

Ethics and Society
Test 3 Study Guide

1. **CRITICAL THINKING**– Traditionally, science and morality are held to be different domains of inquiry. Yet some ethicists are moving towards incorporating the findings of cognitive science into the study of morality. How is cognitive science limited in helping us solve problems in the field of ethics? In other words, what can science help us solve and what can it *not* help us solve?
2. Define the following: cognitive science, computational theory of mind, module.
3. What is moral nativism? Briefly explain Haidt's and Joyce's own versions of moral nativism. Note: It might help to listen to Haidt's talk [The Moral Roots of Liberals and Conservatives](#).
4. Assuming there is a morality module, in what ways is it a very strange module? See section titled *Idiosyncrasies* in the lesson called *Endless Night (Pt. I)*.
5. What is moral licensing?
6. What is metaethics?
7. **CRITICAL THINKING**– Explain the difference between moral relativism and moral absolutism.
8. **CRITICAL THINKING**– Explain the difference between moral objectivism and moral non-objectivism (a.k.a., moral anti-realism).
9. What is an empirical claim?
10. Batson (2019) defines **egoism** and **altruism** so that they are amenable to empirical examination. How does he define **egoism** and **altruism**?
11. Batson concludes that there are at least four motivational states. What are they? Give a brief description of each.
12. Per the data surveyed in this class, is psychological egoism true? Why or why not?
13. What is an ontological claim? What is a metaphysical claim?
14. What is natural theology?
15. **CRITICAL THINKING**– What is the teleological argument, a.k.a. Paley's Watch Analogy? There are two types of responses to this argument that we covered in class. Briefly summarize both.
16. Explain the argument against God's existence known as **The Problem of Evil** in a nutshell.
17. Kyle Harper (2017, chapter 8) believes the rise of Christianity is at least in part accidental. What is his argument? (Hint: It involves the Antonine Plague.)
18. **CRITICAL THINKING**–We covered part of Pascal Boyer's argument for how religion is a by-product of evolution. Briefly explain his view. Be sure to

incorporate into your explanation the two cognitive modules that we mentioned in class.

19. What is Marquis' (1989) deprivation argument?
20. **CRITICAL THINKING**–What is equivocation? Discuss why Mary Anne Warren believes that the common pro-life argument is guilty of equivocation.
21. What are Warren's criteria for personhood?
22. Define the following Nietzschean concepts: the master/slave morality distinction, moral nihilism.
23. What is the is/ought distinction?
24. **CRITICAL THINKING**– Rachels (1986) believes that cultural relativism has several implications that most people are willing to accept. What are these counterintuitive implications that Rachels believes doom cultural relativism?
25. Explain the notion of relative truth. Why is it vulnerable to the charge of being self-defeating?
26. **CRITICAL THINKING**– Aristotle and Kant both believed that reason could either help them develop virtues or help them discover objective moral truth, respectively. More recently, theorists like Mercier and Sperber (2017) and Tomasello (2018) argue that reason actually has a social-communicative evolutionary origin. How could these recent findings undermine Aristotle's and Kant's views?
27. **CRITICAL THINKING**– How could studies like the Stanford Prison Experiment and Milgram's Obedience to Authority Experiments undermine virtue ethics?
28. What are affective forecasting errors?
29. What part of the brain dominates when Kantian-type moral judgments are made? Briefly state the evidence from Greene's fMRI studies, the 2006 DeSteno and Valdesolo studies, studies on subjects with brain lesions, and studies on psychopaths that links this part of the brain to Kantian-type moral reasoning.¹
30. Why does Greene (2007) argue that Kantianism is actually rooted in emotion rather than in reason?

¹ Remember that Kant's *perfect duties* all take the forms of injunctions against some particular act: do not kill, do not lie, do not steal, etc. Recall also that these perfect duties admit of **no exceptions ever**.