

1. Explain the following claims:
  - (a) "Consistency is central to theoretical rationality"?
  - (b) "Just as causation is the cement of the physical universe, rationality is the cement of our mental lives."
  - (c) "Rationality is about satisficing rather than optimizing". Relate to the figures of constrained vs unconstrained maximizers (p. 262).
2. Can rationality be viewed as an absolute concept? Are actually able to construe rationality as one, general concept which would be applicable to everything?
3. Can we distinguish different degrees of rationality?
4. Considering anything could be rational given the specific domain, could we still identify things such as paradoxes of rationality?
5. Is rationality innate? Or is it rather adaptive? Is it a stable property or something context-dependent?
6. What would be an example of individual irrationality raising from collective rationality?
7. What is the relationship between theoretical vs practical rationality?
8. It seems that we use rationality to explain our actions but at the same time we model the concept of rationality on our actions. Does it not make rationality some kind of artificial concept? Following that thought – do we really need such concept as rationality to describe human behaviour? If it falls in so many traps, maybe it would be better to focus on specific factors, such as willingness to take the risk or motives of our choices?
9. Is there a link between rationality and IQ (dysrationalia)?
10. Rationality and morality.
11. What exactly is paradoxical in the Newcomb paradox?
12. Is it possible to demonstrate irrationality by experiment and by using some normative criteria?
13. Is it rational that people are scared of dying even though they know it's inevitable?
14. Suppose all the minds are extinct. Is there any rationality left?
15. Are there areas of our lives where it is more advantageous to be irrational, what can they be, and could we say that it has some adaptational benefits?
16. D. T. Kenrick and V. Griskevicius in "The Rational Animal: How Evolution Made Us Smarter Than We Think" claim that even if some human decisions might look irrational or even stupid at the surface level, at the deeper level people's decisions are actually driven by their deep-seated evolutionary goals. Is this just making rational sense out of apparent irrationality or a voice of an extreme adaptationism. Or maybe both?
17. How to implement rationality in artificial intelligence? Is it better to define the principles of operation or let SI learn rational action (it's about a long-lasting learning process)?
18. Since irrational behaviour sometimes proves itself to be effective and renders better results, wouldn't it make sense to just take off that label and just state that that kind of behaviour is worthy of calling it rational?
19. According to Radford those who fear the shark in *Jaws* are being irrationally inconsistent (Sorensen, 2004, p. 258). If we compare it with the concept of ersatz emotions (Polish *emocje ersacowe*) (Klawiter, Wiener, 2015), which appear while watching this type of movie, considered to be intentional and controlled by us – will we still find fear of a shark irrational?
20. If there is a weakness of will – is there a weakness of reason? Is our will based on our memory?

21. Suppose that there is some institution (established by government or otherwise) which could protect people from outcomes of irrational behaviours. Would there be any reason to improve our reasoning abilities? Or would they become obsolete, just as hunting skills?
22. What about Pascal's wager?

#### Additional materials

- Chapters of A. R. Mele & P. Rawling (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Rationality*, Oxford UP, 2004:
  - Robert Audi, "Theoretical Rationality: Its Sources, Structure, and Scope", ch. 2.
  - Alfred R. Mele, "Motivated Irrationality", ch. 13.
- Entries in the "Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy":
  - [Instrumental Rationality](#).
  - [Practical Reason](#).
  - [Historicist Theories of Scientific Rationality](#).