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Phil Mind

### Reading Questions for February 29

These questions cover an article by Justin Fisher called “Why Nothing Mental is Just in the Head.” The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

#### *Background:*

This week we’re discussing the question “To what degree is the content of our thoughts determined by our external environment?” On Monday, we read a book chapter by Sarah Sawyer that discusses a number of positions and arguments in this debate. Today we’re looking at a (somewhat) recent article by Justin Fisher that aims to advance the debate by arguing for a rather strong externalist conclusion. The text is somewhat difficult at times, so I suspect you will find questions 3 and 4 somewhat difficult to answer.

#### *Questions:*

1. (\*) In his introduction (pages 318-20), Fisher clarifies the externalist conclusion he wishes to argue for. What is his externalist conclusion? Does he think that Punam’s Twin-Earthling cases establish his conclusion? Why? Is he right? Why?
2. On pages 320-22, Fisher introduces a case that is supposed to establish his conclusion. What is the case, and how is it supposed to support his conclusion?
3. (\*) On pages 322-5, Fisher argues that his case is possible. How does his argument go? Is it plausible? Why?
4. (\*) On pages 325-8, Fisher considers some objections to his argument. How do the objections go? What are his responses? Are they plausible? Why?