# Intro to Philosophy

## January 29, 2013

## Descartes

* **Descartes’ Meditations**
  + **Step 1** – Use the method of doubt to bulldoze away all beliefs that are too uncertain to use as a foundation.
  + **Step 2** – Identify a suitable foundation.
  + **Step 3** – Rebuild ordinary knowledge firmly on this foundation
* **Descartes’ Bulldozer**
  + **#1** – Your **senses may deceive you** but sometimes you do have a clear view.
  + **#2** – You may be **dreaming**, but even in a dream 2+3=5. Squares have four sides, etc.
  + **#3** – There might be an **evil demon** that could intervene in any interference, and keep me from noticing my mistakes.
* **Is there a foundation?**
  + **Are there any beliefs, that we can be absolutely certainly are true beyond a reasonable doubt?**
    - **“I think, therefore I am”**
    - **“Certain what’s happening in your own mind.”**
  + **“An evil demon can never bring it about that I am nothing while I think I think I am something I conclude that this proposition, I am, I exist, must be true whenever I assert it or think it is true. “**
    - He could not trick you into thinking he’s tricking you into thinking, the reason behind that is because you must have been thinking to think that thought.
    - You have to bulldoze the thoughts of the past as the evil demon could of implanted those in your head when you might of just been born yesterday.
  + **Descartes thinks you can also be certain what’s happening in your own mind.**
    - “I seem to smell a rate”
    - Be sure to say “seem to”
    - “I want not to sleep with my mother”
    - “I believe all races are equal”
    - “I feel pain”
    - You can introspect and be absolutely certain
  + **Are beliefs about emotions foundational?**
    - People sometimes seem to be mistaken about what emotions they’re actually experiencing.
    - What you ever thought you were in love, but then decided you weren’t?
    - Can you be sure of your current emotions?