

Your name: _____

Your section (circle):

Mon. Tues. Wed. Fri.

Metaphysics Exercise 9

Phil. 93, Winter 2007. Due Thurs., Feb. 15.

1. Which of the following former beliefs of the Meditator turn out (according to Descartes) to have been correct?
 - a. 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).
 - b. My body is able to move and digest only because it has a soul.
 - c. God is supremely good and would never deceive me.
 - 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. (a) and (b).
 - f. None of the above.

2. How, according to Descartes, is a human soul related to its body?
 - a. We know the soul and the body only through our our own perceptions; only God knows what they really are. Therefore, only God can understand how they are related.
 - b. Nature teaches the soul to act in ways that are (normally) for the benefit of the soul-body composite.
 - c. The motions of the pineal gland can cause certain kinds of “thinking” in the soul.
 - d. The soul exists for itself because it thinks its own existence; the body exists only because the soul thinks it, as well.
 - e. (a) and (b).
 - f. (b) 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. What we call “bodies” are really just perceptions in our minds. So of course we can be certain they exist.
 - c. Our nature teaches us to believe this, based on our perceptions. But our nature is due to God, and God is not a deceiver. Therefore it must, for the most part, be true.
 - d. Our perceptions are not caused by bodies directly, but by God. And God

knows what bodies are where (and he is not a deceiver).

e. 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.

f. (c) and (d).