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Exercise 22

Historically, a cornerstone of classical empiricism has been the notion that every true generalization must be confirmable by specific observations. In classical empiricism, the truth of “All balls are red,” for example, is assessed by inspecting balls; any observation of a *non* red ball refutes unequivocally the proposed generalization.

For W.V.O. Quine, however, this constitutes an overly “narrow” conception of empiricism. “All balls are red,” he maintains, forms one strand within an entire web of statements (our knowledge); individual observations can be referred only to this web as a whole. As new observations are collected, he explains, they must be integrated into the web. Problems occur only if a contradiction develops between a new observation, say, “That ball is blue,” and the preexisting statements. In that case, he argues, *any* statement or combination of statements (not merely the “offending” generalization, as in classical empiricism) can be altered to achieve the fundamental requirement, a system free of contradictions, even if, in some cases, the alteration consists of labeling the new observation a “hallucination.”

(172 words)

1. According to Quine’s conception of empiricism, if a new observation were to contradict some statement already within our system of knowledge, which of the following would be true?

- (A) The new observation would be rejected as untrue.
- (B) Both the observation and the statement in our system that it contradicted would be discarded.
- (C) New observations would be added to our web of statements in order to expand our system of knowledge.
- (D) The observation or some part of our web of statements would need to be adjusted to resolve the contradiction.
- (E) An entirely new field of knowledge would be created.

For the following question, consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply

2. It can be inferred from the passage that Quine considers classical empiricism to be “overly ‘narrow’ ” for which of the following reasons?

- ☐ A Classical empiricism requires that our system of generalizations be free of contradictions.
- ☐ B Classical empiricism demands that in the case of a contradiction between an individual observation and a generalization, the generalization must be abandoned.
- ☐ C Classical empiricism asserts that every observation will either confirm an existing generalization or initiate a new generalization.

Shergottites, the name given to three anomalous achondrites (igneous meteorites lacking chondrules) so far discovered on Earth, present scientists with a genuine enigma. Shergottites crystallized from molten rock less than 1.1 billion years ago (some 3.5 billion years later than typical achondrites) and were presumably ejected into space when an object impacted on a body similar in chemical composition to Earth. While some scientists speculate that shergottites derive from Io (a volcanically active moon of Jupiter), recent measurements suggest that since Io's surface is rich in sulfur and sodium, the chemical composition of its volcanic products would probably be unlike that of the shergottites. Moreover, any fragments dislodged from Io by interbody impact would be unlikely to escape the gravitational pull of Jupiter.

The only other logical source of shergottites is Mars. Space-probe photographs indicate the existence of giant volcanoes on the Martian surface. From the small number of impact craters that appear on Martian lava flows, one can estimate that the planet was volcanically active as recently as a half-billion years ago—and may be active today.

(178 words)

3. The passage provides information to answer which of the following questions?

- (A) What is the precise age of the solar system?
- (B) How did shergottites get their name?
- (C) What are the chemical properties shared by shergottites and Martian soils?
- (D) How volcanically active is the planet Jupiter?
- (E) What is a major feature of the Martian surface?

For the following question, consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply

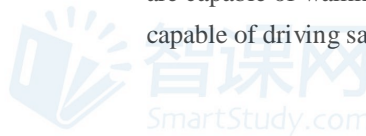
4. It can be inferred from the passage that each of the following is a consideration in determining whether a particular planet is a possible source of shergottites that have been discovered on Earth

- ☐ A strength of the planet's field of gravity
- ☐ B proximity of the planet to its moons
- ☐ C chemical composition of the planet's surface

5. When a driver is suspected of having had too much to drink, testing the driver's ability to walk a straight line gives a more reliable indication of fitness to drive than does testing the driver's blood-alcohol level.

Which of the following, if true, best supports the claim made in the statement above?

- (A) Not all observers will agree whether or not an individual has succeeded in walking a straight line.
- (B) Because of genetic differences and variations in acquired tolerance to alcohol, some individuals suffer more serious motor impairment from a given high blood-alcohol level than do others.
- (C) Tests designed to measure blood-alcohol levels are accurate, inexpensive, and easy to administer.
- (D) More than half the drivers involved in fatal accidents have blood-alcohol levels that exceed the legal limit, whereas in less-serious accidents the proportion of legally intoxicated drivers is lower.
- (E) Some individuals with high blood-alcohol levels are capable of walking a straight line but are not capable of driving safely.



In *Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry does not reject integration or the economic and moral promise of the American dream; rather, she remains loyal to this dream while looking, realistically, at its incomplete realization. Once we recognize this dual vision, we can accept the play's ironic nuances as deliberate social commentaries by Hansberry rather than as the "unintentional" irony that Bigsby attributes to the work. Indeed a curiously persistent refusal to credit Hansberry with a capacity for intentional irony has led some critics to interpret the play's thematic conflicts as mere confusion, contradiction, or eclecticism. Isaacs, for example, cannot easily reconcile Hansberry's intense concern for her race with her ideal of human reconciliation. But the play's complex view of Black self-esteem and human solidarity as compatible is no more "contradictory" than Du Bois' famous, well-considered ideal of ethnic self-awareness coexisting with human unity, or Fanon's emphasis on an ideal internationalism that also accommodates national identities and roles. (158 words)

6. The author's primary purpose in this passage is to
- (A) explain some critics' refusal to consider *Raisin in the Sun* a deliberately ironic play
 - (B) suggest that ironic nuances ally *Raisin in the Sun* with Du Bois' and Fanon's writings
 - (C) analyze the fundamental dramatic conflicts in *Raisin in the Sun*
 - (D) justify the inclusion of contradictory elements in *Raisin in the Sun*
 - (E) affirm the thematic coherence underlying *Raisin in the Sun*
7. Select the sentence that the author of the passage reinforce his criticism of responses such as Isaacs' to *Raisin in the Sun*
8. The author of the passage would probably consider which of the following judgments to be most similar to the reasoning of critics?
- (A) The world is certainly flat; therefore, the person proposing to sail around it is unquestionably foolhardy.
 - (B) Radioactivity cannot be directly perceived; therefore, a scientist could not possibly control it in a laboratory.
 - (C) The painter of this picture could not intend it to be funny, therefore, its humor must result from a lack of skill.
 - (D) Traditional social mores are beneficial to culture; therefore, anyone who deviates from them acts destructively.
 - (E) Filmmakers who produce documentaries deal exclusively with facts; therefore, a filmmaker who reinterprets particular events is misleading us.

The transplantation of organs from one individual to another normally involves two major problems: (1) organ rejection is likely unless the transplantation antigens of both individuals are nearly identical, and (2) the introduction of any unmatched transplantation antigens induces the development by the recipient of donor-specific lymphocytes that will produce violent rejection of further transplantations from that donor. However, we have found that, among many strains of rats, liver transplants are never rejected, and that they even induce a state of donor-specific unresponsiveness. Our hypothesis is that (1) many strains of rats simply cannot mount a sufficiently vigorous destructive immune-response (using lymphocytes) to outstrip the liver's relatively great capacity to protect itself from immune-response damage and that (2) the systemic unresponsiveness observed is due to concentration of the recipient's donor-specific lymphocytes at the site of the liver transplant. (138 words)

9 The primary purpose of the passage is to treat the accepted generalizations about organ transplantation in which of the following ways?

- (A) Explicate their main features
- (B) Suggest an alternative to them
- (C) Examine their virtues and limitations
- (D) Criticize the major evidence used to support them
- (E) Present findings that qualify them

10. Which of the following new findings about strains of rats that do not normally reject liver transplants, if true, would support the authors' hypothesis?

- I. Stomach transplants are accepted by the recipients in all cases.
- II. Increasing the strength of the recipient's immune-response reaction can induce liver-transplant rejection.
- III. Organs from any other donor can be transplanted without rejection after liver transplantation.
- IV. Preventing lymphocytes from being concentrated at the liver transplant produces acceptance of skin transplants.

- (A) II only
- (B) I and III only
- (C) II and IV only
- (D) I, II, and III only
- (E) I, III, and IV only



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