

Mind and World
Workshop on Rosenberg, ch's 1-3
September 26, 2006

Meet in Writing Groups: Morning (Tuesday) group in Sem 2 B2105; Afternoon (Thursday) group in Sem 2 E2107

1. What are Rosenberg's central claims about philosophy, as a practice, and how it differs from other academic disciplines? Write a concise summary of his position. Discuss...
2. In chapter two, Rosenberg offers a "case study," which turns on a "thought-experiment," on three imaginary stories. He allows that these are fictional, imagined, events. These fictions can be used, he claims, to reveal important truths. "And now we are perfectly positioned to take the decisive step into *philosophical* reasoning." [p. 18] What is that step, and how to these stories help us take it?
3. In chapter three, Rosenberg points to arguments drawn from Descartes first *Meditation* that are aimed at undermining our confidence in sense experience or the trustworthiness of God. Rosenberg contends that these arguments share the same *invalid* form. What's his case that the form is invalid? How might Descartes defend himself?
4. Farther on in chapter three, Rosenberg points out some of the "frogs" of argumentation. How can one show that these are indeed "frogs"? Do so with some of his examples.
5. Pick some controversial issue (that's not too hot for anyone in the group) – animal rights, compensation for loss of property value that results from governmental action (Prop 933), personhood of the human fetus... -- and construct an argument for each of at least two contrary positions. Are these arguments valid? Where does "philosophy" enter the dispute?

OR

6. Drawing on your seminar discussions from the morning, take one of Socrates' arguments found in the first pages of *Meno* and write it up as a "case" (see p. 15 in Rosenberg), then as an explicit argument (see pp. 17-18).