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### Reading Questions for February 3

These questions covers a reading by J. J. C. Smart called “Sensations and Brain Processes” and then also some abstracts from your group members. The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

#### *Background:*

Today we’re finishing our look at identity theory, which is (roughly) the theory that mental processes are brain processes. We’ll read an article by J. J. C. Smart defending this view. Then, we’ll have further small group discussions of your abstracts.

#### *Questions:*

1. (\*) In the first several pages (141-5), Smart lays out his theory and says why he thinks it compares favorably with some other views. What is his theory? Which views does he compare it with and why does he think it compares favorably with them? Is he right? Why?
2. (\*) Smart then runs through a series of objections and replies (146-54). You don’t have to read through all of them in detail if you don’t want, but I would like you to at least skim through them and find the one you find to be most threatening to Smart’s view. Then answer the following questions: What is this objection? What is Smart’s reply? Is it a good reply? Why?
3. (\*) In the final pages (155-6) Smart discusses a question that he and Place disagree on, viz. whether the brain-process thesis is a scientific hypothesis. How do they disagree? Who is right and why?
4. Here are some questions to think about when reading your peers’ abstracts (these are the same questions as Monday’s):
  - (a) Is it clear what the person will be trying to accomplish in their paper?

- (b) Does the person give arguments? If so, are their arguments sound? Are there objections they should be aware of?
- (c) Does the person offer objections to other people's arguments? If so, are there responses to their objections you can think of?
- (d) Does the person introduce concepts? If so are each of the concepts they introduce clear?
- (e) Does the person seem to be trying to discuss a huge number of issues very quickly? If so, what would be a good way to help focus the paper so that the person can go in depth?