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Phil Mind

Reading Questions for January 18

These questions cover two of Descartes' *Meditations*, namely the second and sixth. The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

Background:

At this point, we are examining dualism, i.e. (roughly) that there are two different fundamental kinds or categories. In his *Meditations*, Descartes does a number of things, including trying to answer skeptical doubts, prove the existence of God, and discover the relationship between the mind and the body. We will focus on the parts in which he talks about the relationship between the mind and the body, in which he defends a dualist view.

Questions:

1. (*) On pages 16-7, Descartes says that he exists. Why does he think this? Is he right? Why?
2. (*) In the paragraph on page 54 starting "First" Descartes offers an argument that he is really distinct from his body. How does the argument go? Is it sound (i.e. is it such that both (a) it has true premises and (b) its conclusion follows from its premises)? Why?
3. (*) In the paragraph on page 59 starting "The first observation" Descartes offers an argument that there is a great difference between the mind and the body. How does this argument go? Is it sound? Why?