob and Esau, explore the relationship between intention and outcome in the framing of moral choices in Genesis.

3) Discuss one or more of the implications of the narrative of the Fall in Genesis and/or Kant.

4) Consider the relationship between humans and animals presented in Kant's Conjectural Beginning of Human History and/or Genesis.

5) In what ways and to what end does Kant remake/remodel Genesis?

6) Discuss the relation between fiction and truth in one of the following texts: Genesis, Kant’s Conjectural Beginning of Human History, Plato’s Gorgias.

7) Using Plato’s own criteria from Gorgias, what distinguishes a work of philosophy from a purely fictional story, and does the Gorgias itself fulfill the criteria for a philosophical work?

8) Why, in your view, does Plato use a dialogue between characters to make his arguments in Gorgias?

9) Is Plato better characterized as a philosopher, or as an orator, given what he says in Gorgias?