Aesthetics (PHL 340)
Spring semester 2007
Questions for a dialogue day
On the reading from Plato’s Republic in Wartenberg

Name _______________________________

1. Plato calls for the banishment of the arts from the Republic. Does he call for the banishment of all arts? What distinction does he make with respect to the arts?

2. In Plato’s example of furniture (15), what does he mean when he states that the “makers [of furniture] look towards the appropriate form in making the beds and tables” (15)?

3. With respect to the first reason, what does Plato mean by “three kinds of beds”? (16)

4. What does Plato mean when he states that the work of the artist is “far removed from the truth” and “at the third remove from that which is”? (17-18)

5. What is the second reason for banishing the arts, and what assumption underlies this reason? See the top of p. 24.

6. In sum, what are the two reasons Plato gives for banishing the arts?

7. What is distinctively “Platonic” about Plato’s position on the arts, that is, what is his view of human nature and especially the place of reason and the passions?

8. What is your position on Plato’s view of the arts?