

Philosophy 101: Introduction to Philosophy, Queens College, Fall 2005  
Russell Marcus, Instructor  
email: [philosophy@thatmarcusfamily.org](mailto:philosophy@thatmarcusfamily.org)  
website: <http://philosophy.thatmarcusfamily.org>  
Office phone: (718) 997-5287

Lecture Notes, October 26

## I. The role of the senses

The senses provide natural protection of our bodies, p 81.

This is just the best structure for humans.

It is far better to be deceived once in a while, pp 83-4; also pp 88-9.

The important point is that bodies are perceived by the mind alone, and only have extension as a real property.

The others are confused representations.

Locke and Berkeley take up this topic.

Still, our errors make God seem deceptive.

He could prevent them.

Descartes uses the mind/body distinction to block this accusation.

## II. The mind/body distinction

Descartes first argues that we are thinking things, i.e. minds alone, p 78.

That is, the mind is distinct from the body.

- 1) I have a clear and distinct understanding of my mind, without my body.
- 2) I have a clear and distinct understanding of my body, without my mind.
- 3) Whatever I can clearly and distinctly conceive of as separate, can be separated by God, and so are really distinct.

So, my mind is distinct from my body

Another proof of the distinctness of the mind and body, from the divisibility of body, pp 85-6.

- 1) Whatever two things have different properties are different objects.
- 2) The mind is indivisible.
- 3) The body is divisible.

So, the mind is not the body.

For Descartes, of course, we are essentially our minds.

Still, we are tied to our bodies in a remarkable way.

Like a sailor and ship, p 81.

We have a clear and distinct understanding of ourselves without our bodies, p 78.

Does this mean that our bodies are just imagined?

But then God would be a deceiver

## III. Review for Exam