

Your name: _____

Your section (circle):

Mon. Tues. Wed. (am) Wed. (pm)

Metaphysics (or Epistemology) Exercise 6

Phil. 93, Winter 2006. Due Thurs., Feb. 2

1. The *cogito* argument convinces the Meditator:
 - a. That he exists.
 - b. That he can only be certain of one thing: that he exists. Everything else will always be subject to doubts.
 - c. That, by thinking, he causes himself to exist.
 - d. That, by thinking, he creates his own identity.
 - e. (a), and (b).
 - f. (a), (b), (c), and (d).

2. After asking the question, “What am I?”, Descartes (or the Meditator) considers the answer that he is a body. He rejects this answer, at this point, because:
 - a. He is a Christian. He believes in life after death, i.e. after the disintegration of the body.
 - b. He has proved that bodies don’t exist.
 - c. He has proved that he exists without proving that his body exists. So, even if he is a body, he is not certain that he exists insofar as he is a body.
 - d. He has proved that he exists without proving that his body exists. So being a body is not part of the identity which he has created for himself.
 - e. He believes that he is not a body, but a kind of fire or wind that moves through a body.
 - f. (c) and (e).

3. In the sixth paragraph of the *Second Meditation* (p. 82), Descartes (or the Meditator) excludes sense perception from what he can show himself to be, because “this surely does not occur without a body.” But in the eighth paragraph (p. 83) he includes “sense perceptions” after all. How can these two statements be reconciled?
 - a. They can’t. Descartes has contradicted himself.
 - b. They can’t. Descartes’s true opinion is what he goes on to say here (in the next paragraph): that he is a body with sense organs. The previous statements about his not being a body were put in to avoid condemnation by the Church.
 - c. The first statement reflects a doubt (about the existence of sense organs) which the Meditator then goes on to settle. So, by the time the eighth paragraph comes, he feels certain that he has sensations after all.
 - d. As Descartes goes on to say here (in the next paragraph), the phrase “having

sense perceptions” is used in two different ways in the two different statements: in a strict or primary way in the second statement, and in a looser or more derivative way in the first. So the two statements don’t really conflict with one another.

e. The Meditator has learned that what is true for him is what he thinks. So he realizes that sensations will be true for him if he thinks they are.

f. (d) and (e).