

國立中央大學九十一年度碩士班研究生入學試題卷

所別： 藝術學研究所 甲組乙組科目： 英文 共 二 頁 第 一 頁

請用中文寫出下列各題的摘要（不是翻譯）：

1.

The issue of not assisting someone in distress is by no means a modern phenomenon; it was a matter of concern even in biblical times. Social psychologists have carried out many experiments in both field and laboratory to determine the factors influencing bystanders' responses to people who appear to be in distress. These studies reveal that if there are many bystanders, if someone else is perceived as more expert or as having more responsibility, if the situation is ambiguous, or if the person in distress is considered responsible for his or her own plight, then the observer is less likely to intervene. All these conditions diminish personal responsibility. (15%)

2.

In any science a good general theory is the handiest tool possible. Not only does it link many seemingly random facts into one coherent framework, but it also acts as a powerful aid to prediction. Making predictions has become one of the leading growth industries of the twentieth century. For instance, if you wanted to find out whether there is a planet beyond the known series, you could ask several hundred astronomers to keep their eyes open at night. But it would be more fruitful to turn to gravitational theory, which predicts that if there was a further planet out there it would cause detectable movements in the orbit of some other known planets. Indeed that is exactly how Leverrier predicted in 1846 that a planet would be discovered: Uranus. (15%)

3.

Human beings have been remaking the Earth for as long as we have had a history. Up to now, however, our ability to create our own second Genesis has been tempered by the restraints imposed by species boundaries. We have been forced to work narrowly, continually crossing close relatives in the plant or animal kingdoms to create new varieties, strains and breeds. Through a long, historical process of tinkering and trial and error, we have redrawn the biological map, creating new agricultural products, new sources of energy, more durable building materials, and life-saving pharmaceuticals. Still, in all this time, nature dictated the terms of engagement.

But the new technologies of the Genetic Age allow scientists, corporations and governments to manipulate the natural world at the most fundamental level—the genetic one. Imagine the wholesale transfer of genes between totally unrelated species and across all biological boundaries—plant, animal and human—creating thousands of novel life forms in a brief moment of evolutionary time. Then, with clonal propagation, mass-producing countless replicas of these new creations, releasing them into the biosphere to propagate, mutate, proliferate and migrate. This is, in fact, the radical and commercial experiment now underway. (20%)

注意：背面有試題

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4.

When you deal with a head of state and the policy-makers and advisers in government, these people, regardless of their nationality, are highly conscious of the need for deniability to protect themselves. They hold onto their records for dear life, or they take their most important papers with them and try to sequester them from public scrutiny. Therefore any effort to combat the impunity of heads of state is a threat to them, and they can be expected to resist it. But the effort should be made to hold these people accountable. We live in an interesting time because these issues are now front and center. (20 分)

5.

It is a curious phenomenon, but in an age when fame and celebrity are rampant, greatness seems to be in increasingly short supply- not just in politics but in art, literature, music, science, and other walks of life. Today's luminaries seem so insignificant compared with those of the past. Where once we had Erasmus, Dostoyevsky and Beethoven, now we have Jerry Springer, Tom Clancy and Posh Spice.

Where now, in science, do we find the likes of Sir Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin or Albert Einstein? Where in art do we find a Giotto, Michelangelo or Picasso? In music, where is the Bach, Mozart or Wagner? In literature, the Dante, Shakespeare or Goethe? Or in philosophy, the Descartes, Hume or Kant?

As recently as the 20th century, history was still churning out the greats. Einstein and Picasso were certainly among them: so were Ernest Rutherford, Marcel Proust, T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats, and others. But the more the century progressed, the fewer heroes it produced: until by the end of it, the supply seemed almost to have dried up.

An easy explanation might be to point to the van Gogh syndrome. Vincent van Gogh, it will be remembered, went unrecognized as a great artist in his lifetime, only to be acknowledged as a genius after his death. So, perhaps greatness becomes apparent only with hindsight and today's geniuses will be recognized tomorrow.

But it is a weak argument. In reality, while history may deliver the final verdict on people's achievements, few geniuses go unrecognized in their lifetime. Besides a generation has passed without revealing the hidden greatness of Jimmy Carter, Harold Robbins or Olivia Newton-John. If time is all it takes, how much longer must we wait?

A more engaging proposition is that we are paying the price of too much television: or, more precisely, too much information, conveyed by the vastly expanded range of TV channels, magazines, books and other media - including, now, the internet. (30 分)

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