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Exercise 2

By 1950, the results of attempts to relate brain processes to mental experience appeared rather discouraging. Herring suggested that different modes of

Line sensation, such as pain, taste, and color, might be

5 correlated with the discharge of specific kinds of nervous energy. However, subsequently developed methods of recording and analyzing nerve potentials failed to reveal any such qualitative diversity. Although qualitative variance among nerve energies was never rigidly

10 disproved, the doctrine was generally abandoned in favor of the opposing view, namely, that nerve impulses are essentially homogeneous in quality and are transmitted as “common currency” throughout the nervous system.

According to this theory, it is not the quality of the

15 sensory nerve impulses that determines the diverse conscious sensations they produce, but rather the different areas of the brain into which they discharge, and there is some evidence for this view. In one experiment, when an electric stimulus was applied to a given sensory field of

20 the cerebral cortex of a conscious human subject, it produced a sensation of the appropriate modality for that particular locus, that is, a visual sensation from the visual cortex, an auditory sensation from the auditory cortex, and so on. However, cortical locus, in itself, turned out to

25 have little explanatory value.

1. The author mentions “common currency” in line 13 primarily in order to emphasize the

- (A) lack of differentiation among nerve impulses in human beings
- (B) similarity of the sensations that all human beings experience
- (C) similarities in the views of scientists who have studied the human nervous system
- (D) continuous passage of nerve impulses through the nervous system
- (E) recurrent questioning by scientists of an accepted explanation about the nervous system

2. The description of an experiment in which electric stimuli were applied to different sensory fields of the cerebral cortex tends to support the theory that

- (A) the simple presence of different cortical areas cannot account for the diversity of mental experience
- (B) variation in spatiotemporal patterning of nerve impulses correlates with variation in subjective experience
- (C) nerve impulses are essentially homogeneous and are relatively unaffected as they travel through the nervous system
- (D) the mental experiences produced by sensory nerve impulses are determined by the cortical area activated
- (E) variation in neuron types affects the quality of nerve impulses

3. Which of the following best summarizes the author’s opinion of the suggestion that different areas of the brain determine perceptions produced by sensory nerve impulses?

- (A) It is a plausible explanation, but it has not been completely proved.
- (B) It is the best explanation of brain processes currently available.
- (C) It is disproved by the fact that the various areas of the brain are physiologically very similar.
- (D) There is some evidence to support it, but it fails to explain the diversity of mental experience.
- (E) There is experimental evidence that confirms its correctness.

A Marxist sociologist has argued that racism stems from the class struggle that is unique to the capitalist system—that racial prejudice is generated by capitalists

Line as a means of controlling workers. His thesis works
5 relatively well when applied to discrimination against Blacks in the United States, but his definition of racial prejudice as “racially-based negative prejudgments against a group generally accepted as a race in any given region of ethnic competition,” can be interpreted
10 as also including hostility toward such ethnic groups as the Chinese in California and the Jews in medieval Europe. However, since prejudice against these latter peoples was not inspired by capitalists, he has to reason that such antagonisms were not really based on race.
15 He disposes thusly (albeit unconvincingly) of both the intolerance faced by Jews before the rise of capitalism and the early twentieth-century discrimination against Oriental people in California, which, inconveniently, was instigated by workers.

4. The passage supplies information that would answer which of the following questions EXCEPT?

- Ⓐ What conditions caused the discrimination against Oriental people in California in the early twentieth century?
- Ⓑ What evidence did the Marxist sociologist provide to support his thesis?
- Ⓒ What explanation did the Marxist sociologist give for the existence of racial prejudice?
- 5. According to the passage, the Marxist sociologist’s chain of reasoning required him to assert that prejudice toward Oriental people in California was
 - (A) directed primarily against the Chinese
 - (B) similar in origin to prejudice against the Jews
 - (C) understood by Oriental people as ethnic competition
 - (D) provoked by workers
 - (E) nonracial in character

It would be wonderful to observe a singularity (an infinitely dense concentration of matter) and obtain direct evidence of the undoubtedly bizarre phenomena that occur near one. Unfortunately, in most cases a distant observer cannot see the singularity; outgoing light rays are dragged back by gravity so forcefully that even if they could start out within a few kilometers of the singularity, they would end up in the singularity itself.

6. Which of the following sentences would most probably follow the last sentence of the passage?

- (A) Thus, a physicist interested in studying phenomena near singularities would necessarily hope to find a singularity with a measurable gravitational field.
- (B) Accordingly, physicists to date have been unable to observe directly any singularity.
- (C) It is specifically this startling phenomenon that has allowed us to codify the scant information currently available about singularities.
- (D) Moreover, the existence of this extraordinary phenomenon is implied in the extensive reports of several physicists.
- (E) Although unanticipated, phenomena such as these are consistent with the structure of a singularity.

The evolution of intelligence among early large mammals of the grasslands was due in great measure to the interaction between two ecologically synchronized groups of these animals, the hunting carnivores and the herbivores that they hunted. The interaction resulting from the differences between predator and prey led to a general improvement in brain functions; however, certain components of intelligence were improved far more than others.

Using past events as a framework, the large mammal predator is working out a relationship between movement and food, sensitive to possibilities in cold trails and distant sounds—and yesterday's unforgotten lessons. The herbivore prey is of a different mind. Its mood of wariness rather than searching and its attitude of general expectancy instead of anticipating are silk-thin veils of tranquility over an explosive endocrine system.

The kind of intelligence favored by the interplay of increasingly smarter catchers and increasingly keener escapers is defined by attention—that aspect of mind carrying consciousness forward from one moment to the next. It ranges from a passive, free-floating awareness to a highly focused, active fixation. The range through these states is mediated by the arousal system, a network of tracts converging from sensory systems to integrating centers in the brain stem. From the more relaxed to the more vigorous levels, sensitivity to novelty is increased. The organism is more awake, more vigilant; this increased vigilance results in the apprehension of ever more subtle signals as the organism becomes more sensitive to its surroundings. The processes of arousal and concentration give attention its direction. Arousal is at first general, with a flooding of impulses in the brain stem; then gradually the activation is channeled. Thus begins concentration, the holding of consistent images. One meaning of intelligence is the way in which these images and other alertly searched information are used in the context of previous experience. Consciousness links past attention to the present and permits the integration of details with perceived ends and purposes.

The elements of intelligence and consciousness come together marvelously to produce different styles in predator and prey. Herbivores and carnivores develop different kinds of attention related to escaping or chasing. Although in both kinds of animal, arousal stimulates the production of adrenaline and norepinephrine by the adrenal glands, the effect in herbivores is primarily fear, whereas in carnivores the effect is primarily aggression. For both, arousal attunes the animal to what is ahead. Perhaps it does not experience forethought as we know it, but the animal does experience something like it. The predator is searchingly aggressive, inner-directed, tuned by the nervous system and the adrenal hormones, but aware in a sense closer to human consciousness than, say, a hungry lizard's instinctive snap at a passing beetle.

7. The author refers to a hungry lizard (line 47) primarily in order to
- (A) demonstrate the similarity between the hunting methods of mammals and those of nonmammals
 - (B) broaden the application of his argument by including an insectivore as an example
 - (C) make a distinction between higher and lower levels of consciousness
 - (D) provide an additional illustration of the brutality characteristic of predators
 - (E) offer an objection to suggestions that all animals lack consciousness
8. It can be inferred from the passage that in animals less intelligent than the mammals discussed in the passage
- (A) past experience is less helpful in ensuring survival
 - (B) attention is more highly focused
 - (C) muscular coordination is less highly developed
 - (D) there is less need for competition among species
 - (E) environment is more important in establishing the proper ratio of prey to predator
9. The author provides information that would answer which of the following questions?
- ☐ A Why is an aroused herbivore usually fearful?
 - ☐ B What are some of the degrees of attention in large mammals?
 - ☐ C What occurs when the stimulus that causes arousal of a mammal is removed?
10. According to the passage, as the process of arousal in an organism continues, all of the following may occur EXCEPT
- (A) the production of adrenaline
 - (B) the production of norepinephrine
 - (C) a heightening of sensitivity to stimuli
 - (D) an increase in selectivity with respect to stimuli
 - (E) an expansion of the range of states mediated by the brain stem

Gutman's examination of the slaves' extended kinship system produces important findings. Gutman discovers that cousins rarely married, an exogamous tendency that

Line contrasted sharply with the endogamy practiced by the
5 plantation owners. This preference for exogamy, Gutman suggests, may have derived from West African rules governing marriage, which, though they differed from one tribal group to another, all involved some kind of prohibition against unions with close kin. This taboo
10 against cousins' marrying is important, argues Gutman, because it is one of many indications of a strong awareness among slaves of an extended kinship network. The fact that distantly related kin would care for children separated from their families also suggests this
15 awareness. When blood relationships were few, as in newly created plantations in the Southwest, "fictive" kinship arrangements took their place until a new pattern of consanguinity developed. Gutman presents convincing evidence that this extended kinship structure—which he
20 believes developed by the mid-to-late eighteenth century—provided the foundations for the strong communal consciousness that existed among slaves.

11. According to the passage, all of the following are true of the West African rules governing marriage:

- ☐ A The rules forbade marriages between close kin.
- ☐ B The rules were not uniform in all respects from one West African tribe to another.
- ☐ C The rules have been considered to be a possible source of slaves' marriage preferences.

12. Which of the following statements concerning the marriage practices of plantation owners during the period of Black slavery in the United States can most logically be inferred from the information in the passage.

- (A) These practices began to alter sometime around the mid-eighteenth century.
- (B) These practices varied markedly from one region of the country to another.
- (C) Plantation owners usually based their choice of marriage partners on economic considerations.
- (D) Plantation owners often married earlier than slaves.
- (E) Plantation owners often married their cousins.

13. Select the sentence in the passage that the author introduces additional support for the existence of the awareness of kinship among the slaves of an extended kinship network.

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