



Study Questions for *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

1. How have the mass extinctions caused by World War Terminus reshaped the natural world and redefined the relationship between human and nonhuman animals?
2. What can we learn about the difference between androids and humans by considering the difference between robotic and real pets?
3. In addition to social status, what do animals signify in the post-war society of the novel? How do the human-animal relationships in Dick's work change our current understanding of pet-keeping?
4. What are the similarities and differences between the parallel plots of the novel: the stories of John (or J. R. Isidore) and Pris Stratton, and of Rick Deckard and Rachael Rosen?
5. Within the world of the novel, is the Voigt-Kampff test an accurate way of distinguishing androids from humans? What quality does the test single out as the defining aspect of the human? Does the test make it rationally legitimate or morally acceptable to "retire" the androids?
6. What role does the character of Phil Resch play in the unfolding of the plot, in the novel's treatment of the distinction between the real and the imitation, and in Rick's sense of his own identity?
7. What does Rachael Rosen reveal about android character, motivation, or identity? Why does she appear in two different beings (Rachael and Pris)? Why does she push the goat off the roof?
8. What is the connection between the virtual world that John and other characters enter through the "empathy box" and the real post-war world of nuclear winter and electric sheep or robotic pets? What is the relationship between the "empathy box" experience and Rick's climb up the desolate hill in northern California?
9. The design and creation of androids represents an extreme version of the exploitation of technology in the service of human kind, and the use of the Penfield wave transmitter and the "empathy box" demonstrate a human dependence on technology to fulfill basic needs and desires. Does Dick's novel reject, accede to, or revel in technology?
10. Dick described science fiction as "the conceptual dislocation" of our own society in order to generate "a new society . . . [that] occurs as a convulsive shock in the reader's mind, *the shock of dysrecognition*" (1981). What is the most shocking or dysrecognizable aspect of Dick's work, for today's reader? What role does Dick's science fiction play in our own thinking about the present?