

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your section (circle):

Mon. Tues. Wed. Fri.

### Metaphysics Exercise 8

Phil. 93, Winter 2007. Due Tues., Feb. 13.

1. The existence of error is a problem for the Meditator because:
  - a. If he really is sometimes in error, then it seems likely that an evil demon is deceiving him, after all.
  - b. It seems that a perfect cause should have only perfect effects.
  - c. If the *cogito* argument were really successful, it would have eliminated all his errors. So if he is still in error, there must have been something wrong with the argument.
  - d. He proved in the *Second Meditation* that we do not know the world by means of our senses. But without sense-deception, it seems there should be no errors.
  - e. (c) and (d).
  - f. (a), (c) and (d).
  
2. On p. 100, Descartes (or the Meditator) says: “For since I now know that my nature is very weak and limited, whereas the nature of God is immense, incomprehensible and infinite, I also know . . . that he is capable of countless things whose causes are beyond my knowledge.” Which of the following is correct?
  - a. This shows that Descartes thinks you can “have the idea of God” without knowing almost anything about what God actually is.
  - b. This shows that Descartes is not really a rationalist: he thinks religion is a better source of knowledge than reason.
  - c. This shows that Descartes is a rationalist: he thinks “reason” (which in this case really just means a mystical, unfalsifiable preconception about God) is a better source of knowledge than the evidence of our senses.
  - d. This shows that Descartes thinks we will have to rely on our own reason to find out about the world, since we don’t understand God well enough to deduce things about the world from our knowledge of God.
  - e. This shows that, although Descartes is a rationalist, he doesn’t think we can expect much from reason. We will need our religious knowledge about God to fill in all the gaps in our knowledge about the world.
  - f. (a) and (d).

3. Which of the following are part of Descartes's solution to the problem of his own imperfection (the Problem of Evil)?
- a. Nothingness, or the simple absence of some thing, does not have a cause.
  - b. When we make an error, it is always due to our own will.
  - c. Sometimes being in error is a perfection, rather than an imperfection.
  - d. The *cogito* argument shows that we can never really be in error, since our thought is the source of truth for us.
  - e. (a) and (b).
  - f. (a), (b) and (c).