THE PHILOSOPHER’S STONE
ANNOUNCES
THE FIRST HONORS PHILOSOPHY COLLOQUIUM
FOOD FOR THE SOUL SERVED BY AASU STUDENTS
APPETIZERS FOR THE BODY PROVIDED BY OLYMPIA CAFE

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2003
10 – 1 PM
UNIVERSITY HALL 156

Colloquium
Session Schedule
On Thursday,
April 24, 2003
In UH 156

10:00-10:20 Session 1
“The Paradoxical Philosopher: Plato the Writer, the Rhetorician, the Artist, and the Philosopher” by Megan Schlicht

10:20-10:40 Session 2
“Good Guilt, Bad Guilt: Does Guilt Hinder Development or Lead to Morality?” by Mike Huling who comments on Nietzsche’s and Freud’s views of guilt.

10:40-11:00 Session 3
“Plato in the 21st Century” by Bretlan Weaver examines Plato’s observations regarding the fallibility of the democratic state.

11:00-11:20 Session 4
“Descartes Finds Freedom – But What is It, Exactly?” by Ditrie Sanchez

11:20-11:35 BREAK

11:35-12:00 Session 5
“Renaissance Man” by Lauren Mason is an exploration of Platonic influences within Renaissance literature.

12:00-12:20 Session 6
“The Practice of Dying and Death: Are Plato and Dr. Nordenhaug Trying to Encourage Philosophy Student Suicides?” by Karla Rodriguez explores Socrates’ definition of philosophy as “the practice of death and dying.”

12:20-12:40 Session 7
“Should Epistemology or Metaphysics be Considered Primary in the Search for Truth?” by Amanda Bartley who focuses on whether one can search for what one does not know.

12:40-1:00 Session 8
“My Soul Responsibility: Self Interest or Am I My Brother’s Keeper?” by Gretchen Stewart

The Newsletter of the Philosophical Debate Group
For hundreds of years after the fall of the Roman Civilization, the western world saw very little advancement in science. It did, however, see changes in philosophical thought. Much of that change in thought fell along Catholic Church lines, but there were still changes. When Aristotelian logic came into play in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, it began to influence thought gradually away from theology to philosophy and the new sciences. Philosophical thought had an impact on the world by creating the conceptual framework in which science could set out methodically to confirm the correct theories.

By the end of the Middle Ages, science was on its way to becoming an important area of study in its own right. A hundred years after the Renaissance, philosophy was no longer having such a large and unilateral impact on science. The tables had turned. Science was now making an impact on philosophical thought with all its new discoveries, like the discovery of how light passes through a concave lens and is reversed thereby forcing a new understanding of how the human eye works and in turn forcing new philosophical theories of sense perception.

Philosophers were then forced to alter philosophy to fit the new scientific conceptual framework as they tried to understand where the earth fit into the universe, and how Newtonian physics affected our view of our world and the heavens beyond as well as man himself. Science has come a long way since the Middle Ages and over the last six hundred years, its sense of independence from philosophy and its power over philosophy has grown.

Like to know the answer to this age-old conundrum? Try asking the question, if a tree falls in the forest and no one is there to sense it, does it even really fall? Or try asking, if a tree falls in the forest and you are there having sensations of a tree falling, does that mean your mental sensations of the tree necessarily must come from a material tree?

According to Berkeley, our entire reality exists as a pattern of sensations in our minds. If this is indeed the case, one could conclude that our not being in the forest would allow an otherwise falling tree to stand upright. But, herein lies the catch. The forest isn’t materially there to begin with—only one’s mental sensations of the forest are present.

If one is to persist in the belief that matter is fact, Berkeley argues, one must find supporting evidence for such a notion from either one’s senses or reason. Each of these, as revealed in Berkeley’s analysis, is inadequate to confirm the physical existence of such a forest, tree, or sound.

Now, prepare for the physical world to dissolve beneath you and assume a new understanding of the world that is not around you—but IN you! One cannot trust matter to be observed by the senses, because they can only provide the mind with nonmaterial sensations and ideas. If you are accustomed to trusting that the idea (of an object) produced by sensations (of that object) represent the actual material object, as John Locke affirmed, then consider that one idea can only be like another idea. In other words, no immaterial idea can ever be like (or represent) anything material. The idea of fifty pounds does not weigh fifty pounds any more than the idea of red is actually red since ideas, being immaterial, are both weightless and colorless.