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# Will And Determinism Philosophy Home Page

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## SHERLYN ISAIAS

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Four Views on Free Will  
Information Philosopher  
In this small book, theoretical physicist Gerard 't Hooft (Nobel prize 1999), philosopher Emanuele Severino (Lincei Academician), and theologian Piero Coda (Pontifical Lateran University) confront one another on a topic that lies at the roots of quantum mechanics and at the origin of Western thought: Determinism and Free Will. "God does not play dice" said Einstein, a tenacious determinist. Quantum Mechanics and its clash with General Relativity have reanimated ancient dilemmas about chance and necessity: Is Nature deterministic? Is Man free? The "free-will

theorem" by Conway and Kochen, and the deterministic interpretation of quantum mechanics proposed by 't Hooft, revive such philosophical questions in modern Physics. Is Becoming real? Is the Elementary Event a product of the Case? The cyclopean clash between Heraclitus and Parmenides has entered a new episode, as evidenced by the essays in this volume. Thinking about Free Will  
Oxford University Press on Demand  
In *Of Liberty and Necessity* James A. Harris presents the first comprehensive account of the free will problem in eighteenth-century British philosophy. Harris proposes new interpretations of the positions of familiar figures such as Locke, Hume, Edwards, and Reid.

He also gives careful attention to writers such as William King, Samuel Clarke, Anthony Collins, Lord Kames, James Beattie, David Hartley, Joseph Priestley, and Dugald Stewart, who, while well-known in the eighteenth century, have since been largely ignored by historians of philosophy. Through detailed textual analysis, and by making precise use of a variety of different contexts, Harris elucidates the contribution that each of these writers makes to the eighteenth-century discussion of the will and its freedom. In this period, the question of the nature of human freedom is posed principally in terms of the influence of motives upon the will. On one side of the debate are those who believe that we are free in our choices. A motive, these

philosophers believe, constitutes a reason to act in a particular way, but it is up to us which motive we act upon. On the other side of the debate are those who believe that, on the contrary, there is no such thing as freedom of choice. According to these philosophers, one motive is always intrinsically stronger than the rest and so is the one that must determine choice. Several important issues are raised as this disagreement is explored and developed, including the nature of motives, the value of 'indifference' to the will's freedom, the distinction between 'moral' and 'physical' necessity, the relation between the will and the understanding, and the internal coherence of the concept of freedom of will. One of Harris's primary objectives is to place this debate in the context of the eighteenth-century concern with replicating in the mental sphere what Newton had achieved in the philosophy of nature. All of the philosophers discussed in *Of Liberty and Necessity* conceive of themselves as 'experimental' reasoners, and, when examining the will, focus primarily upon

what experience reveals about the influence of motives upon choice. The nature and significance of introspection is therefore at the very centre of the free will problem in this period, as is the question of what can legitimately be inferred from observable regularities in human behaviour.

*The Limits of Free Will* MIT Press

Focusing on the rich and variegated cluster of Indic philosophical traditions as they developed from the late Vedic period up to the pre-modern period, this book offers an understanding, according to each school, of the nature of free will and agency.

[Free Will and Theism](#)

Reaktion Books

Discusses the incompatibility of the concepts of free will and determinism and argues that moral responsibility needs the doctrine of free will

[Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy](#) Routledge

*The Limits of Free Will* presents influential articles by Paul Russell concerning free will and moral responsibility. The problems arising in this field of philosophy, which are deeply rooted in the history of the subject, are

also intimately related to a wide range of other fields, such as law and criminology, moral psychology, theology, and, more recently, neuroscience. These articles were written and published over a period of three decades, although most have appeared in the past decade. Among the topics covered: the challenge of skepticism; moral sentiment and moral capacity; necessity and the metaphysics of causation; practical reason; free will and art; fatalism and the limits of agency; moral luck, and our metaphysical attitudes of optimism and pessimism. Some essays are primarily critical in character, presenting critiques and commentary on major works or contributions in the contemporary scene. Others are mainly constructive, aiming to develop and articulate a distinctive account of compatibilism. The general theory advanced by Russell, which he describes as a form of "critical compatibilism", rejects any form of unqualified or radical skepticism; but it also insists that a plausible compatibilism has significant and substantive implications

about the limits of agency and argues that this licenses a metaphysical attitude of (modest) pessimism on this topic. While each essay is self-standing, there is nevertheless a core set of themes and issues that unite and link them together. The collection is arranged and organized in a format that enables the reader to appreciate and recognize these links and core themes.

#### Free Will and Moral

Responsibility Routledge  
It is well over a decade since John Fischer and Mark Ravizza – and before them, Jay Wallace and Daniel Dennett – defended responsibility from the threat of determinism. But defending responsibility from determinism is a potentially endless and largely negative enterprise; it can go on for as long as dissenting voices remain, and although such work strengthens the theoretical foundations of these theories, it won't necessarily build anything on top of those foundations, nor will it move these theories into new territory or explain how to apply them to practical contexts. To this end, the papers in this volume address these

more positive challenges by exploring how compatibilist responsibility theory can be extended and/or applied in a range of practical contexts. For instance, how is the narrow philosophical concept of responsibility that was defended from the threat of determinism related to the plural notions of responsibility present in everyday discourse, and how might this more fine-grained understanding of responsibility open up new vistas and challenges for compatibilist theory? What light might compatibilism shed, and what light might be shed upon it, by political debates about access to public welfare in the context of responsibility for one's own health, and by legal debates about the impact of self-intoxication on responsibility. Does compatibilist theory, which was originally designed to cater for analysis of individual actions, scale to scenarios that involve group action and collective responsibility — e.g. for harms due to human-induced climate change? This book's chapters deal with a range of theoretical problems discussed in

classic compatibilist literature — e.g. the relationship between responsibility and capacity, the role of historical tracing in discounting the exculpatory value of incapacities, and the justifiability of retributive punishment. But instead of motivating their discussions by focusing on the alleged threat that determinism poses to responsibility, these chapters' authors have animated their discussions by tackling important practical problems which crop up in contemporary debates about responsibility.  
**Hard Luck** Clarendon Press  
Much contemporary scholarship on free will focuses on whether it is compatible with causal determinism. According to compatibilists, it is possible for an agent to be determined in all her choices and actions and still be free. Incompatibilists, on the other hand, think that the existence of free will is incompatible with the truth of determinism. There are two dominant general conceptions of the nature of free will. According to the first of these, free will is primarily a function of being able to

do otherwise than one in fact does. On this view, free will centrally depends upon alternative possibilities. The second approach focuses instead on issues of sourcehood, holding that free will is primarily a function of an agent being the source of her actions in a particular way. This book demarcates these two different conceptions free will, explores the relationship between them, and examines how they relate to the debate between compatibilists and incompatibilists. It ultimately argues for a version of Source Incompatibilism.

### **Free Will and**

**Determinism** Routledge  
The problem of free will has fascinated philosophers since ancient times: Do we have free will, or at least the kind of free will that seems necessary for moral responsibility? Does determinism - the idea that everything that happens is necessitated to happen, given the past and the laws of nature - threaten the commonly held assumption that we are indeed free and morally responsible? Although these questions have been widely discussed in the past, the present volume offers a

variety of new perspectives from philosophers who have made significant contributions to this debate over recent years, including Derk Pereboom, Robert Kane, Ishtiyaque Haji, Michael McKenna, John Martin Fischer, David Widerker and Saul Smilansky. The emphasis in these essays is not merely on free will, but on allied notions such as moral responsibility, moral obligation, fairness and meaningfulness, and on whether any room can be made for these notions in a deterministic or an indeterministic universe.

### **Free Will and Epistemology**

Cambridge Scholars Publishing  
This volume brings together van Inwagen's most significant essays in this major field, addressing key topics and including two entirely new chapters.  
*The Illusion of Conscious Will* Springer  
The problem of determinism arises in all the major areas of philosophy. The first part of this book, first published in 1991, is a critical and historical exposition of the problem and the most important ideas and arguments which have arisen over

the many years of debate. The second part considers the various forms of determinism and the implications that they engender.

### *The Implications of Determinism* Bloomsbury Publishing

A state-of-the-art collection of previously unpublished essays on the topics of determinism, free will, moral responsibility, and action theory, written by some of the most important figures in these fields of study.

### Exploring the Illusion of Free Will and Moral Responsibility Routledge

A novel contribution to the age-old debate about free will versus determinism. Do we consciously cause our actions, or do they happen to us? Philosophers, psychologists, neuroscientists, theologians, and lawyers have long debated the existence of free will versus determinism. In this book Daniel Wegner offers a novel understanding of the issue. Like actions, he argues, the feeling of conscious will is created by the mind and brain. Yet if psychological and neural mechanisms are responsible for all human

behavior, how could we have conscious will? The feeling of conscious will, Wegner shows, helps us to appreciate and remember our authorship of the things our minds and bodies do. Yes, we feel that we consciously will our actions, Wegner says, but at the same time, our actions happen to us. Although conscious will is an illusion, it serves as a guide to understanding ourselves and to developing a sense of responsibility and morality. Approaching conscious will as a topic of psychological study, Wegner examines the issue from a variety of angles. He looks at illusions of the will—those cases where people feel that they are willing an act that they are not doing or, conversely, are not willing an act that they in fact are doing. He explores conscious will in hypnosis, Ouija board spelling, automatic writing, and facilitated communication, as well as in such phenomena as spirit possession, dissociative identity disorder, and trance channeling. The result is a book that sidesteps endless debates to focus, more fruitfully, on the impact on our lives of the illusion of conscious will.

What Tends to Be  
Springer Science & Business Media  
Exploring the Illusion of Free Will and Moral Responsibility investigates the philosophical and scientific arguments for free will skepticism and their implications. Skepticism about free will and moral responsibility has been on the rise in recent years. In fact, a significant number of philosophers, psychologists, and neuroscientists now either doubt or outright deny the existence of free will and/or moral responsibility—and the list of prominent skeptics appears to grow by the day. Given the profound importance that the concepts of free will and moral responsibility hold in our lives—in understanding ourselves, society, and the law—it is important that we explore what is behind this new wave of skepticism. It is also important that we explore the potential consequences of skepticism for ourselves and society. Edited by Gregg D. Caruso, this collection of new essays brings together an internationally recognized line-up of contributors, most of whom hold

skeptical positions of some sort, to display and explore the leading arguments for free will skepticism and to debate their implications. *Freedom and Determinism* Simon and Schuster  
Determinism is, roughly, the thesis that facts about the past and the laws of nature entail all truths. A venerable, age-old dilemma concerning responsibility distils to this: if either determinism is true or it is not true, we lack “responsibility-grounding” control. Either determinism is true or it is not true. So, we lack responsibility-grounding control. Deprived of such control, no one is ever morally responsible for anything. A number of the freshly-minted essays in this collection address aspects of this dilemma. Responding to the horn that determinism undermines the freedom that responsibility (or moral obligation) requires, the freedom to do otherwise, some papers in this collection debate the merits of Frankfurt-style examples that purport to show that one can be responsible despite lacking alternatives. Responding to the horn that indeterminism implies luck or

randomness, other papers discuss the strengths or shortcomings of libertarian free will or control. Also included in this collection are essays on the freedom requirements of moral obligation, forgiveness and free will, a “desert-free” conception of free will, and vicarious legal and moral responsibility. The authors of the essays in this volume are philosophers who have made significant contributions to debates in free will, moral responsibility, moral obligation, the reactive attitudes, philosophy of action, and philosophical psychology, and include John Martin Fischer, Robert Kane, Michael McKenna, Alfred Mele, and Derk Pereboom.

[Why Free Will Is Real](#) MIT Press

This book rescues compatibilists from the familiar charge of 'quagmire of evasion' by arguing that the problem of free will and determinism is a metaphysical problem with a metaphysical solution. There is no good reason to think that determinism would rob us of the free will we think we have.

**Moral Responsibility**  
Cambridge Scholars

**Publishing**

The title of this work is to be taken seriously: it is a small book for teaching students to read the language of determinism. Some prior knowledge of college-level mathematics and physics is presupposed, but otherwise the book is suitable for use in an advanced undergraduate or beginning graduate course in the philosophy of science. While writing I had in mind primarily a philosophical audience, but I hope that students and colleagues from the sciences will also find the treatment of scientific issues of interest. Though modest in not trying to reach beyond an introductory level of analysis, the work is decidedly immodest in trying to change a number of misimpressions that pervade the philosophical literature. For example, when told that classical physics is not the place to look for clean and unproblematic examples of determinism, most philosophers react with a mixture of disbelief and incomprehension. The misconceptions on which that reaction is based can and must be changed.

*Breaking the Free Will Illusion for the Betterment of Humankind* MIT Press

The concept of luck has played an important role in debates concerning free will and moral responsibility, yet participants in these debates have relied upon an intuitive notion of what luck is. Neil Levy develops an account of luck, which is then applied to the free will debate. He argues that the standard luck objection succeeds against common accounts of libertarian free will, but that it is possible to amend libertarian accounts so that they are no more vulnerable to luck than is compatibilism. But compatibilist accounts of luck are themselves vulnerable to a powerful luck objection: historical compatibilisms cannot satisfactorily explain how agents can take responsibility for their constitutive luck; non-historical compatibilisms run into insurmountable difficulties with the epistemic condition on control over action. Levy argues that because epistemic conditions on control are so demanding that they are rarely satisfied, agents are not blameworthy for performing actions that they take to be best in a given situation. It follows that if there are any



actions for which agents are responsible, they are akratic actions; but even these are unacceptably subject to luck. Levy goes on to discuss recent non-historical compatibilisms, and argues that they do not offer a viable alternative to control-based compatibilisms. He suggests that luck undermines our freedom and moral responsibility no matter whether determinism is true or not.

**Free Will** Springer Nature  
 "Nicely conceived, very clearly written. . . . A high level of philosophic substance and sophistication." --David M. Mowry, SUNY at Plattsburgh  
[Free Will, Agency, and Selfhood in Indian Philosophy](#) Oxford University Press  
 Focusing on the concepts and interactions of free will, moral responsibility, and determinism, this text

represents the most up-to-date account of the four major positions in the free will debate. Four serious and well-known philosophers explore the opposing viewpoints of libertarianism, compatibilism, hard incompatibilism, and revisionism. The first half of the book contains each philosopher's explanation of his particular view; the second half allows them to directly respond to each other's arguments, in a lively and engaging conversation. Offers the reader a one-of-a-kind, interactive discussion. Forms part of the acclaimed Great Debates in Philosophy series. *Determinism and Free Will* Oxford University Press  
 This comprehensive study offers a balanced assessment of libertarian accounts of free will. Bringing to bear recent work on action, causation, and causal explanation, Clarke defends a type of

event-causal view from popular objections concerning rationality and diminished control. He subtly explores the extent to which event-causal accounts can secure the things for the sake of which we value free will, judging their success here to be limited. Clarke then sets out a highly original agent-causal account, one that integrates agent causation and nondeterministic event causation. He defends this view from a number of objections but argues that we should find the substance causation required by any agent-causal account to be impossible. Clarke concludes that if a broad thesis of incompatibilism is correct - one on which both free will and moral responsibility are incompatible with determinism - then no libertarian account is entirely adequate.