

Descartes and Armstrong: Practice Quiz Answers

The Masked Man Fallacy runs as follows: I do not know the name of the Man in the Mask. I do know the name of my father. Therefore my father is not the Man in the Mask. Some commentators think that Descartes is guilty of this fallacy when he argues for substance dualism. In his Objections to the Meditations, Arnauld accuses Descartes of a similar fallacy, although Arnauld's example is taken from geometry: I can realize that a triangle is right-angled, without realizing that it has a square on the hypotenuse equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides. I might draw from this the conclusion that having a square on the hypotenuse equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides is not part of the essence of being a right-angled triangle, but this would be a mistake. Descartes responds that although one might understand that something is a right-angled triangle without knowing that it has a square on the hypotenuse equal to the sum of the square on the other two sides, one could not grasp that this is a right-angled triangle and deny that it has a square on the hypotenuse equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides.

6) c

7) b

8) a

9) b

10) c