Questions for Sean Duans’ Doctoral Comprehensive Exam:

* Causal Mediation Effects (CMEs) analysis has proven to be an effective methodology to understand potential mechanisms for causal analysis, particularly in the social sciences.   What are the principal limitations of this approach? Is there any advantage of taking a Bayesian approach to learning causal mediation effects?  Finally, can you imagine a scenario where CMEs could be used to address mechanism associated with anthropogenic climate change causes of increased hurricane intensity?
* Pick two of the three below:

1. Gratitude is a very popular positive psychology intervention.  In your opinion, what is special about gratitude, compared to other interventions? What is the evidence base that supports gratitude as more effective, compared to kindness, compassion, best possible selves, and the like?  And, most effective for what?  (please consider your own research goals in answering this part of the question).
2. Is gratitude a positive emotion, a cognitive process, or both?  Opinions differ, so be sure to cite multiple sides in your answer.
3. What more basic affective, physiological, or cognitive processes are affected by a person’s resolve to feel, and express, gratitude?  That is, what are the primary mediators of gratitude effects?  Be sure to discuss studies examining mediators in your answers.