1. What is equivocality? How does it arise? Why is it important?
2. Identify the three questions of interpretation.
3. Compare and contrast the following:
   • Structural characteristics of consciousness from Jaynes
   • Three questions of interpretation from Mailloux
   • Two aspects of sensemaking from Weick
   • Tree of talking
   • Dennett’s characterization of perception
4. Albert Einstein made the following observation connecting scientific thinking and everyday thinking: “The whole of science is nothing more than a refinement of everyday thinking.” Write a coherent essay -- of at least four paragraphs -- comparing and contrasting the traditional view of the scientific method to everyday thinking as captured in the attached diagram. Possible paragraphs subjects include:
   i. Traditional view of scientific method
   ii. In-class characterization of everyday thinking
   iii. Similarities between the two
   iv. Differences between the two
   v. Is Einstein correct in his characterization in the above quote?

I. Interpretation

Definition: acceptable and approximating translation

A. Approximating What?
   1. Formalist
   2. Intentionalist
   3. Foundationalist

   • an approximating reading captures something such as intention that is “there”

B. Translating How?
   1. Historicizing
   2. Allegorizing

   • translation is an activity of historicizing, allegorizing, or punning that gives form to the approximation

C. Acceptable to Whom?
   1. Interpreter vs. Text
   2. Interpreter vs Interpreter

   • an acceptable reading has some standing in the community
D. Interpretation

- interpretation means giving a rendering in which one word is explained by another

**Interpretation points in two directions—toward a text and toward an audience**

- interpreter mediates between two
- mediation takes place in a context (it is never private); it involves political interests, consequences, coercion, persuasion, and rhetoric.
- interpretation becomes important given ambiguity and equivocality
- In real world practice, problems do not present themselves to the practitioners as givens.
- They must be constructed from the materials of problematic situations which are puzzling, troubling, and uncertain.
- In order to convert a problematic situation into a problem, a practitioner must do a certain kind of work. He must make sense of an uncertain situation that initially makes no sense.

II. Sensemaking

A. What makes something an instance of sensemaking?

- Someone notices something
- discrepant cues are noticed as one looks back over elapsed experience
- plausible speculations are offered to explain cues

B. Sense making or making sense

- structures the unknown
- places stimuli into some kind of context
- Sensemaking is grounded in both individual and social activity, and whether the two are even separable is an important issue
- sensemaking addresses how the text is constructed as well as how it is read. It is about authoring as well as reading.

C. Sense Making differs from interpretation

- sense making is clearly a process; interpretation can be a product
- the idea of interpreting implies that something is there—a text; sense making is less about discovery than it is about invention.
- to talk about sensemaking is to talk about reality as an ongoing accomplishment that takes form when people make retrospective sense of the situations in which they find themselves and their creations
- it is reflexive—people make sense of things by seeing a world on which they already imposed what they believe; people discover their own inventions
III. Seven Properties of SenseMaking

A. **Grounded in Identity Construction**
   - sense making begins with a sense maker
   - how can I know what I think until I see what I say? Four pronouns
   - each sense maker is a “parliament of selves” Mead
   - what motivates the individual

B. **Retrospective**
   - creation of meaning is an attentional process
   - attention is directed backward
   - things that affect remembering will affect interpretation
   - we are conscious of what we have done, not of doing it
   - the problem is that there are too many meanings, not too few. The problem faced by the sensemaker is one of equivocality, not one of uncertainty.
   - The problem is confusion, not ignorance. – need clarity on what matters

C. **Enactive of sensible environments**
   - people produce part of the environment they face
   - people construct reality through authoritative acts–enactment
   - people receive stimuli as a result of their own activity
   - the metaphor of enactment through intentional grafting and pruning is an instance of artificial selection in evolutionary theory
   - sensemaking involves **ongoing codetermination**—individual and stimulus; people create their own environments as those environments create them

D. **Social**
   - conduct is contingent on the conduct of others, whether the others are imagined or are physically present

E. **Ongoing**
   - sensemaking never starts–people are always in the middle of things
   - people find themselves thrown into ongoing situations
   - Language is action–when people say something, they create rather than describe

F. **Focused on and by extracted cues**
   - sensemaking tends to be swift
   - we need to study the ways people notice, extract cues, and embellish that which they extract
extracted cues are simple, familiar structures that are seeds from which people develop a larger sense of what may be occurring (talk about EXFORMATION)

MAP example–lost in the Alps with a map of the Pyrenees

Raises the possibility that when you are lost, any old map will do. The old map will animate and orient people. Once people begin to act (enact), they generate tangible outcomes (cues) in some context (social), and this helps them discover (retrospect) what is occurring (ongoing), what needs to be explained (plausibility), and when should be done next (identity enhancement)

G. Driven by plausibility rather than accuracy

- the prefix sense in the word sensemaking invokes a realist ontology–there is something out there to be registered, sensed accurately
- the sensible need not be sensable–accuracy is nice but not necessary
- sensemaking is about plausibility, pragmatics, coherence, reasonableness, creation, invention, and instrumentality
- people need to distort and filter, to separate signal from noise given their current projects, if they are not to be overwhelmed with data.
- sensemaking is about the embellishment and elaboration of a single point of reference or extracted cue. Embellishment occurs when a cue is linked with amore general idea.
- speed reduces need for accuracy
- Sensemaking is about accounts that are socially acceptable and credible–filtered information is less accurate but, if the filtering is effective, more understandable.
- In an equivocal, postmodern world, infused with the politics of interpretation and conflicting interests and inhabited by people with multiple shifting identities, an obsession with accuracy seems fruitless, and not of much practical help, either.

IV. EQUIVOCALITY

- Equivocal – capable of two or more interpretations
"Theorist’s Fiction"

Consciousness

Analog World

Spatialization

Excretion

Perceptual Analysis

Conciliation

Exformation

Narratization

Theory

Tree of Talking$_1$

(Generating Metaphors/Memes)

Enactment

Real World

Understanding/
Explanation/
Prediction

Sense Making

"Theorist’s Fiction"

Text/Transcript

Hetero Phenomenology

Interpretation/
Tree of Talking$_2$