Midterm #1: Chapters 1 to 4 (inclusive)

Note. your midterm essay questions will come from the list below but I do NOT guarantee that the questions will appear exactly as you see them here. I may take only ask part of a question, or divide one question into two questions. In other words, make sure you are competent to answer ALL the questions below. There is overlap in some of these questions. I won’t use an essay question that is NOT found below. Multiple choice questions are drawn from the textbook generally, including material not covered in class.

1. Discuss Freud’s model of the mind. How has the person-as-computer conception translated Freud’s model, particularly with regard to the notion of an “unconscious” part of the mind (i.e., the contemporary automatized nonconscious or “cognitive unconscious”). Be sure to explain how the mind can be conceived as being like a computer. Discuss Bowlby’s notion of “defensive exclusion (from further processing)” as something of a contemporary equivalent to Freud’s repressed unconscious. [There is a reading by Bowlby that partly covers this, in case you missed those classes where this was discussed.]

2. Discuss Piaget’s stages of human development. How does Piaget envision the person? How does Piaget’s view of an “innate reflex” differ from the Behaviorists view of a reflex? (In class I discussed Piaget’s “circular reaction” as an example of Piaget’s view of reflexes as weak sorts of things which the child strengthens.) When do mental representations first appear in Piaget’s scheme and on what behavioral evidence can one infer their presence?

3. Discuss emotions. What are they? What function do they serve? How might they be nonfunctional, even disruptive? What is the difference between primary, secondary, and complex emotions? In what way might emotions be “unconscious?”

4. What is the difference between the Behaviorist’s rat (or pigeon), Star Trek’s Spock (or the Terminator), and the more recent Star Trek Borg? How might they differ according to whether they might have insights and whether they might subjectively experience emotions. Defend your answers using empirical research and examples. [this question overlaps considerably with Question #3]

5. How does “Darwin’s chimp” differ from “Hamilton’s chimp” (i.e., how do early 19th century evolutionary theories differ from contemporary evolutionary theories?). (Be sure to discuss the notion of a functional understanding of behavior.)