

Philosophy 3334 Summer 2018
Reading questions #13
Due Fri, June 21th

1) Read Steven Pinker's "Gender" (Chapter 18 of his 2002 book *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature*). In part of this chapter, Pinker discusses the book *The Natural History of Rape* by Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer. Pinker agrees with Thornhill and Palmer that, roughly speaking, "rape is about sex" and so can be understood in evolutionary terms. They consider two different theories: rape could be an adaptation or could be the by product of other adaptations. What are these two different theories? (I just mean what do these claims mean). What are some possible non-evolutionary answers to what causes rape? Ideally, think of some yourself, but if you can't think of any, Pinker gives some – for example, he discusses the theory developed by Susan Brownmiller.

Just out of curiosity, what have you learned (in school or elsewhere) or just heard other people say about the causes of rape? What do you think is "the common view"? What is your view?

2) After reading the chapter, come up with a question that you want answered or a topic that you would like to be discussed. This could be something that the chapters forced you think about or it could be something that you thought was particularly confusing in the chapters.