1. In the Daly & Wilson paper on child abuse, they collected data not only on child abuse but also on runaways and criminal offenses by minors. What was their purpose in collecting this information? Explain how the results could have come out for all three variables so as to cast doubt on their hypothesis.

*They serve as controls for the ‘broken home’ effect. Had the results for the criminal offenses and runaways followed the same pattern as for child abuse – incidence highest in step-parent families – you could say that child abuse is just one of many negative effects that happens in these households. Instead, the incidence of criminal offenses and runaways is actually higher in single-parent households, and the higher incidence of child abuse is specific to step-parent families.*

2. For the Kurzban et al paper “Can race be erased?” we discussed why the study design might have been better had the researchers used chess or debate (for example) as their competitive context instead of basketball. Explain how this might have been a better design given what they predicted and concluded about the salience of coalition, race and gender in their study. In your answer, include how and why the results might have been different had they done this.

*Because co-ed basketball is actually pretty unusual compared to the many other activities nowadays in which each gender routinely competes with and against the other, so gender may have remained salient even when coalition was marked (in contrast to the effect with race in Expts 1 and 2). In the context of chess, debate or even co-ed softball or soccer, gender differences might stand out less, and the salience of gender might weaken when coalition was marked. [Put differently, the investigators are generalizing very broadly given the very specific nature of their experimental situation. You could accuse the Farmers Market study of the same thing actually.]*

3. Suppose you wanted to criticize one of these two studies as committing the naturalistic fallacy. I’m not saying that either one really does, but which one do you think is potentially more culpable? Explain your answer.

*The Naturalistic Fallacy is saying that some behavior is unavoidable (to be expected) because it is ‘natural’, or, conversely [and many people didn’t seem to get this flip side] saying that it is avoidable because it is not natural. Kurzban et al give us the flip side version of the N.F. – that’s the point of their ‘race can be erased’ title – they claim, and do a study they say supports this claim, that race is not a ‘natural category’ and so racism is not inevitable. But most of us would argue that racism is a bad thing, and should be ‘erased’, regardless of whether people naturally categorize by race or not. [Are we supposed to conclude that sexism is inevitable because (as they suggest) we automatically categorize on the basis of gender? The irony here is that Kurzban et al are ‘on the side of the angels’, trying to draw a politically palatable conclusion from their data, whereas most often the excitement is generated by studies that appear to suggest politically unpalatable conclusions (e.g., evolutionary psychology studies of rape). BTW, although you could pick either paper in this question, you have to work much harder to make the case that D&W are more culpable of the fallacy than Kurzban et al. It is not enough to say that D&W could be perceived as excusing child abuse, the question asks which study actually commits the N.F.]