

Your name: _____

Your section (circle):

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

Metaphysics Exercise 9

Phil. 93, Winter 2006. Due Thurs., Feb. 16.

1. Which of the following former beliefs of the Meditator turn out (according to Descartes) to have been correct?
 - a. There are bodies (extended substances).
 - b. Bodies differ in color.
 - c. My soul is a “spirit”: that is, “something tenuous, like a wind or fire or ether, which permeate[s] my more solid parts” (p. 81).
 - d. The visions of bodies which I see in dreams are caused by me (by my soul or mind), not by any actual body.
 - e. All of the above.
 - f. (a) and (b).

2. How, according to Descartes, is a human soul united with its body?
 - a. The soul feels pleasure or pain due to events in its body. That is: it is disposed to seek or avoid certain things due to their effect on its body.
 - b. The soul can act directly on the pineal gland, causing it to move.
 - c. The soul and the body are not complete substances in themselves. Only the composite is a substance.
 - d. Only the soul truly exists. All the properties we normally attribute to the body (e.g. color) are really just sensations (sense data) in the soul, so bodies in general are just sets of sensations.
 - e. (a) and (b).
 - f. (a) and (c).

3. How, according to Descartes, can I know that there are really bodies around me (e.g., a fire, a dressing gown, a piece of wax)?
 - a. I can’t ever know this. The only thing I can ever know for sure is that I exist.
 - b. I can’t always be sure in particular cases, but, because God is not a deceiver, I know that for the most part—as long as there are no signs that I am dreaming, etc.—my perceptions must contain much truth.
 - c. I can clearly and distinctly perceive all the bodies that are close to me. But I cannot go wrong in trusting my clear and distinct perceptions.
 - d. I am a thinking thing, so whatever I think is true for me. But I think there are bodies. So it is true for me that there are bodies, even if for someone else (e.g.,

someone with “dropsy”) it might not be true.

e. I am a thinking thing: that is, a “soul” or “spirit.” But a spirit can only think when it is in a brain, and can move the pineal gland around. Therefore, there is at least one body near me (near my spirit): namely, my brain.

f. (c) and (d).