Sample questions

#1
The objective science of phenomenology sounds just oxy-moronic enough to be enticing. I have no idea how it would work, but it is interesting. No single theory can capture every aspect of reality (I believe), but I don't see why there couldn't be any number of "folk" sciences that deal in relationships between generalized concepts, and the patterns therein. Rather than a question, I have more of a conjecture. Perhaps a good place to start on some kind of objective phenomenology would be in investigating inter-sensory quality correlations. Like, why would red be described as hot? Why are sharp noises sharp? Does describing "red" as "hot" contain absolutely any explanatory power to someone who was blind from birth? Will it enable them to perform any task at all in the real world more efficiently? Let's say that the association between red and "heat" has to do specifically with the heating of objects passing through the glowing red phase. Even though it seems that the association could not then exist *without* sight, being aware of such an association for sighted people and understanding its depth seems like it would potentially useful for various judgment calls of an unsighted person.

#2
Calvo's paper on plant intelligence left me wondering about the web of intelligence posed by our last reading. This paper seems to support a functionalist perspective of the mind because of the way it makes connections between the actions of plants and mammals, not the physiological makeup. Moving from this perspective and "branching" off the web of intelligence, I wonder what this means for consciousness? If plants and mammals share similar computational characteristics but only humans have consciousness, does that support Dennett's claim that it is an illusion or is it actually a complex adaptation caused by a divergence in evolutionary history?

#3
In response to Chalmers' gradual destructive uploading example I wonder if it might be fair to say that the example could be incoherent? What if it is impossible to transmit the functional information of a carbon based neuron to a silicon unit? This might be a misunderstanding of how neurons work, but my questions arise from the thought that while a silicon brain and a carbon brain might be similar or the same from a functionalist standpoint, they might be totally different types of consciousness. Even from a functionalist perspective it seems reasonable that while both brains are considered conscious because of their output, they experience vastly different types of conscious experience. What if our idea of consciousness is tied to the qualitative haze of sensory information and thought that is our waking experience. Is it possible for silicon to replicate this experience?

#4
In Corabi and Schenider's "If "You Upload, Will You Survive?" they take a quick overview of the prevailing theories of self, and apply them to the question of whether or not a computer upload of a person will preserve the self. The answer they give is no in most cases (unless you're a Psychological continuity theorist). Their case hinges primarily on the idea that objects cannot exist at a point, cease to exist, and then resume existing, especially

resume existing in a distant location. My question is regarding their responses to soul theorists. How relevant is the movement of souls from body to body, when movement is something that is attributed to the physical/material world? Most conceptions of dualistic objects are envisioned to be out of space, so there would be no need to move to the new upload/body, it would simply already be a part of it. Is there some consideration I'm missing aside from Corabi and Schenider trying to prove their point?

#5
I agree with the claim that evolutionary psychology puts forth that modern day humans have the brains of our ancestors that lived many thousands of years ago. The most obvious piece of evidence for this claim is the analogy cited by the authors of this paper made by Pinker that says, in effect; we must have some experiences passed down our ancestral lineage because more people are afraid of snakes than driving without a seatbelt, even though more people die from not wearing a seatbelt than from snake bites. It takes a long time for natural selection to have visible effects on a population which is why we, essentially, have caveman brains still. There is another analogy in the paper that says our brains all function like a bunch on mini computers, similar to a swiss army knife. Natural selection takes a very long time to show visible effects when it changes the cognitive abilities of a population. I wonder how our caveman 'swiss army knife' brains will function when they adapt to our relatively safe, technology driven, urban lifestyle of the 21st century, which is a stark contrast to the Will a gadget of the swiss army knife be altogether removed, or will new functional abilities be added?