

## Metaphysics (or Epistemology) Exercise 4

Phil. 100B, Winter 2011. Due Tues., Jan. 25.

**Note** this is to be done on-line via Question Cloud if possible. However, if this proves impossible for some reason, please hand this in as a hard copy or e-mail your answers to your TA.

1. Descartes (or his fictional representative, the Meditator) sets out to find real reasons for doubting all his previous opinions. He does this because:
  - a. He thinks good science depends on always doubting one's results a little bit and keeping an open mind.
  - b. He has discovered that some of his existing opinions are inconsistent with one another, implying that at least some of them are false.
  - c. He has discovered that his existing opinions came about by way of unreliable methods.
  - d. He feels dizzy, and this only serves to increase the suspicion that he may be dreaming.
  - e. (a) and (b).
  - f. (b) and (c).
  
2. Descartes (or the Meditator) first mentions dreaming because:
  - a. Since there is no difference between dreaming and being awake, there is no reason to believe in waking opinions more than in dreaming opinions.
  - b. Since dreams are inconsistent, he concludes that he cannot trust any of the opinions he has formed on the basis of dreams.
  - c. He suspects that evil demons may be keeping him asleep and dreaming for their own purposes.
  - d. Since he acknowledges that he believes crazy things while he dreams, there is can't be anything crazy about likening himself to madmen.
  - e. (a), (b) and (d).
  - f. None of the above.
  
3. In the ninth paragraph of the *First Meditation* (middle of p. 78 in our book), Descartes (or the Meditator) mentions that he has a firmly rooted and long-standing belief in the existence of God. He says this because:
  - a. Although he set out to doubt everything, he is too religious to notice that the existence of God should also be doubted.
  - b. He realizes that many of his old opinions are based only on his unjustified belief (faith) in the existence of God.
  - c. He is afraid that God may actually be evil and deceptive.
  - d. He knows that his audience expects him to prove the existence of God.
  - e. This is misleading: Descartes is a rationalist; what he means by "God" is just whatever chance evolutionary process might have led to his existence.
  - f. None of the above.