**Definitions of Free Will**

Eddy Nahmias, Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy and the Neuroscience Institute at Georgia State University, published August 13, 2012, Big Questions Online, https://www.bigquestionsonline.com/2012/08/13/does-contemporary-neuroscience-support-challenge-reality-free-will/

“We’ve seen that **people understand “free will” to mean different things** and that people think our having free will would require different things.  I think **the best way to define “free will” is** (roughly):  “**the set of powers or capacities for making choices and controlling actions that an agent needs to be morally responsible for her choices and actions.**”  I think **this definition accords with the way most people, and most philosophers, understand free will, and** I think **it is also theoretically useful.  That is, it provides a useful target for philosophical analysis**—what are those capacities and what would limit or eliminate them?—**and** then **for scientific study.**  Once we pick out the relevant capacities, we can study:  how they are instantiated in humans (if they are), to what degree humans (as a species) possess them, to what degree (individual) humans possess them and exercise them in particular actions, and what might help us develop these capacities.  **Free will, as defined here, seems to require that free actions can be influenced by rational deliberation and conscious choice.**  On the conceptual side, how should we understand these capacities and the type of causal influence they need to have for our actions to count as free and responsible?  On the scientific side, how do our brains implement these capacities and what prevents them from playing a causal role in action?”

Jonathan Schooler, Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of California Santa Barbara, published August 12, 2013, Big Questions Online, Emphasis Added https://www.bigquestionsonline.com/2014/05/06/what-are-implications-free-will-debate-individuals-society/

“For myself, **the functionality of a belief in free will, both as revealed by research and through personal experience, contributes to its appeal.  Free will from my perspective is like sailing a ship; we are buffeted by innumerable forces out of our control and will inevitably get somewhere regardless of what we do. However, if we take the helm we are more likely to end up where we want to go.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 13.

“Putting these thoughts together, **compatibilists argue that to be free, as we ordinarily understand it, is (1) to have the *power* or *ability* to do what we want or desire to do, which in turn entails (2) an *absence of constraints* or impediments (such as physical restraints, coercion, and compulsion) preventing us from doing what we want.** Let us call a view that defines freedom in terms of 1 and 2 “classical compatibilism.” Most traditional compatibilists, such as Hobbes, Hume, and Mill, were classical compatibilists in this sense. **Hobbes stated the view succinctly, saying a man is free when he finds “no stop in doing what he has the will, desire, or inclination to do.”** And Hobbes noted that if this is what freedom means, then freedom is compatible with determinism. For, as he put it, there may be no constraints or impediments preventing persons from doing what they “will or desire to do,” even if it should turn out that what they will or desire was determined by their past.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 6.

“**To see where the conflict lies between determinism and free will, consider again what free will requires. We believe we have free will when we view ourselves as agents capable of influencing the world in various ways.** Open alternatives, or alternative possibilities, seem to lie before us. **We reason** and deliberate among them **and choose. We feel (1) it is “up to us” what we choose and how we act; and this means we could have chosen or acted otherwise.** As Aristotle noted: when acting is “up to us.” so is not acting. **This “up-to-us-ness” also suggests that (2) the ultimate sources of our actions lie in us and not outside us in factors beyond our control. If free will implies these conditions, one can see why determinism would be a threat to free will.** If one or another form of determinism were true, **it seems that it would not be (1) “up to us” what we chose from an array of alternative possibilities, since only one alternative would be possible. And it seems that the (2) sources or origins of our actions would not be “in us” but in something else** (such as the decrees of fate, the foreordaining acts of God, or antecedent causes and laws of nature) outside and beyond our control.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 6.

“**The popular conception of free will seems to rest on two assumptions: (1) that each of us could have behaved differently than we did** in the past, **and (2) that we are the conscious source of most of our thoughts and actions in the present.** As we are about to see, however, both of these assumptions are false.”

**Aff: Answer to Quantum Indeterminism**

George Musser, contributing editor at Scientific American, February 6, 2012, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/quantum-physics-free-will/

“**I find the idea that indeterminism restores free will extremely unpersuasive. What difference does it make if** my **conscious choices were programmed in at the big bang or decided on the fly by random particle events? In either case,** you might worry that **your decisions are not your own. If anything, quantum indeterminism makes matters worse**, because within our decision-making process, we want determinism: your choices should flow from your needs and desires. **Also, at a deep level, quantum mechanics is not random at all. Schrödinger’s equation is completely deterministic and time-symmetric.** Carroll feels much the same:”

Tom Chivers, journalist, the Daily Telegraph, published October 12, 2010 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/8058541/Neuroscience-free-will-and-determinism-Im-just-a-machine.html>

“**Some philosophers –** Robert **Kane, and, famously,** Karl **Popper and** John **Eccles – have held out hope that quantum indeterminacy**, the randomness at the level of the universe's finest grains, **could rescue true freedom.** Prof **Haggard is dismissive.** "No one wants to be told they're just a machine. But **there is simply nothing approaching convincing evidence for the quantum view. Popper and Eccles proposed that free will was due to quantum indeterminacy in the chemical messages that communicate between neurons. "But none of that happens at the quantum level. From a physics point of view, it's macro-level." Besides, quantum activity is purely random, and randomness gives you no more freedom than determinism does.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 8-9.

“One might think these indeterministic developments in modern physics would have disposed of philosophical worries about free will. Why be concerned that free will conflicts with determinism if determinism is not even true in the physical world? But the interesting fact is that **despite these developments in physics, worries about free will did not go away in the twentieth century.** Concerns about determinism of human behavior persist to this day, and debates about free will have become more heated than ever. Why is this so? **There are four reasons why indeterministic developments in modern physics have not disposed of traditional concerns about free will and determinism. First, the new quantum world of elementary particles is as mysterious as free will itself, and there is still much debate about how to interpret it.** Standard views of quantum physics hold that the behavior of elementary particles involves chance and is undetermined. But these **standard views have been challenged; and there exist alternative interpretations of quantum theory that are deterministic.** These alternative interpretations are the minority view among physicists at present, and they are controversial. But **they cannot be ruled out. There is also the possibility that quantum physics will one day be superseded by a more comprehensive theory that is deterministic. So the question of determinism in the physical world is not finally settled.** But it is true that modern physics does give us more reason to believe that indeterminism and chance might have a more significant role to play in the physical universe than did the classical physics of Newton and Laplace. So there may be room for free will in nature, but this is not guaranteed.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 9.

“But there is a second problem. Suppose it were true that the behavior of elementary particles is not always determined? What would this have to do with *human behavior*? **Contemporary determinists often point out that, while quantum indeterminacy may be significant for elementary particles,** such as electrons and protons, **its indeterministic effects are** usually **insignificant in large physical systems, such as the human brain and body. Complex physical systems involving many particles and higher energies tend to be regular and predictable in their behavior, according to quantum physics itself.** Thus, modern determinists, such as Ted Honderich, argue that **we can continue to regard human behavior as determined “for all practical purposes” or “near-determined,”** whatever the truth may be about electrons and protons. And this is all that matters in free will debates.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 9.

“A third point complicates matters even further. **Suppose for the sake of argument that quantum jumps or other undetermined events in the brain or body *do* sometimes have large-scale undetermined effects on human behavior.** How would this help free will? Suppose a choice was the result of a quantum jump or other undetermined event in a person’s brain. Would this be a *free* or responsible choice? **Such undetermined effects in the brain or body would happen by chance and would be unpredictable and uncontrollable, like the sudden occurrence of a thought or the jerking of an arm that one could not predict or control. Such an effect would be quite the opposite of what we take free and responsible actions to be.** A similar objection was made against the ancient Epicurean philosophers, who had argued that atoms must “swerve” in chance ways if there was to be room in nature for free will. How, asked the critics, would chance swerves of the atoms help to give us free will? **It seems that undetermined events happening in the brain or body would occur spontaneously and would be more of a nuisance, or a curse, like epilepsy, than an enhancement of our freedom.** If free will is not compatible with determinism, it does not appear to be compatible with indeterminism either, since indeterminism would seem to be mere chance.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 9-10.

“To these considerations, we can add a fourth and final reason why indeterministic developments in modern physics have not disposes of worries about free will and determinism. **At the same time that determinism has been in retreat in the physical sciences in the past century, developments in sciences other than physics - in biology, biochemistry, and neuroscience, in psychiatry, psychology, and other social and behavioral sciences - have been moving in the opposite direction.** These other sciences have convinced many persons that more of their behavior than previously believed is determined by causes unknown to them and beyond their control.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 43.

“Now **Kant** in fact **believed that all events occurring in space and time were determined**. Writing in the eighteenth century, Kant was convinced that the mechanistic physics of Newton provided a true explanation of the physical world and that this physics was determinist. But **we do not have to assume that science is deterministic, as Kant did, to arrive at a conclusion like his - that free choices cannot be explained by science. For *view from sciences perspective within space and time*, if free choices were *not* determined, then they would appear to be merely random events, such as quantum jumps in atoms. Either way - determined or random - they would not be free choices.** So, had Kant know modern physics, he might have responded this way: “Free choices can no more be explained by an indeterministic (quantum) physics than they can by a deterministic (Newtonian) physics. I may have been wrong about the truth of Newton’s physics. But I was not wrong in concluding that free choices are beyond scientific explanation.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 29-30.

“**The indeterminacy specific to quantum mechanics offers no foothold: If my brain is a quantum computer, the brain of a fly is likely to be a quantum computer, too. Do flies enjoy free will? Quantum effects are unlikely to be biologically salient in any case.** They play a role in evolution because cosmic rays and other high-energy particles cause point mutations in DNA (and the behavior of such particles passing through the nucleus of a cell is governed by the laws of quantum mechanics). Evolution, therefore, seems unpredictable in principle. But **few neuroscientists view the brain as a quantum computer. And even if it were, quantum indeterminacy does nothing to make the concept of free will scientifically intelligible. In the face of any real independence from prior events, every thought and action would seem to merit the statement “I don’t know what came over me.” If determinism is true, the future is set - and this includes all our future states of mind and our subsequent behavior. And to the extent that the law of cause and effect is subject to indeterminism - quantum or otherwise - we can take no credit for what happens.** There is no combination of these truths that seems compatible with the popular notion of free will.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 27-28.

“In physical terms, **we know that every human action can be reduced to a series of impersonal events: Genes are transcribed, neurotransmitters bind to their receptors, muscle fibers contract, and John Doe pulls the trigger on his gun.** But for our commonsense notions of human agency and morality to hold, it seems that our actions cannot be merely lawful products of our biology, our conditioning, or anything else that might lead others to predict them. **Consequently, some scientists and philosophers hope that chance or quantum uncertainty can make room for free will.** For instance, the biologist Martin **Heisenberg has observed that certain processes in the brain,** such as the opening and closing of ion channels and the release of synaptic vesicles, **occur at random, and cannot therefore be determined by environmental stimuli. Thus, much of our behavior can be considered truly “self-generated”** - and therein, he imagines, lies a basis for human freedom. **But how do events of this kind justify the feeling of free will? “Self-generated” in this sense means only that certain events originate in the brain.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 27-28.

“**If my decision to have a second cup of coffee this morning was due to a random release of neurotransmitters, how could the indeterminacy of the** initiating **event count as** the **free** exercise of my **will? Chance occurrences are** by definition **ones for which I can claim no responsibility.** And **if** certain of **my behaviors are truly the result of chance, they should be surprising *even to me*.** How would neurological ambushes of this kind to make me free?”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 28-29.

“**Imagine what your life would be like if *all* your actions, intentions, beliefs, and desires were randomly “self-generated” in this way. You would scarcely seem to have a mind at all.** You would live as one blown about by an internal wind. **Actions, intentions, beliefs, and desires can exist only in a system that is significantly constrained by patterns of behavior and the laws of stimulus-response. The possibility of reasoning with other human beings** - or, indeed, of finding their behaviors and utterances comprehensible at all - **depends on the assumption that their thoughts and actions will obediently ride the rails of a shared reality.** This is true as well when attempting to understand one’s own behavior. In the limit, Heisenberg’s “self-generated” mental events would preclude the existence of any mind at all.”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 15.

“Of course **our actions occur at the level of the visibly large, not the invisibly small** - at the macroscopic level, not the microscopic. And might that not still leave some threat from determinism? Perhaps we do not know with any certainty how far indeterminism holds for such macroscopic events. **Even if there is some microscopic indeterminism, much variation in what happens at this microscopic level may make no difference to how we deliberately act. Minute variations in the positions of various tiny particles may make no difference to whether or not, say, I deliberately raise my hand.** Events at the macroscopic level might still be largely predetermined. **Many or all of our actions could still be fixed in advance by causes outside our control.** In which case, the causal predetermination of our actions could still remain a serious possibility - and so, if Incompatibilism is true, a real threat to our freedom.”

**Aff: Libet Experiments and Their Successors**

Stephen Cave, Ph.D Cambridge University, author, The Atlantic, published June 2016, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/06/theres-no-such-thing-as-free-will/480750/

“**Many scientists say that the American physiologist Benjamin Libet demonstrated in the 1980s that we have no free will.** It was already known that **electrical activity builds up in a person’s brain before she, for example, moves her hand; Libet showed that this buildup occurs before the person consciously makes a decision to move. The** conscious **experience of deciding to act, which we** usually **associate with free will, appears to be an add-on**, a post hoc reconstruction of events that occurs *after* the brain has already set the act in motion.”

Tom Chivers, journalist, the Daily Telegraph, published October 12, 2010 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/8058541/Neuroscience-free-will-and-determinism-Im-just-a-machine.html

“We're **in the Institute for Cognitive Neuroscience**, in Queen Square in London, the nerve centre – if you will – of British brain research. **Prof Haggard is demonstrating "transcranial magnetic stimulation", a technique that uses magnetic coils to affect one's brain, and then to control the body.** One of his research assistants, Christina Fuentes, is holding a loop-shaped paddle next to his head, moving it fractionally. "If we get it right, it might cause something." She presses a switch, and the coil activates with a click. Prof Haggard's hand twitches. "It's not me doing that," he assures me, "it's her." **The machinery can't force Prof Haggard to do anything really complicated** – "You can't make me sign my name," he says, almost ruefully – **but at one point, Christina is able to waggle his index finger slightly, like a schoolmaster. It's very fine control, a part of the brain specifically in command of a part of the body.** "There's quite a detailed map of the brain's wiring to the body that you can build," he tells me. I watch as Christina controls Prof Haggard's fingers like a marionette. **The mechanical nature of it is unsettling. A graph on a screen shows his muscle activity plotted by time; 20 milliseconds after she clicks the button, it depicts an elegant leap and drop, like a heartbeat on an ECG. That 20 milliseconds is how long it takes for the signal to travel down his nerves. "The conduction time would be less from my jaw muscles, more from my leg muscles," he says.** And as many of us will recognise, the process gets less effective as we age: "As I get older, the curve will move slowly to the right on the graph." **The idea that our bodies can be controlled by an outside force is a pretty astonishing one. "This is absolutely out of my control," insists Prof Haggard, as his muscles continue to move. "I'm not doing it, Christina is. I'm just a machine, and she is operating me."**”

Tom Chivers, journalist, the Daily Telegraph, published October 12, 2010 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/8058541/Neuroscience-free-will-and-determinism-Im-just-a-machine.html

“What does this mean in terms of free will? "We don't have free will, in the spiritual sense. **What you're seeing is the last output stage of a machine. There are lots of things that happen before this stage – plans, goals, learning – and those are the reasons we do more interesting things than just waggle fingers. But there's no ghost in the machine.**" The conclusions are shocking: **if we are part of the universe, and obey its laws, it's hard to see where free will comes into it.** What we think of as freedom, he says, is a product of complexity. "An amoeba has one input, one output. If you touch it with one chemical, it engulfs it; with another, it recoils.”

Andrew Griffin, journalist, The Independent, published April 30, 2016 http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/free-will-could-all-be-an-illusion-scientists-suggest-after-study-that-shows-choice-could-just-be-a7008181.html

“**The idea that human beings trick themselves into believing in free will was laid out** in a paper **by** psychologists Dan **Wegner and** Thalia **Wheatley nearly 20 years ago.** They proposed the feeling of wanting to do something was real, but there may be no connection between the feeling and actually doing it. **The new study builds on that work and says that the brain rewrites history when it makes its choices, changing our memories so that we believe we wanted to do something before it happened.** **In one** of the studies undertaken **by** Adam **Bear and** Paul **Bloom, of Yale** University, the **test subjects were shown five white circles on a computer monitor. They were told to choose one of the circles before one of them lit up red. The participants were then asked to describe whether they’d picked the correct circle, another one, or if they hadn’t had time to actually pick one.** Statistically, people should have picked the right circle about one out of every five times. But **they reported getting it right much more than 20 per cent of the time, going over 30 per cent if the circle turned red very quickly. The scientists suggest that the findings show that the test subjects’ minds were swapping around the order of events**, so that it appeared that they had chosen the right circle – even if they hadn’t actually had time to do so.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 8-9.

“The physiologist Benjamin **Libet famously used EEG to show that activity in the brain’s motor cortex can be detected some 300 milliseconds before a person** feels that he has **decided to move. Another lab extended this work using** functional magnetic resonance imaging **(fMRI): Subjects were asked to press one of two buttons while watching a “clock” composed of a random sequence of letters appearing on a screen. They reported which letter was visible at the moment they decided to press one button** or the other. **The experimenters found two brain regions that contained information about which button subjects would press a full *7 to 10 seconds* before the decision was consciously made.** More recently, direct recordings from the cortex showed **the activity of merely 256 neurons was sufficient to predict with 80 percent accuracy a person’s decision to move 700 milliseconds before he became aware of it.** These findings are difficult to reconcile with the sense that we are the conscious authors of our actions. One fact now seems indisputable: **Some moments before you are aware of what you will do next - at time in which you subjectively appear to have complete freedom to behave however you please - your brain has already determined what you will do.** You then become conscious of this “decision” and believe that you are in the process of making it.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 24-25.

“We know, in fact, that **we sometimes feel responsible for events over which we have no causal influence.** Given the right experimental manipulations, people can be led to believe that they consciously intended an action when they neither chose it nor had control over their movements. **In one experiment, subjects were asked to select pictures on a screen using a computer’s cursor. They tended to believe they had intentionally guided the cursor to a specific image, even when it was under the full control over another person, as long as they heard the name of the image just before the cursor stopped.** People who are susceptible to hypnosis can be given elaborate suggestions to perform odd tasks, and when asked why they have done these things, many will confabulate - giving reasons for their behavior that have nothing to do with its actual cause. **There is no question that our attribution of agency can be gravely in error. I am arguing that it always is.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 10-11.

“**Imagine a perfect neuroimaging device that would allow us to detect and interpret the subtlest changes in brain function.** You might spend an hour thinking and acting freely in the lab, only to discover that the scientists scanning your brain had been able to produce a complete record of what you would think and do some moments in advance of each event. For instance, exactly 10 minutes and 10 seconds into the experiment, you decided to pick up a magazine from a nearby table and begin reading, but the scanner log shows this mental state arising at 10 minutes and 6 seconds - and the experimenters even knew which magazine you would choose. You read for a while and then got bored and stopped; the experimenters knew you would stop a second before you did and could tell you which sentence would be the last you read. And so it would go with everything else. You tried to recall the name of the lead experimenter, but you forgot it; a minute later you remembered it as “Brent” when it was actually “Brett.” Next, you decided to go shopping for new shoes after you left the lab - but on second thought, you realized that your son would be getting out of school early that day, so you wouldn’t have enough time to go shopping after all. **Imagine what it would be like to see the time log of these mental events, alongside video of the associated behavior, demonstrating that the experimenters knew what you would think and do just before you did. You would, of course, continue to feel free in every present moment, but the fact that someone else could report what you were about to think and do would expose this feeling for what it is: an *illusion*. If the laws of nature do not strike most of us as incompatible with free will, that is because we have not imagined how human behavior would appear if all cause-and-effect relationships were understood.**”

Roy F. Baumeister, Professor of Psychology at Florida State University, “Free Will in Scientific Psychology,” Journal of the Association of Psychological Science, 2008, volume 3, issue 1, page 14

“A starting point for psychology is to identify what aspects of an action make people regard it as free versus unfree. To be sure, some factors can contribute to a mistaken sense of freedom in one’s own action. **Wegner** (2002) **showed that when the thought of an event immediately precedes its actual occurrence, people believe they have caused it, even if in reality they have not. For example, when participants who were moving a cursor around a computer screen along with someone else** (akin to having four hands on the pointer on a Ouija board) **heard the name of some image mentioned and then the cursor stopped there 2 s later, they believed that they had intentionally caused the cursor to stop, even though the stopping was actually programmed by the apparatus** (Wegner & Wheatley, 1999).”

**Aff: Lack of Agency**

Tom Chivers, journalist, the Daily Telegraph, published October 12, 2010 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/8058541/Neuroscience-free-will-and-determinism-Im-just-a-machine.html>

“**Maybe**, I suggest, **we've over-defined free will. Perhaps it doesn't exist in the mystical breaking-the-laws-of-the-universe way, but there is a sense in which this "me", this brain and body, responds to the world, reacts to information, tries to shape its environment; takes decisions.** Can we not pull free will back to something more defensible? He taps his fingers. "Yes, **interacting intelligently with your environment might be enough. The philosophical definition of free will uses the phrase 'could have done otherwise'.** I picked up the blue cup; could I have picked up the white one? Given the initial conditions, the world as it was, could I have acted differently? "**As a neuroscientist, you've got to be a determinist. There are physical laws, which the electrical and chemical events in the brain obey. Under identical circumstances, you couldn't have done otherwise; there's no 'I' which can say 'I want to do otherwise'.** It's richness of the action that you do make, acting smart rather than acting dumb, which is free will."”

Jerry Coyne, Professor of Ecology and Evolution, University of Chicago, USA Today, published January 1, 2012, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2012-01-01/free-will-science-religion/52317624/1

“Now there's no way to rewind the tape of our lives to see if we can really make different choices in completely identical circumstances. But two lines of **evidence suggest that** such **free will is an illusion.** The first is simple: **we are biological creatures, collections of molecules that must obey the laws of physics. All the success of science rests on the regularity of those laws, which determine the behavior of every molecule in the universe. Those molecules, of course, also make up your brain — the organ that does the "choosing." And the neurons and molecules in your brain are the product of both your genes and your environment, an environment including the other people we deal with.** Memories, for example, are nothing more than structural and chemical changes in your brain cells. **Everything that you think, say, or do, must come down to molecules and physics. True "free will," then, would require us to somehow step outside of our brain's structure and modify how it works. Science hasn't shown any way we can do this because "we" are simply constructs of our brain. We can't impose a nebulous "will" on the inputs to our brain that can affect its output of decisions and actions**, any more than a programmed computer can somehow reach inside itself and change its program.”

Jerry Coyne, Professor of Ecology and Evolution, University of Chicago, USA Today, published January 1, 2012, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2012-01-01/free-will-science-religion/52317624/1

“And **that's what neurobiology is telling us: Our brains are simply meat computers that, like real computers, are programmed by our genes and experiences to convert an array of inputs into a predetermined output.** Recent experiments involving brain scans show that when a subject "decides" to push a button on the left or right side of a computer, the choice can be predicted by brain activity at least *seven seconds* before the subject is consciously aware of having made it. (These studies use crude imaging techniques based on blood flow, and I suspect that future understanding of the brain will allow us to predict many of our decisions far earlier than seven seconds in advance.) "Decisions" made like that aren't conscious ones. And **if our choices are unconscious, with some determined well before the moment we think we've made them, then we don't have free will in any meaningful sense.**”

**Aff: Answer to Free Won't**

Jerry Coyne, Professor of Ecology and Evolution, University of Chicago, USA Today, published January 1, 2012, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2012-01-01/free-will-science-religion/52317624/1

“**Many scientists and philosophers now accept that our actions and thoughts are indeed determined by physical laws**, and in that sense we don't really choose freely, but philosophers have concocted ingenious rationalizations for why we nevertheless have free will of a sort. It's all based on redefining "free will" to mean something else. **Some philosophers claim that if we can change our actions in response to reason, then we've shown free will. But of course the words and deeds of other people are simply environmental influences that can affect our brain molecules.** That's how love begins.”

Jerry Coyne, Professor of Ecology and Evolution, University of Chicago, USA Today, published January 1, 2012, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2012-01-01/free-will-science-religion/52317624/1

“Other **philosophers argue that while we may not be able to choose our actions, we can choose to *veto* our actions** — in other words, we don't have free will but do have "free won't." **But from the standpoint of physics, instigating an action is no different from vetoing one, and in fact involves the same regions of the brain.**”

**Aff: Personal Consistency Does Not Create Freedom**

Jerry Coyne, Professor of Ecology and Evolution, University of Chicago, USA Today, published January 1, 2012, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2012-01-01/free-will-science-religion/52317624/1

“Finally, **some argue that we have free will if our actions are consistent with our personalities and past behaviors. But that says nothing about whether we "choose' our actions; only that our genetic and environmental makeup affects our actions in a consistent way.** As Sam Harris noted in his book *Free Will*, all the attempts to harmonize the determinism of physics with a freedom of choice down to the claim that "a puppet is free so long as he loves his strings."”

**Aff: Argument from Intoxication**

Stephen Cave, Ph.D Cambridge University, author, The Atlantic, published June 2016, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/06/theres-no-such-thing-as-free-will/480750/

“**We know that changes to brain chemistry can alter behavior—otherwise neither alcohol nor antipsychotics would have** their desired **effects. The same holds true for brain structure: Cases of** ordinary **adults becoming murderers or pedophiles after developing a brain tumor demonstrate how dependent we are on the physical properties of our gray stuff.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 68.

“**Hobbesian freedom**, remember, **is no more than unobstructed desire**, the only thing, according to Hobbes, that can remove our freedom is some obstacle to satisfying our desires. Our freedom can never be taken away by our desires themselves. **But common sense thinks of freedom quite differently. It sees freedom as something that can perfectly well be taken away from us, not merely by obstacles to our desires, but by our desires themselves. Consider drug addicts, for example. A drug addict is a person imprisoned**, not by obstacles to desire satisfaction such as locked cell doors or chains, but **by his own desires. A drug addict lacks the freedom not to take the drug to which he is addicted.** And he lacks this freedom not to take the drug because his own desire to take it, and not any external constraint, is forcing him to act. The addict is acting exactly as he desires to act. But **despite the lack of any obstacle to acting as he desires, he is still not acting freely. He is still not free to act otherwise.** And it is his very own decisions that have taken that freedom away. Our view of addiction shows that we naturally see being free - having a genuine control over how we act - as something quite different from merely doing what we want. **Which is why we can happily deny that sharks, which have desires too and are often able to carry them out, are in control of their actions as we are.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 69.

“**In the addict, we ordinarily think, freedom is lacking because the addict’s voluntary actions are not determined by his own free decisions - by his own free will.** The addict’s voluntary actions and any decisions that precede from them are instead being determined by his desires, by motivations outside his direct control. And **as far as ordinary intuition is concerned, desires are quite different things from decisions. Unlike decisions, desires are passive occurrences, things that come over us without being directly our own doing.** And that leaves desires as threats to freedom, and not as sources of it.”

**Aff: Determinism is Not Fatalism**

Stephen Cave, Ph.D Cambridge University, author, The Atlantic, published June 2016, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/06/theres-no-such-thing-as-free-will/480750/

“The big problem, in Harris’s view, is that people often confuse determinism with fatalism. **Determinism is the belief that our decisions are part of an unbreakable chain of cause and effect. Fatalism, on the other hand, is the belief that our decisions don’t really matter, because whatever is destined to happen will happen**—like Oedipus’s marriage to his mother, despite his efforts to avoid that fate. **When people hear there is no free will, they wrongly become fatalistic; they think their efforts will make no difference. But this is a mistake. People are not moving toward an inevitable destiny**; given a different stimulus (like a different idea about free will), they will behave differently and so have different lives. **If people better understood these fine distinctions**, Harris believes, **the consequences of losing faith in free will would be much less negative** than Vohs’s and Baumeister’s experiments suggest.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 34.

“And **the fact that our choices depend on prior causes does not mean that they don’t matter. If I had decided not to write this book, it wouldn’t have written itself. My choice** to write it **was unquestionably the primary cause of its coming into being.** Decisions, intentions, efforts, goals, willpower, etc., are causal states of the brain, leading to specific behaviors, and behaviors lead to outcomes in the world. **Human choice**, therefore, **is as important as fanciers of free will believe. But the next choice you make will come out of the darkness of prior causes that you, the conscious witness of your experience, did not bring into being.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 33-34.

“As Dan Dennett and many others have pointed out, **people generally confuse determinism with fatalism. This gives rise to questions like “If everything is determined, why should I do anything? Why not just sit back and see what happens?” This is pure confusion. To sit back** and see what happens **is itself a choice that will produce its own consequences.** It is also extremely difficult to do: Just try staying in bed all day waiting for something to happen; you will find yourself assailed by the impulse to get up and do something, which will require increasingly heroic efforts to resist.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 39.

“**Choices, efforts, intentions and reasoning influence our behavior** - but they are themselves part of a chain of causes that precede conscious awareness and over which we exert no ultimate control. **My choices matter - and there are paths toward making wiser ones - but I cannot choose what I choose. And if it ever appears that I do - for instance, after going back and forth between two options - I do not *choose* to choose what I choose. There is a regress here that always ends in darkness.** I must take a first step, or a last one, for reasons that are bound to remain inscrutable.”

**Aff: The Randomness Objection to Indeterminism**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 37. Emphasis Original.

“Indeed, **another** frequently heard **objection to indeterminist free will is precisely that undetermined free choices must *always* amount to mere *random* choices, like flipping a coin** or spinning a wheel to select from among a set of alternatives. Perhaps there is a role for random choices in our lives - for sometimes settling choices by a coin flip or spinning a wheel - when we are indifferent to the outcomes. (Which movie should I see tonight when I like both available options?) But **suppose that all our free and responsible choices - including momentous ones, like whether to act heroically or treacherously, to lie to a friend, or to marry one person rather than another - had to be settled by random selection** in this way. **Such a consequence, according to most philosophers, would be a reduction to absurdity** of the view that free will and responsibility require indeterminism.”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 16.

“There is a deeper worry about freedom. **Incompatibilism says that we cannot be free if determinism is true. But**, as we are now about to see, **it seems that we also cannot be free if determinism is false** - and that this must be true on any view, whether we are incompatibilists or not. In which case if Incompatibilism is true we cannot be free at all. **Freedom is impossible.** **Suppose**, as incompatibilist freedom would require, **that our actions are not determined in advance. Then** that seems to mean that **how we act is a matter of simple chance. For there are but these two alternatives. Either an action is causally determined. Or, to the extent that it is causally undetermined, its occurrence depends on chance.** But chance alone does not constitute freedom. One its own chance comes to nothing more than randomness. And one thing does seem to be clear. **Randomness, the operation of mere chance, clearly excludes control.** For example, if we are to count as exercising control over a process, that process cannot simply be developing at random. **If a process is just random, then it must be taking place outside our control. Randomness is at least as much a threat to freedom - to our exercising control over how we act - as determinism might be.** If our actions are no more than chance occurrences, then how can our actions involve an exercise of control on our part? The worry goes deeper. It is not simply that undetermined actions look no better than random. **It seems that if what we think of as our actions were undetermined, they could not really be *actions* at all - they could be no more than mere blind motions.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 17.

“**To the degree that our actions are undetermined, so they will fail to be influenced by our prior desires**, and the less how we move about and do things will depend on what beforehand we desire or want. **And that means that these so-called actions will look less like genuine actions - and more like blind motions or reflexes. And how can blind motions or reflexes be free?** How can blind motions or reflexes be genuine exercises of our control?”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 81.

“**One problem facing the libertarian has to do with the threat of randomness.** By *randomness* I mean here the operation of mere chance. And randomness so understood, most people suppose, is quite opposed to freedom. If an event or process is developing at random or purely by chance, we cannot be exercising control over how it is developing. But - the critics allege - **freedom conceived in libertarian terms threatens to come to nothing more than chance. For there are really only two alternatives. Either an action must be causally determined in advance - in which case the libertarian will deny that it is really free. Or to the extent that the action is causally undetermined, its occurrence must depend on simple chance.** By banishing causal predetermination libertarianism has tried to make room  for what it regards as genuine freedom. But **in the absence of causal predetermination all we really find is chance - which does not amount to genuine freedom at all.** I shall call this problem that libertarians face the *randomness problem.*”

**Aff: The Luck Objection to Indeterminism**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 37-38.

“**Finally, consider the** following objection, which has been suggested by a number of critics of indeterminist free choice. We may call it the **“Luck Objection.” Indeterminism,** as noted earlier, **implies different possible futures, given exactly the same past. Suppose then that two agents had exactly the same past up to a point at which they were faced with a choice between distorting the truth for selfish gain or telling the truth at great personal cost. One agent lies and the other tells the truth.** Bruce **Waller summarizes this objection as follows: if the pasts of these two agents “are really identical” in every way up to the moment of choice, “and the difference in their acts results from chance,” would there “be any grounds for distinguishing between [them], for saying that one person deserves censure for a selfish decision and the other deserves praise?”**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 38.

“Another critic, Alfred **Mele, poses the same problem in terms of a single agent in different possible worlds. Suppose that in the actual world, John fails to** resist the temptation to do what he thinks he should not do, **arrive on time at a meeting. If John could have done otherwise given the same past, then we could imagine that his counterpart, John\*, in an alternate possible world** (which is exactly the same as the actual world up to the moment of choice) resists the temptation and **arrives on time. Mele then argues that “if there is nothing about the agents’ powers, capacities, states of mind, moral character and the like that explains this difference in outcome, … the difference is just a matter of luck.”** It would seem that John\* got lucky in his attempt to overcome temptation, while John did not. **Would it be fair or just to reward the one and punish the other for what appears to be ultimately the luck of the draw?**”

**Aff: Societal Influences Determine Your Character**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 3-4.

“The citizens in Skinner’s *Walden Two* have it better than the workers in *Brave New World*. Yet the desires and purposes of those who live in Walden Two are also covertly controlled, in this case by behavioral engineers. Citizens of Walden Two live collectively in what can be described as a rural commune; and because they share the duties of farming and raising children, they have plenty of leisure. They pursue arts, sciences, and crafts, engage in musical performances, and enjoy what appears to be a pleasant existence. Indeed, the leading figure of the novel, a fellow named Frazier, who founded Walden Two, forthrightly says that, in his community, persons can do whatever they want or choose because they have been behaviorally conditioned since childhood to want and choose only what they can have and do. **Frazier then adds** provocatively **that,** in his view, **Walden Two “is the freest place on earth,” since people there can choose and do anything they want. And in a sense he is right. There is no need for *coercion* in Walden Two or for *punishment*** (there are no prisons). **No one has to be forced to do anything against his or her will. No one harasses the citizens, and no one has to harass them. Yet we might wonder whether Walden Two *is* the freest place on earth. Is all this *surface* freedom in Walden Two not brought about at the expense of a *deeper* freedom of the will?** The citizens of Walden Two can indeed do anything they want or will to do, but **they do not have the ultimate say about what it is that they want or will. Such an objection is in fact made by** one of Frazier’s critics in the novel, a philosopher named **Castle** who visits Walden Two. But **Frazier is untroubled by Castle’s criticism. He admits that this supposedly deeper freedom of the will does not exist in Walden Two but argues that it is no real loss.** Echoing the novel’s author, B.F. Skinner (who was a foremost defender of behaviorism in psychology), **Frazier thinks this so-called freedom of the will - the freedom that Castle and other philosophers have trumpeted for centuries - is an illusion. We do not want and cannot have such a freedom anyway, he says, inside *or* outside Walden Two. In our ordinary lives, we are just as much the products of upbringing and social conditioning as the citizens of Walden Two, though we may delude ourselves into thinking otherwise. We may think we are the creators or originators of our own wills only because we are unaware of most of the genetic, psychological, and social factors that influence us.** Moreover, the idea that we could be ultimate or “original” creators of our own wills - that we could somehow be “causes of ourselves” - is an impossible ideal, according to Frazier. If we trace the psychological springs of action back to their origins - back to childhood, say - we find that we were less free then, not more.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 40-41.

“Take a moment to think about the context in which your next decision will occur: **You did not pick your parents or the time and place of your birth. You didn’t choose your gender or most of your life experiences. You had no control whatsoever over your genome or the development of your brain. And now your brain is making choices on the basis of preferences and beliefs that have been hammered into it over a lifetime - by your genes, your physical development since you were conceived, and the interactions you have had with other people, events, and ideas.** Where is the freedom in this? Yes you are free to do what you want even now. But where did your desires come from?”

**Aff: van Iwagen’s Consequence Argument**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 23-24.

“The argument is called the Consequence Argument, and it is stated informally as follows by one of its proponents, Peter van Inwagen: “**If determinism is true, then our acts are the consequences of the laws of nature and the events in the remote past. But it is not up to us what went on before we were born; and neither is it up to us what the laws of nature are. Therefore the consequences of these things (including our own acts) are not up to us.”** To say it is not “up to us” what “went on before we were born,” or “what the laws of nature are,” is to say that there is nothing we can now do to change the past or alter the laws of nature (such things are beyond our control). This gives us two premises of the Consequence Argument. (1) There is nothing we can now do to change the past. (2) There is nothing we can now do to change the laws of nature. Putting these two premises together, we get (3) There is nothing we can now do to change the past and the laws of nature. But if determinism is true, then (4) Our present actions are the necessary consequences of the past and the laws of nature. (Or, equivalently, it is necessary that, given the past and the laws of nature, our present actions occur.) So if determinism is true, it seems that (5) **There is nothing we can now do to change the fact that our present actions are the necessary consequences of the past and the laws of nature. But if there is nothing we can now do to change the past and the laws of nature** (which is step 3) ***and* nothing we can now do to change the fact that our present actions are the necessary consequences of the past and the laws of nature** (step 5), it would seem to follow that, if determinism is true (step 4), **then** (6) **There is nothing we can now do to change the fact that our present actions occur. In other words, we *cannot now do otherwise* than we actually do.** Since this argument can be applied to any agents and actions at any times, we can infer from it that *if determinism is true, no one can ever do otherwise*; and if free will requires the power to do otherwise, then no one has free will.”

**Aff: Rejecting the Hypothetical “Can”**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 29-30.

“What are the “serious objections” to hypothetical analyses of “can” and “could have done otherwise” referred to in this passage? **The objection that many philosophers regard as the most serious goes like this: hypothetical analyses of “can” and “could have done otherwise” sometimes (wrongly) tell us that agents can do otherwise, or could have done otherwise, in cases where it’s clear that the agents could *not* have done otherwise. So the hypothetical analyses must be wrong.** Here is an example of Michael McKenna’s illustrating this objection. **Suppose that Danielle has been scarred by a terrible childhood accident involving a blond Labrador retriever. The accident rendered her “psychologically incapable of wanting to touch a blond haired dog.** **Imagine** that, on her sixteenth birthday, unaware of her condition, **her father brings her two puppies to choose between, one being a blond haired Lab, the other a black haired Lab. He tells Danielle just to pick up whichever of the two she pleases and that he will return the other puppy to the pet store. Danielle, happily, and unencumbered, does what she wants and picks up the black Lab. Was Danielle free to *do otherwise*** (*could* she have done otherwise) than pick up the black Lab? **It seems not,** McKenna says. **Given her traumatic childhood experience, she cannot even form a want to touch a blond-haired Lab, hence she could not pick up one. But notice the compatibilist hypothetical analysis of “she could have done otherwise” would be true in this case:** *If* Danielle *did* want to pick up the blond-haired Lab, then she would have done so. **So the hypothetical analysis gives us the wrong answer in this case and in many other similar cases.** It tells us Danielle could have done otherwise (because she would have, if she wanted), when in fact she could *not* have done otherwise (because she could not have *wanted* to do otherwise).”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 30.

“**The problem with the hypothetical analysis brought out by this example is** the following: **to truly capture the meaning of “She *could* have done otherwise,” it is not good enough to simply say “She *would* have done otherwise, *if* she had wanted to”; one must add “*and* she *could also have wanted* to do otherwise.” But then the hypothetical analysis merely pushes back the question of whether the agent could have *wanted* or *chosen* (or *willed*) to do otherwise.** And answering this further question requires another “could” statement (“She could have wanted or chosen to do otherwise”) which in turn requires another hypothetical analysis: “She would have wanted or chosen to do otherwise, *if* she had *wanted or chosen to want or choose* otherwise.” And the same question would arise about this further hypothetical statement, requiring yet another “could” statement to be analyzed, and so on indefinitely. **The result is an infinite regress that would never allow one to eliminate the word “could” and would never allow one to definitively answer the original question of whether the agent could have done otherwise - which shows that something has gone wrong with the hypothetical analysis.** For reasons such as this, defenders of the Consequence Argument think the hypothetical analysis of “could have done otherwise” favored by classical compatibilists is flawed. Such an analysis would undermine the Consequence Argument, if it were correct. But there are reasons to think it is not correct.”

**Aff: Answers to Indeterminist (Libertarian) Free Will**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 35.

“1. First, one often hears **critics of libertarianism argue that events that are undetermined happen merely by chance and are not** under the *control* of anything, hence are not under the control of the agent. **It is not “up to” agents whether undetermined events occur or not.** But if events are not under the control of an agent, **they cannot be free and responsible actions.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 35.

“2. A related argument was suggested in chapter 1. **Suppose a choice was the result of a quantum jump or other undetermined event in a person’s brain. Would this amount to a free and responsible choice? Such undetermined effects in the brain or body would be unpredictable and impulsive** - like the sudden occurrence of a thought or the spasmodic jerking of an arm that one could not have predicted or influenced - **quite the opposite of what we take free and responsible actions to be.** It seems that **undetermined events happening in the brain or the body would** occur *spontaneously* and would **be more likely to *undermine* our freedom rather than to *enhance* our freedom.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 35.

“3. **Nor would it help to suppose that the indeterminism or chance came *between* our choices and our actions. Imagine that you have chosen to make a delicate cut in a fine piece of cloth, but because of an undetermined twitching in your arm, you make the wrong cut. In this case, the undetermined twitching in your arm was no enhancement of your freedom, but a hindrance or obstacle to your carrying out your intended purpose.** Critics of libertarian freedom often contend that this is what indeterminism would always be - a *hindrance* or *impediment* to freedom. It would get in the way, diminishing rather than enhancing *control* and *responsibility* for what happens. **Note that twitching of your arm is actually a *constraint* on your freedom** in the classical compatibilist sense, **since it *prevents* you from doing what you *want* to do, that is, make the delicate cut properly.** So, far from giving us more freedom, it seems that indeterminism would turn out to be another kind of impediment limiting our freedom.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 35.

“4. **Even more absurd consequences follow if we suppose that indeterminism or chance is involved in the initiation of everyday actions.** A nineteenth-century critic of undetermined free action, Arthur **Schopenhauer, imagined the case of a man who suddenly found his legs start to move *by chance*, carrying across the room against his wishes. Is this what libertarians have in mind**, Schopenhauer asked, **when they insist that free actions must be undetermined?** Such caricatures are popular among critics of indeterminist freedom for obvious reasons: **undetermined or chance-initiated actions would represent the opposite of free and responsible actions.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 35-36.

“5. Going a little deeper, **critics of libertarian freedom also note that, if choices are actions are undetermined, they may occur otherwise, *given the exactly same past and laws of nature*.** This follows, as we saw, from indeterminism, which implies different possible futures, given the same past. But **such a requirement has troubling consequences regarding free choices**, as noted in chapter 2. Here is a further example illustrating the problem. **Suppose Mike, who is deliberating about whether to vacation in Hawaii or Colorado, gradually comes to favor and choose Hawaii. If Mike’s choice, when he finally makes it, was undetermined, as libertarians require, then he might have chosen** otherwise (chosen **to visit Colorado instead), given exactly the same deliberation up to the moment of choice** that in fact led him to favor and choose Hawaii (the same thoughts, reasoning, beliefs, desires, and so on). As noted in our discussion of Molly’s choosing a career, it is difficult to make sense of this. Mike’s **choosing Colorado in such circumstances** (in which he had come to favor Hawaii) **would seem irrational and inexplicable, capricious and arbitrary.** If the choice of Hawaii came about by virtue of undetermined events in Mike’s brain, **this would not be an occasion for rejoicing in his freedom, but for consulting a neurologist** about the waywardness of his neural processes.”

**Aff: Answers to Leibniz on Deliberation as Prior Constraint**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 36.

“**Leibniz’s claim** that reasons may “incline without necessitating” **is an important one. But** unfortunately, **it will not solve the problem** about Mike’s choice described in objection 5. For **it is precisely *because* Mike’s prior reasons and motives** (his beliefs and desires about beaches and surfing) **inclined him more strongly toward the choice of Hawaii that his choosing of Colorado by chance at the end of the same deliberation would be arbitrary, irrational, and inexplicable.** Similarly, if his reasons had inclined him more strongly toward Colorado, then choosing Hawaii by chance at the end of the same deliberation would have been irrational and inexplicable.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 36-37.

“What **if Mike’s prior reasons and motives had not inclined him more strongly to *either* alternative**? **Then, if the choice were undetermined**, matters would be even worse. For **the choice would** then **be doubly arbitrary** - arbitrary either way he might choose. **Medieval philosophers**, who discussed free will, **had a name for the condition** of an agent who has no better reasons for choosing one option rather than the other. They called it **the “liberty of indifference.”** **You have probably heard the well-known illustration of the liberty of indifference** involving Burdian’s ass - **the donkey that starved between two equidistant bales of hay because it had no reason to choose one over the other.** Jean Burdian was a medieval French philosopher to whom this famous example of the donkey is often wrongly attributed. The original example goes back to the medieval Arabic philosopher Al-Ghazzali, who imagined a camel starving between two groves of date trees. These examples of the liberty of indifference were often used later by philosophers, such as Hume and Schopenhauer, the ridicule libertarian or indeterminist free will. (Al-Ghazzali had used his example for a similar purpose.) **Of course, a human, who was not an ass, would undoubtedly not starve to death in these conditions. It would be better to flip a coin and choose one option arbitrarily or by chance than to go without food altogether. But such a solution to the liberty of indifference - choosing by a coin flip - still amounts to choosing arbitrarily or by chance. Is that what indeterminist freedom amounts to?**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 87-88.

“However, **this distinction between determining and probabilistic causes does not really help. The conflict between action and libertarian freedom is not so easily resolved.** And it is fairly clear why. True, libertarian freedom is strictly consistent with actions having prior unfree causes, provided the influence of these causes is sufficiently weak, so that these causes merely influence how we act without actually determining what we do. But **this causal influence, even if it does not actually remove libertarian freedom, is still a threat to it. Enough of an increase in this causal influence - the influence that is supposed to be exactly what makes an action our own deliberate doing - and you will remove libertarian freedom.** This means that **if we add more of what makes action genuine action - if we increase the causal influence of prior desires - then freedom is ended. And this is surely intolerable.** It is intolerable that what actually makes action action, and so constitutes it as the very medium for the exercise of freedom, should at the same time be freedom-threatening. **It is intolerable that what gives action its very identity should have to be limited if freedom is to be at all possible. Freedom is something that we exercise through how we act. It therefore cannot be something that is threatened by the very nature of action.**”

**Aff: Souls Don’t Solve**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 41.

“To see why, ask the following question: **if a free choice** (such as Molly’s choice to join the law firm in Dallas or Mike’s to vacation in Hawaii or John’s to arrive late) **is not determined by the prior *physical* activity of the agent’s brain, is the choice determined by the prior *mental* activity of the agent’s mind or soul? Dualists** who are libertarians about free will **must answer that free choices in a libertarian sense cannot be determined by prior activity of a disembodied mind or soul any more than free choices can be determined by prior physical activity of the body.** For, determinism either way would rule out the possibility of doing otherwise, hence would rule out libertarian free will. **If** God had so made us that **the activities and effects of our *minds* were also determined, we would be no better off *regarding free will* just because our minds were separate from our bodies.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 41-42.

“But if determinism by the mind is no more acceptable than determinism by the body, then dualists who want to defend libertarian free will cannot merely say that Molly (or Mike or John) could have chosen or chosen otherwise, given all the same past *physical* circumstances. **Dualists must also say that free agents could have chosen or chosen otherwise, given all the same past physical *and mental* circumstances. If dualists do *not* say this, all the original problems about the Indeterminist Condition will come back to haunt them.** **If Molly might have chosen the law firm in Austin, given all the same prior thoughts, reasoning, and other mental (as well as physical) circumstances that in fact led her to favor the Dallas firm, then her choice to join the Austin firm would have been just as irrational, inexplicable, and arbitrary if it issued from a disembodied mind or soul as it would if it had issued from an embodied person.** If John and John\* might have chosen differently, given exactly the same mental (and physical) histories up to the moment when they did choose, the Mele’s question comes back to haunt us: “What can account for the difference in their choices - why John failed to overcome the temptation and John\* did not - except luck?””

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 42.

“For reasons such as these, **placing the agent’s thoughts and deliberations in a disembodied mind or soul does not solve the problems about and undetermined free will. Dualism simply transfers these problems from another level**, from the physical sphere to the mental. That is why a critic of libertarianism, such as Simon Blackburn, can say: “The dualist approach to free will makes a fundamental philosophical mistake. **It sees the problem and tries to solve it by throwing another kind of “thing” into the arena** [the controlling soul]. **But it forgets to ask how the new “thing” escapes the problems that beset ordinary things**. … If we cannot understand how human beings are free [in a libertarian sense], we cannot understand how [a disembodied mind] can be free” either.. Of course, Blackburn’s comment does not mean that dualism is necessarily false. But it does mean that appealing to a mind or soul separate from the body will not by itself solve the problem of free will, as some people have believed.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 11-12.

“It is important to recognize that **the case** I am building **against free will does not depend on philosophical materialism (the assumption that reality is, at bottom, purely physical).** There is no question that (most, if not all) mental states are the product of physical events. The brain is a physical system, entirely beholden to the laws of nature - and there is every reason to believe that changes in its functional state and material structure entirely dictate our thoughts and actions. But **even if the human mind were made of soul-stuff, nothing** about my argument **would change. The unconscious operations of a soul would grant you no more freedom that the unconscious physiology of your brain.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 12.

“**If you don’t know what your soul is going to do next, you are not in control.** This is obviously true in all cases where a person wishes he could feel or behave differently than he does: Think of the millions of committed Christians whose souls happen to be gay, prone to obesity, or bored by prayer. However, **free will is no more evident when a person does exactly what, in retrospect, he wishes he had done. The soul that allows you to stay on your diet is just as mysterious as the one that tempts you to eat cherry pie for breakfast.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 40.

“**This belief in a total disembodiment or immateriality of our decision-making capacity is hard for us to share.** We now have a knowledge of the brain not available in the Middle Ages. We can see, if only in outline, how the brain might be an organ of thought and reasoning, an organ that is material or physical. **We see that the brain contains vast neural networks conveying a plethora of electric chargers or signals, changes in the distribution of which appear to be correlated with thought and mentality.** We are inclined, therefore, to think that, like any other mental capacity, **our decision-making capacity must somehow be embodied in the brain.**”

**Aff: Argument from the Origin of Intentions**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 64.

“**It is generally argued that our experience of free will presents a compelling mystery: On the one hand, we can’t make sense of it in scientific terms; on the other, we *feel* that we are the authors of our own thoughts and actions.** However, I think that this mystery is itself a symptom of our confusion. **It is not that free will is simply an illusion - our experience is not merely delivering a distorted view of reality. Rather, we are mistaken about our experience. Not only are we not as free as we think we are - we do not feel as free as we think we do.** Our sense of our own freedom results from our not paying close attention to what it is like to be us. **The moment we pay attention, it is possible to see that free will is nowhere to be found, and our experience is perfectly compatible with this truth. Thoughts and intentions simply arise in the mind.** What else could they do? The truth about us is stranger than many suppose: ***The illusion of free will is itself an illusion.***”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 13.

“**Consider what it would take to actually have free will. You would need to be aware of all of the factors that determine your** thoughts and **actions, and you would need to have complete control over those factors.** But there is a paradox here that vitiates the very notion of freedom - for **what would influence the influences? More influences? None of these adventitious mental states are the real you. You are not controlling the storm**, and you are not lost in it. **You *are* the storm.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 64.

“The problem is not merely that **free will makes no sense objectively** (i.e. when our thoughts and actions are viewed from a third person point of view); **it makes no sense subjectively either.** It is quite possible to notice this through introspection. In fact, I will now perform an experiment in free will for all to see: **I will write anything I want for the rest of this book.** Whatever I write will, of course, be something I choose to write. **No one is compelling me to do this.** No one has assigned me a topic or demanded that I use certain words. **I can be ungrammatical if I pleased. And if I want to put a rabbit in this sentence, I am free to do so. But paying attention to my stream of consciousness reveals that this notion of freedom does not reach very deep. Where did this rabbit come from? Why didn’t I put an elephant in that sentence?** I do not know. **I am free to change “rabbit” to “elephant,” of course. But if I did this, how could I explain it? It is impossible for me to know the cause of either choice.** Either is compatible with my being compelled by the laws of nature or buffeted by the winds of chance; but neither looks, or feels, like freedom. Rabbit or elephant? **Am I free to decide that “elephant” is the better word *when I just do not feel that it is the better word*? Am I free to change my mind? Of course not. It can only change *me.***”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 5-6.

“Free will is an illusion. Our wills are simply not of our own making. **Thoughts and intentions emerge from background causes of which we are unaware and over which we exert no conscious control.** We do not have the freedom we think we have. **Free will is actually more than an illusion** (or less), **in that it cannot be made conceptually coherent.** Either our wills are determined by prior causes and we are not responsible for them, or they are the product of chance and we are not responsible for them. If a man’s choice to shoot the president is determined by a certain pattern of neural activity, which is in turn the product of prior causes - perhaps an unfortunate coincidence of bad genes, an unhappy childhood, lost sleep, and cosmic-ray bombardment - what can it possibly mean to say that his will is “free”? **No one has ever described a way in which mental and physical processes could arise that would attest to the existence of such freedom.** Most illusions are made of sterner stuff than this.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 6.

“But the deeper truth is that **free will doesn’t even correspond to any *subjective* fact about us** - and introspection soon proves as hostile to the idea as the laws of physics are. **Seeming acts of volition merely arise spontaneously** (whether caused, uncaused, or probabilistically inclined, it makes no difference) **and cannot be traced to a point of origin in our conscious minds.** A moment or two of serious self-scrutiny, and you might observe that **you no more decide the next thought you think than the next thought I write.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 7.

“**We are conscious of only a tiny fraction of the information that our brains process in each moment. Although we continually notice changes in our experience** - in thought, mood, perception, behavior, etc. - **we are** utterly **unaware of the neurophysiological events that produce them.** In fact, we can be very poor witnesses to experience itself. **By merely glancing at your face or listening to your tone of voice, others are often more aware of your state of mind and motivations than you are.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 25-26.

“**How can we be “free” as conscious agent if everything that we consciously intend is caused by events in our brain that we *do not* intend and of which we are entirely unaware?** We can’t. **To say** that “my brain” decided to think or act in a particular way, whether consciously or not, and **that this is the basis for my freedom, is to ignoring the very source of our belief in free will: the feeling of *conscious* agency.** People *feel* that they are the authors of their thoughts and actions, and this is the only reason why there seems to be a problem of free will worth talking about.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 24.

“**People** feel (or **presume) an authorship of their thoughts and actions that is illusory. If we were to detect their conscious choices on a brain scanner seconds before they were aware of them, they would be rightly astonished** - because this would directly challenge their status as conscious agents in control of their inner lives. **We know that we could perform such an experiment**, at least in principle, and if we turned the machine correctly, subjects would feel that we were reading their minds (or controlling them).”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 61.

“And Hobbes was surely right on one point at least. **Decisions to act are not voluntary. They are not directly subject to the will. They cannot be taken just on the basis of prior decisions or desires so to decide. For example, I cannot decide that in precisely five minutes’ time I shall then take a decision to raise my hand** - and sensibly expect that in five minutes, at the appointed time, I shall take the decision decided upon, and take it voluntarily, just on the basis of my earlier decision that I shall take it.”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 61-62.

“And this is connected with another feature of decisions that also distinguishes them from what we really can do voluntarily - from what we really can do on the basis of a prior decision or desire to do it. **Just as decisions are not directly subject to the will, so they are not directly subject to command. I cannot sensibly command you to take a particular decision, such as a decision to raise your hand, and then expect you to take the decision commanded exactly as commanded and simply in order to obey my command.** Suppose, for example, I commanded you thus: ‘In five minutes’ time take a decision to raise your hand tomorrow - and then, after a further minute, abandon that decision, and instead decide not to raise your hand tomorrow. Then, after yet a further minute, abandon that decision too. **You would surely react to my command with some bewilderment. You would be quite incapable of carrying it out. Decisions are not things that can be taken simply in order to obey commands that they be taken.** The fact that decisions cannot sensibly be commanded is obviously connected with the fact that decisions cannot be taken voluntarily. For if decisions could be taken voluntarily, on the basis of a prior decision to take them, then you could perfectly well take decisions simply in order to obey my decision commands. You need only to decide to take whatever decisions I commanded you to take, and then obeying my decision commands would be easy. Once I commanded you to take a particular decision, such as a decision to raise your hand, you would simply take that decision voluntarily, on the basis of a decision to take it, and as a means to fulfilling my command. It is very clear why decision cannot be sensibly commanded. If I want to get you to decide to raise your hand, I cannot just command you ‘Decide to raise your hand!’ **To get you to decide to raise your hand, i have to somehow convince you that acting as decided, raising your hand, would be a good idea. I have to give you some reason to raise your hand. I have somehow to show or make it clear to you that raising your hand would have benefits.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 63.

“So Hobbes was quite right about the non-voluntariness of decisions. **We cannot take a particular decision to act at will, just because we have decided to take it.** We should not be distracted from appreciating this by the fact that **there is something else connected with decision-making that we can do voluntarily. This is not taking a particular decision to act, but something that is very easily confused with it but which is, nevertheless, importantly different - namely making up our mind one way or the other what to do.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 64.

“Combined with Hobbes’s new definition of intentional action as what we do voluntarily, on the basis of a decision or desire to do it, **the non-voluntariness of decision-making has an obvious consequence. That I decide to do this rather than that, to raise my hand rather than lower it, can no longer be my own deliberate or intentional doing**. Since it is non-voluntary, that I decide to do this rather than that is going to be something that happens to me, rather than anything I intentionally do. **Because they are non-voluntary, decisions cannot themselves be deliberate actions.** So what the will-based theory takes to be the primary form of intentional action - the taking of a decision to do this rather than that - Hobbes denies to be an action at all. And if not an action, if not something done deliberately or intentionally, deciding to do this rather than that cannot be something we do freely either. **There can be no longer any freedom of will. It can no longer be up to us which actions we decide to perform.**”

Nick Herbert, author, Elemental Mind: Consciousness and the New Physics, Penguin, 1993, p. 36-37.

“9: Free Will. **Associated with the sense of self and personality is the notion of a “free will.” Although much of my behavior is unconscious, automatic, or reflexive, I have the feeling that some of my activity is not forced on me but results from free choices made by my “self.”** Concordant with this belief that the self is in charge of its behavior, most legal systems hold a person responsible for his acts, except in situations where he can prove that he acted under irresistible compulsion. The philosopher **Spinoza**, on the other hand, **dismissed free will as an illusion resulting from our ignorance of the true causes of our actions. A good theory of consciousness should be able to resolve the free will question by revealing the ultimate causes of our willed acts: do these causes reside solely in matter or do they originate in an immaterial soul?** What does it really mean for an action to have psychological rather than material causes? **Do willful acts violate the laws of physics?**”

**Aff: Answers to Higher vs Lower Level Brain Systems**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 9.

“**The distinction between “higher” and “lower” systems in the brain offers no relief: I, as the conscious witness of my experience, no more initiate events in my prefrontal cortex than I cause my heart to beat.** There will always be some delay between the first neurophysiological events that kindle my next conscious thought and the thought itself. And even if there weren’t - even if all mental states were truly coincident with their underlying brain states - **I cannot decide what I will next think or intend until a thought or intention arises. What will my next mental state be? I do not know - it just happens. Where is the freedom in that?**”

**Aff: Distinction Between Voluntary and Involuntary Irrelevant**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 13.

“**There is a distinction between voluntary and involuntary actions**, of course, **but it does nothing to support the common idea of free will** (nor does it depend upon it). A voluntary action is accompanied by the felt intention to carry it out, whereas an involuntary action isn’t. Needless to say, **this difference is reflected at the level of the brain.** And what a person consciously intends to do says a lot about him. It makes sense to treat a man who enjoys murdering children differently from one who accidentally hit and killed a child with his care - because the conscious intentions of the former give us a lot of information about how he is likely to behave in the future. But **where intentions themselves come from, and what determines their character in every instance, remains perfectly mysterious in subjective terms. Our sense of free will results from a failure to appreciate this: We do not know what we intend to do until the intention itself arises.** To understand this is to realize that we are not the authors of our thoughts and actions in the way that people generally suppose.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 13.

“Of course, this insight does not make social and political freedom any less important. **The freedom to do what one intends, and not to do otherwise, is no less valuable than it ever was. Having a gun to your head is still a problem worth rectifying, wherever intentions come from. But the idea that we, as conscious beings, are deeply responsible for the character of our mental lives** and subsequent behavior **is simply impossible** to map onto reality.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 31-32.

“**Certain states of consciousness seem to arise automatically, beyond the sphere of our intentions.** Others seem self-generated, deliberative, and subject to our will. **When I hear the sound of a leaf blower outside my window, it merely impinges upon my consciousness:** I haven’t brought it into being, and I cannot stop it at will. I can try to put the sound out of my mind by focusing on something else - my writing, for instance - and this act of directing attention feels different from merely hearing a sound. I am *doing* it. **Within certain limits, I seem to choose what I pay attention to.** The sound of the leaf blower intrudes, but I can seize the spotlight of my attention in the next moment and aim it elsewhere. **This difference between nonvolitional and volitional states of mind is reflected at the level of the brain - for they are governed by different systems.** And the difference between them must, in part, produce the felt sense that there is a conscious self endowed with freedom of will. As we have begun to see, **however, this feeling of freedom arises from our moment-to-moment ignorance of the prior causes of our thoughts and actions. The phrase “free will” describes what it *feels* like to identify with certain mental states as they arise in consciousness.** Thoughts like “What should I get my daughter for her birthday? I know - I’ll take her to a pet store and have her pick out some tropical fish” convey the apparent reality of choices, freely made. But **from a deeper perspective (speaking both objectively and subjectively), thoughts simply arise unauthored and yet author our actions.**”

**Aff: Harris Answers Compatibilism**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 16-17.

“**Compatibilists generally claim that a person is free as long as he is free from any outer or inner compulsions that would prevent him from acting on his actual desires and intentions.** If you want a second scoop of ice cream and no one is forcing you to eat it, then eating a second scoop is fully demonstrative of your freedom of will. The truth, however, is that **people claim greater autonomy than this. Our moral intuitions and sense of personal agency are anchored to a felt sense that we are the *conscious source* of our thoughts and actions.** When deciding whom to marry or which book to read, **we do not feel compelled by prior events over which we have no control. The freedom we presume for ourselves and readily attribute to others is felt to slip the influence of impersonal background causes.** And the moment we see that such causes are fully effective - as any detailed account of the neurophysiology of human thought and behavior would reveal - we can no longer locate a plausible hook upon which to hang our conventional notions of personal responsibility.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 15-16.

“**In the philosophical literature, one finds three main approaches to the problem: *determinism, libertarianism,* and *compatibilism*. Both determinism and libertarianism hold that if our behavior is fully determined by background causes, free will is an illusion.** (For this reason they are both referred to as “incompatibilist” views.) **Determinists believe that we live in such a world, while libertarians** (no relation to the political philosophy that goes by this name) **imagine that human agency must magically rise above the plane of physical causation.** Libertarians sometimes invoke a metaphysical entity, such as a soul, as the vehicle for our freely acting wills. **Compatibilists, however, claim that determinists and libertarians are both confused and that free will is compatible with the truth of determinism.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 16.

“Today, **the only philosophically respectable way to endorse free will is to be a compatibilist - because we know that determinism**, in every sense relevant to human behavior, **is true. Unconscious neural events determine our thoughts and actions - and are themselves determined by prior causes of which we are subjectively unaware.** However, the “free will” that compatibilists defend is not the free will that most people feel they have.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 18-19.

“**Compatibilists have produced a vast literature in an effort to finesse this problem.** More than in any other area of academic philosophy, the result resembles theology. (I suspect this not an accident. The effort has been primarily one of not allowing the laws of nature to strip us of a cherished illusion.) **According to compatibilists, if a man wants to commit murder, and does so because of this desire, his actions attest to his freedom of will. From both a moral and a scientific perspective, this seems deliberately obtuse.** People have many competing desires - and some desires appear pathological (that is, *un*desireable) even to those in their grip. **Most people are ruled by many mutually incompatible goals and aspirations**: You want to finish your work, but you are also inclined to stop working so that you can play with your kids. You aspire to quit smoking, but you also crave another cigarette. You are struggling to save money, but you are also tempted to buy a new computer. **Where is the freedom when one of these opposing desires inexplicably triumphs over its rival?**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 19-20.

“**The problem for compatibilism runs deeper**, however - for **where is the freedom in wanting what one wants without any internal conflict whatsoever?** Where is the freedom in being perfectly satisfied with your thoughts, intentions, and subsequent actions when they are the product of prior events that you had absolutely no hand in creating? For instance, I just drank a glass of water and feel absolutely at peace with the decision to do so. I was thirsty, and drinking water is fully congruent with my version of who I want to be when in need of a drink. Had I reached for a beer this early in the day, I might have felt guilty; but drinking a glass of water at any hour is blameless, and I am quite satisfied with myself. Where is the freedom in this? It may be true that if I had wanted to do otherwise, I would have, but I am nevertheless compelled to do what I effectively want. And I cannot determine my wants, or decide which will be effective, in advance. **My mental life is simply given to me by the cosmos. Why didn’t I decided to drink a glass of juice? The thought never occurred to me. Am I free to do *that which does not occur to me to do*? Of course not.**”

**Aff: Answers to Dennett**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 22-23.

“This perfectly articulates the difference between Dennett’s view and my own (Dennett agrees). As I have said, I think **compatibilists like Dennett change the subject: They trade a psychological fact - the subjective experience of being a conscious agent - for a conceptual understanding of ourselves as persons. This is a bait and switch.** The psychological truth is that **people feel identical to a certain channel of information in their conscious minds. Dennett is simply asserting that we are more than this - we are coterminous with everything that goes on inside our bodies, whether we are conscious of it or not. This is like saying we are made of stardust - which we are. But we don’t *feel* like stardust.** And the knowledge that we are stardust is not driving our moral intuitions or our system of criminal justice.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 25.

“**Imagine that a person claims to have no need to eat food of any kind - rather, he can live on light.** From time to time, an Indian yogi will make such a boast, much to the merriment of skeptics. Needless to say, there is no reason to take such claims seriously, no matter how thin the yogi. However, a **compatibilist like Dennett could come the charlatan’s defense: The man *does* live on light - we all do - because when you trace the origin of any food, you arrive at something that depends on photosynthesis. By eating beef, we consume the grass the cow ate, and the grass ate sunlight.** So the yogi is no liar after all. **But that’s not the ability the yogi was advertising, and his actual claim remains dishonest (or delusional).** This is the trouble with **compatibilism.** It **solves the problem of “free will” by ignoring it.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 23-24.

“At this moment, **you are making countless unconscious “decisions” with organs** other than your brain - **but these are not events for which you feel responsible. Are *you* producing red blood cells and digestive enzymes at this moment?** Your body is doing these things, of course, but if it “decided” to do otherwise, you would be the victim of these changes, rather than their cause. **To say that you are responsible for everything that goes on inside your skin because it’s all “you” is to make a claim that bears absolutely no relationship to the feelings of agency and moral responsibility that have made the idea of free will an enduring problem for philosophy. There are more bacteria in your body than there are human cells.** In fact, 90 percent of the cells in your body are microbes like *E.coli* (and 99 percent of the functional genes in your body belong to them). Many of these organisms perform necessary functions - they are “you” in some wider sense. **Do you feel identical to them? If they misbehave, are you morally responsible?**”

**Aff: Deliberation does not prove Free Will**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 32-33.

“**This is not to say that conscious awareness and deliberative thinking serve no purpose. Indeed, much of our behavior depends on them.** I might unconscious shift in my seat, but I cannot unconsciously decide that the pain in my back warrants a trip to a physical therapist. To do the latter, I must become aware of the pain and be consciously motivated to do something about it. Perhaps it would be possible to build an insentient robot capable of these states - but in our case, certain behaviors seem to require the presence of conscious thought. **And we know that the brain systems that allow us to reflect upon experience are different from those involved when we automatically react to stimuli. So consciousness, in this sense, is not inconsequential.** **And yet the entire process** of becoming aware of the pain in my back, thinking about it, and seeking a remedy for it **results from processes of which I am completely unaware. Did I, the conscious person, create my pain? No. It simply appeared. Did I create the thoughts about it that led me to consider physical therapy? No. They too, simply appeared.** This process of conscious deliberation, while different from unconscious reflex, offers no foundation for freedom of will.”

**Aff: Conscious Effort Does Not Prove Free Will**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 37.

“If you pay attention to your inner life, you will see that **the emergence of choices, efforts, and intentions is a fundamentally mysterious process. Yes, you can decide to go on a diet** - and we know a lot about the variables that will enable you to stick to it - **but you cannot know why you were finally able to adhere to this discipline when all your previous attempts failed.** You might have a story to tell about why things were different this time around, but it would be nothing more than a post hoc description of events that you did not control. **Yes, you can do what you want - but you cannot account for the fact that your wants are effective in one case and not in another** (and you certainly can’t choose your wants in advance). You wanted to lose weight for years. Then you *really* wanted to. What’s the difference? Whatever it is, it’s not a difference that *you* brought into being.”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 37-38.

“**You are not in control of your mind - because you, as a conscious agent, are only *part* of your mind, living at the mercy of other parts.** You can do what you decide to do - but you cannot decide what you will decide to do. **Of course, you can create a framework in which certain decisions are more likely than others - you can, for instance, purge your house of all sweets, making it very unlikely that you will eat dessert later in the evening - but you cannot know why you were able to submit to such a framework today when you weren’t yesterday.**”

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 38.

“**So it’s not that willpower isn’t important** or that it is destined to be undermined by biology. **Willpower is itself a biological phenomenon. You can change your life, and yourself, through effort and discipline - but you have whatever capacity for effort and discipline you have in this moment,** and not a scintilla more (or less). You are either lucky in this department or you aren’t - and you cannot make your own luck.”

**Aff: Long-Term Thinking is not Free Will**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 38-39.

“**Many people believe that human freedom consists in our ability to do what**, upon reflection, **we believe we should do - which often means overcoming our short-term desires and following our long-term goals or better judgement. This is** certainly an ability that people possess, to a greater or lesser degree, and which other animals appear to lack, but is nevertheless **a capacity of our mind that has unconscious roots. You have not built your mind. And in moments in which you *seem* to build it - when you make an effort to change yourself, to acquire knowledge, or to perfect a skill - the only tools at your disposal are those that you have inherited from moments past.**”

**Aff: “Can Do Otherwise” is Post Hoc Rationalization**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 39-40.

“Many people believe that this problem of regress is a false one. **Certain compatibilists insist that freedom of will is synonymous with the idea that one could have thought or acted differently. However, to say that I could have done otherwise is merely to think the thought “I could have done otherwise” after doing whatever I in fact did.** This is an empty affirmation. **It confuses hope for the future with an honest account of the past. What I will do next, and why, remains, at bottom, a mystery - one that is fully determined by the prior state of the universe and the laws of nature** (including the contributions of chance). To declare my “freedom” is tantamount to saying, “I don’t know why I did it, but it’s the sort of thing I tend to do, and I don’t mind doing it.””

**Aff: A Lack of Free Will is Enabling**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 47.

“**Becoming sensitive to the background causes of one’s thoughts and feelings can** - paradoxically - **allow for greater creative control over one’s life.** It is one thing to bicker with your wife because you are in a bad mood; it is another to realize that your mood and behavior have been caused by low blood sugar. **This understanding reveals you to be a biochemical puppet, of course, but it also allows you to grab hold of one of your strings:** A bite of food may be all that your personality requires. **Getting behind our conscious thoughts and feelings can allow us to steer a more intelligent course through our lives (while knowing, of course, that we are ultimately being steered).**”

**Aff: Harris Responds to Nahmias’ Objections**

Sam Harris, Co-founder and CEO of Project Reason, *Free Will*, Simon & Schuster, 2012, p. 42.

“**There is no question that human beings can imagine and plan for the future, weigh competing desires, etc.** - and that **losing these capacities would greatly diminish us.** External and internal pressures of various kinds can be present or absent while a person imagines, plans, and acts - and such pressures determine our sense of whether he is morally responsible for his behavior. **However, these phenomena have nothing to do with free will.**”

**Aff: Answers to “Agent-Causalist” Theories (a la Chisholm)**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 51-52.

“To many critics of libertarianism, **this solution looks like solving** the Libertarian Dilemma - **either determinism or mere chance - by a *double* stipulation, by introducing a special agent-causal relation defined in such a way that it (1) cannot by its nature be determined, but (2) cannot by its nature be random either.** One can see why many **critics of libertarianism think that agent-cause theories** either lead to infinite regress or **solve the problems about libertarian free will by defining them out of existence** (for “free” rather than by honest toil). Gary Watson states this criticism in the following words: “All we know of this [agent-causal] relation is that it holds between an agent and an event when the agent is the responsible agent of that event, and the event is uncaused by other events. … Agent-causation meets [these] conditions … by stipulation. But **the challenge is to say what this [agent-causal] relation amounts to in such a way as to give some reason for thinking it is empirically possible. ‘Agent-causation’ simply labels, not illuminates, what the libertarian needs.**” Watson’s point is that **if agent-causalists are to do more than merely label what libertarians need, the must say more about the nature of agent-causation and do more to show how such a thing is empirically possible.** Failing to do that, agent-causalist solutions to the free will problem will remain as mysterious as Kantian and dualist solutions. In the next chapter, we will consider what other strategies are available to libertarians, agent-causalists, and others to make sense of the “deeper” freedom of the will they believe in.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 47.

“What are we to say of this agent-causal view? It is not surprising that **many critics of libertarian theories of free will find the notion of immanent causation as mysterious at Kantian noumenal selves or Cartesian immaterial minds.** To say, as Chisholm does, that we are “prime movers unmoved” or “uncaused causes” like God, does not help, according to these critics, since **it merely attempts to explain the obscure by the more obscure.** What do we know of how God moves without being moved? And are we humans really like God in this respect, since **we *are* clearly moved, at least in part, by many physical, psychological, and social factors, some of which are beyond our awareness.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 47-48.

“**Even some defenders of agent-causation admit** that the notion is mysterious. Richard Taylor, mentioned earlier, says: “**One can hardly affirm such a theory of agency with complete comfort … and wholly without embarrassment, for the conception of men and their powers which is involved in it, is strange indeed, if not positively mysterious.”** Yet Taylor thinks such a notion of agent-causation is the only one consistent with libertarian free agency. “If I believe that something not identical to myself was the cause of my behavior - some event wholly external to myself, for instance, or even one internal, such as a nerve impulse, volition, or whatnot - then I cannot regard the behavior as being an act of mine, unless I further believed that I was the cause of that external or internal event.”

**Aff: You Can’t Be the Cause of Yourself (aka *Non Causa Sui)***

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 71-72.

“But, you might ask: **Why do modern skeptics about free will** who are not committed to the truth of determinism **believe that free will of the libertarian kind does not exist?** In other words, why do they accept thesis 2 (free will does not exist) if they remain noncommittal about thesis 3 (that determinism is true)? The answer for most modern skeptics about free will is that they think **free will in the libertarian sense is *impossible, whether determinism is true or not*.** The most widely discussed skeptical argument to show this impossibility is an argument by Galen Strawson, which he calls the Basic Argument. The idea behind Strawson’s Basic Argument is an ancient idea: **Having true free will of the libertarian kind would require that one be a causa sui - a cause of oneself. But being a causa sui is impossible, at least for us human beings. Strawson supports this idea with the following argument: 1. You do what you do because of** the way you are (**your** nature or **character). 2. To be truly responsible for what you do, you must be truly responsible for** the way you are (for **your** nature or **character). 3. But to be truly responsible for the way you are, you must have done something in the past for which you were also responsible to make yourself**, at least in part, **the way you are. 4. But if you were truly responsible for doing something in the past to make yourself what you are now, you must have been responsible for** the way you were then (for **your** nature or **character) at that earlier time. 5. But to have been responsible for the way you were at that earlier time, you must have done something for which you were responsible at a still earlier time to make yourself the way you were at that earlier time, and so on backward. “Here one is setting off on a regress,”** Strawson concludes, a regress that cannot go back forever in the case of human beings. **Eventually you return to early childhood when your initial nature was not formed by you at all, but was the product of your heredity, early upbringing, and other factors beyond your control.** Strawson then adds “This argument goes through whether determinism is true or false. … Even if the property of being a *causa sui* is allowed to belong (entirely unintelligibly) to God, it cannot be plausibly supposed to be possessed by ordinary human beings.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 72.

“**Strawson then** approvingly **quotes** Friedrich **Nietzsche**, who said: “**The *causa sui* is the best self-contradiction that has been conceived so far; it is a sort of rape and perversion of logic**. But the extravagant pride of man has managed to entangle itself … with just this nonsense. **The desire for “freedom of the will” in the superlative metaphysical sense**, which still holds sway, unfortunately, in the minds of the half-educated - the desire to bear the entire and ultimate responsibility for one’s actions oneself, and to absolve God, the world, ancestors, chance and society - **involves nothing less than to be precisely *causa sui*** and, with more than Baron Munchausen’s audacity, to pull oneself up into existence by the hair, out of the swamps of nothingness.” Baron Munchausen was the notorious teller of tales who claimed to have pulled himself from a ditch by his own hair. Needless to say, Nietzsche is another modern skeptic about free will who believes, along with Strawson, that the true free will of the ultimate libertarian kind is an illusion. **Nietzsche thinks we should learn to accept our fate, and get on without the illusion of free will.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 73-74.

“Is there any way to avoid Strawson’s conclusion from these plausible premises? It may be true, as his argument claims, that we cannot be creators of our “original” characters and motives - the characters and motives we began with in childhood before we ever made any free choices. But as we get older and develop, are we powerless to *change* the original characters we started with in childhood? **Compatibilists and libertarians both respond to skeptical arguments like Strawson’s by saying that, although we are not the creators of our original characters, we can indeed freely change our natures and characters as we mature.** It seems like a piece of common sense. **But Strawson replies that neither compatibilists nor libertarians give us an adequate account of *how* we could change our characters that accounts for true responsibility. If the *way* we change ourselves later in life, he argues, is *determined* by how *we already are*, as compatibilists allow, then that kind of change would not amount to true responsibility. But if the way we change ourselves later in life is *undetermined*, as libertarians require, then it would amount to mere luck or chance and that would not be true responsibility either.** In other words, Strawson accepts the objections to *both* compatibilism and libertarianism that were considered in chapters 3 and 4. To answer his Basic Argument, compatibilists or libertarians must succeed in answer the objections against their views in these chapters; and in doing so they must show that one or another of their views can account for true responsibility.”

**Aff: Answer to Proof by Existence of Love**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 76-77.

“How would the rejection of free will affect our personal relations? **Would the value of a person’s love for you be deflated if you came to believe the person was determined to love you** by heredity and environment? Many people think so because, as Pereboom says: “One might argue that we very much want to be loved by others as a result of their free will - we want freely willed love.” But, he adds: “**Against this, the love parents have for their children is typically engendered independently of the parents’ will and we do not find this love deficient.**” Also, **when we fall in love romantically, it is rarely a matter of our free decision. Yet we do not find romantic love less satisfying for that reason.** But is there not a mature kind of love we desire from lovers, spouses, friends, and even parents when we are older that would be deficient if we knew that factors beyond the others’ control determined that they love us? To this objection, which I once posed to Pereboom’s position, he responds as follows: “If we indeed desire a love of this kind, then **we desire a kind of love that is impossible if hard incompatibilism is true. Still the kinds of love that are invulnerable to hard incompatibilism are surely sufficient for good relationships.** If we aspire to the sort of love parents typically have toward their children or the kind romantic lovers ideally have … or the type shared by friends … whose relationship is deepened by their interactions, then the possibility of fulfillment in personal relationships is far from undermined [by hard incompatibilism].””

**Aff: Answer to Frankfurt Compatibilism and Identification**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 95-96.

“While many people believe that Frankfurt’s theory overcomes some of the objections to classical compatibilism, his theory also introduces a new set of problems about free will. For example, **critics of Frankfurt have posed the following problem. Suppose that our first-order desires did conform to our second-order desires, but we were** wantons (and therefore **unreflective) about our *second-order* desires. Would we then have free will?** Consider the following example suggested by a critic of Frankfurt’s, Richard Double, in *The Non-Reality of Free Will*. **Suppose a young man has joined a religious cult and is completely devoted to the cult’s leader. So complete is the young man’s devotion that he has the first-order desire to sacrifice his life if the religious leader asks him. In addition, this first-order desire conforms to his second-order volition**: the young man wants his desire to sacrifice his life to actually “move him to act,” if the leader asks. **He does not want to lose his nerve at the last minute.** Suppose also that this desire is strong enough to move him to sacrifice his life. The young man thus has “the will he wants to have.” **But suppose** he is also completely unreflective about this second-order desire to be moved by the desire to do whatever the cult leader asks. **The young man is so completely under the influence of the cult leader that he never questions this second order desire and is no longer capable of questioning it. Double argues that this young man seems to have all the requirements of free will in Frankfurt’s sense: his first-order desire conforms to his second-order volition and his first-order desire will be effective in action. Yet, “it is difficult to see how the young man has any** more **freedom** than a wanton,” says Double, since he is no longer capable of reflecting on his second-order desires. Would not free will demand that one also be reflective about one’s second-order desires and bring them into conformity with one’s *third-order* volitions, and so on indefinitely? Why stop at the second, or any higher, order of desires? **It seems that we would have to make an infinite number of higher-order reflections to have free will.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 96.

“Frankfurt answers by appealing to a notion of *identification* or “decisive commitment” to some higher-order desire. Rather than reflecting indefinitely, he says, agents at some point simply identify with, or decisively commit to, certain higher-order desires and decide that no further questions about them need to be asked. But this answer has not satisfied Frankfurt’s critics. In the words of another critic, Gary Watson: “**We wanted to know what prevents wantonness with regard to one’s higher-order desires. What gives these desires any special relation to ‘oneself’? It is unhelpful to answer that one makes a decisive commitment where this just means that an interminable ascent to higher orders is not going to be permitted. This *is* arbitrary.**”

**Aff: Answer to Frankfurt Compatibilism and Wholeheartedness**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 97.

“**Frankfurt’s appeal to wholeheartedness** answers some objections to his theory, but it **leads to another deeper objection.** For all Frankfurt’s account tells us, says Watson, **a person’s wholehearted commitment to certain desires may be the result of brainwashing or severe conditioning. Suppose the young man in Double’s example has been brainwashed by the cult leader into being wholeheartedly willing to sacrifice his life if the leader asks. Would the young man then have free will simply because he is wholeheartedly committed to sacrificing his life and has no ambivalence or doubts about acting on this desire?** Does it not also matter for free will how he came to have the wholehearted commitments he does have? Recall the citizens of Skinner’s community Walden Two, described in Chapter 1. THey can have and do everything they want, but only because they were conditioned by behavioral engineers since childhood to want only what they can have and do. The citizens of Walden Two are marvelously “wholehearted” in their attitudes and engagements in Frankfurt’s sense. They are “satisfied” with themselves and “have the wills they want to have.” Not only are they free to do whatever they want, they can *will* whatever they *want*. Their first-order desires always conform to their second-order volitions. So they not only have freedom of *action* but also freedom of *will* in Frankfurt’s sense. It seems that the founder of Walden Two, Frazier, *can* truly say it is “the freest place on earth” in Frankfurt’s sense. But **do the citizens of Walden Two really have free will if their wholeheartedness came about entirely by behavioral engineering?** Or are they more like the young man in the religious cult, if he was brainwashed into being wholeheartedly committed to the point of sacrificing his life? Or is there a difference, perhaps, between engineering the upbringings of persons so they will be happy (as in Walden Two) and brainwashing them so they will sacrifice their lives if you desire - a difference that might account for why the brainwashed cult member may lack free will while the citizens of Walden Two may have it?”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 98.

“**A further problem for Frankfurt’s theory is** this. **If free will is being wholeheartedly committed to one’s desires or engagements and having no ambivalence about them, then it seems that a person can never get *from* ambivalence *to* wholeheartedness *of their own free will*.** For note that we do not have free will in Frankfurt’s sense *until* we have already attained wholeheartedness and are no longer ambivalent about what to do. This is an odd consequence of Frankfurt’s view. For ambivalence is a common feature of everyday life. **We often find ourselves in states of ambivalence - about what career to pursue** (doctor or lawyer or cabinetmaker), **whom to marry, where to live, which course of study to pursue. It seems that what we call free will is often making choices about these things and trying to bring ourselves *from* states of ambivalence** *to* being wholeheartedly committed to what we think is important in life - a career, marriage, or whatever. **Yet, on Frankfurt’s view, it seems we cannot go from ambivalence to wholeheartedness of our own free wills because we do not have free will until we have become wholehearted.**”

**Aff: Answer to Differences between Desires and Values (Plato/Watson)**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 100-101.

“**One problem for Watson’s theory, and for Plato’s, is** embodied in the following question. **Do we always act *unfreely* when we act from weakness of will? If being free means that Reason rules over Desire, then presumably we must be unfree whenever Desire wins out over Reason and we act from weakness of will.** But is this always so? **Suppose the woman who knows she should exercise her injured knee nonetheless succumbs to the temptation to continue watching TV. Or, suppose a student who knows he should study for an exam nonetheless succumbs to the temptation to go to a party. We think it is reasonable to say that in many such cases of weakness of will, the agents succumbed to the temptation *freely*, or of their own free wills.** Otherwise we could never hold persons responsible for their weak-willed behavior. When we give into temptation it is not always a matter of compulsion. But to say we have free will when Reason rules over Desire and that we are unfree when Desire is uncontrolled by Reason seems to imply that weak-willed behavior is not a matter of free will. **It seems that Watson needs a principled way of distinguishing between compulsive and addictive behavior from other cases of weak-willed behavior where people give in to their desires of their own free wills and could have done otherwise.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 100-101.

“In addition, according to some critics, **Watson’s theory**, like Frankfurt’s, **seems to be subject to the objection about behavioral engineering and manipulation. If persons could be behaviorally engineered to always act on their values or better judgements and never succumb to their unruly desires, it seems that they would be truly free in Watson’s (and Plato’s) sense.** This is in fact the condition of the citizens of Walden Two, whose values were implanted in them by their behavioral controllers. Their reason and their desires were engineered to always be in harmony. Such harmony of Reason and Desire is also the condition Platon tried to bring about in the ideal state of his famous work *The Republic*, in which citizens were trained sot that their desires would as much as possible conform to their reason. **Yet we wondered whether the citizens of Walden Two really had free will. And we might also wonder whether the citizens of Plato’s ideal state would have free will if they were so well trained that they could no longer act except as reason dictated.**”

**Aff: The Principle of Ultimate Responsibility**

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 121.

“Fortunately there is another place to look. In the long history of debates about free will, **there is another criterion fueling intuitions about the incompatibility of free will and determinism.** This criterion is related to the second requirement for free will mentioned in chapter 1, **namely, the requirement that the sources or origins of our actions be in us and not in something else. I call this second criterion for free will the condition of Ultimate Responsibility, or UR.** The basic idea is this: **to be *ultimately responsible* for an action, an agent must be responsible for anything that is a sufficient reason, cause, or motive for the action’s occurring. If, for example, a choice issues from, and can be sufficiently explained by, an agent’s character and motives (together with background conditions), then to be *ultimately* responsible for the choice, the agent must be in part responsible by virtue of choices or actions performed in the past for having the character and motives he or she has now.** Compare Aristotle’s claim that if a man is responsible for the good or wicked acts that flow from his character, he must at some point in the past have been responsible for forming the good or wicked characters from which these acts flow.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 121.

“Thus, we said that **even if Luther’s assertion “Here I stand, I cannot do other” was determined by his character and motives when he made it, Luther could still be responsible for his assertion to the extent that he was responsible for forming his present character and motives by many earlier struggles and choices in the past that brought him to this point.** Often we act from a will already formed, but it *our own free will* by virtue of the fact that we formed it by past free choices and actions. This is the idea behind the condition of Ultimate Responsibility or UR. **UR does not rule out the possibility that our choices and actions might be determined by our wills, characters, and motives. But it does require that whenever this is so, to be *ultimately* responsible for what we are, and therefore to have free will, we must be responsible for forming the wills or characters that now determine our acts.**”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 122.

“This condition of Ultimate Responsibility, or **UR**, thus **makes explicit** something that is often hidden in free will debates - namely, **that free will, as opposed to freedom of action, is about the forming and shaping of character and motives that are the *sources* or *origins* of praiseworthy or blameworthy actions.** If persons are responsible for wicked (or noble, shameful, heroic, generous, treacherous, kind, or cruel) acts that flow from their wills from which these acts flow. But **it takes no great insight to see that this condition of UR is also problematic. For it seems to lead to a regress.** To trace the regress: if we must have formed our present wills (our characters and motives) by voluntary choices or actions in our past … then … **UR requires that if any of these earlier choices or actions *also* had sufficient causes or motives by virtue of forming them by still earlier voluntary choices or actions. We thus regress on backward indefinitely into our past.** Eventually we would come to infancy or to a time before our birth when we could not have formed our own wills.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 122-123.

“We saw in chapter 7 that such a regress plays a role in skeptical arguments against libertarian free will, such as Strawson’s Basic Argument. Such skeptical arguments show us that **there is a *possibly* vicious regress here, but it is an actual vicious regress only if *every* one of our voluntary choices and actions in the past had sufficient causes or motives for occurring. Then the regress would continue backward requiring that we be responsible for those sufficient causes or  motives.** So the potential regress tells us that free will is possible only if *some* voluntary choices or actions in our life histories did *not* have sufficient causes or motives that would have required us to have formed them by still earlier choices and actions. **Therein lies the connection of UR to determinism. If determinism were true, *every* act would have sufficient causes in the past, given the laws of nature. So the potential regress tells us that *if* free will requires ultimate responsibility in the sense of UR, then *free will must be incompatible with determinism*.** Some choices of acts in our life histories must lack sufficient causes, and hence must be undetermined, if we are to be *ultimate* sources or grounds of, and hence ultimately responsible for, our own wills.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 126-127.

“I would argue that **persons in such a world lack free *will*, even though it is often the case that they can do otherwise** - thus having alternative possibilities - **in a way that is undetermined. There reason is that they can do otherwise, but only** in the limited Austinian way - **by mistake or accident, unwillingly or unintentionally. What they cannot do in any sense is *will* otherwise than they do; for all their reasons, motives, and purposes have been preset** by God. We may say that the wills of persons in this world are always already “set one way” before and when they act, so that if they do otherwise, it will not be “in accordance with their wills.” There is no name for words like this in which persons can do otherwise in undetermined ways, yet lack free will. So let me call them K-worlds. **The possibility** of K-worlds **shows in a striking way why, to have free will, it is not only necessary to be the ultimate source of one’s *actions*, but to be the ultimate source of one’s *will* to perform the action as well. It would not be enough to have free will for agents to be unhindered in the pursuit of their motives and purposes if all their motives and purposes were created by someone or something else** (God or fate or whatever). Even one’s motives or purposes for wanting to change one’s motives or purposes would be created by someone or something else in such a world.”

Robert Kane, University Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 126-127.

“Now it turns out that UR captures this additional requirement of being the ultimate source of one’s *will* that is lacking a K-world. For **UR says that we must be responsible by virtue of our voluntary actions for anything that is a sufficient cause or a sufficient *motive* or *reason* for our acting as we do. We have a sufficient motive or reason for doing something when our will is “set one way” on doing it before and when we act** - as the assassin’s will is set on killing the prime minister. Among the available things he might do, only one of them (killing the prime minister) would be voluntary and intentional. **Anything else he might do** (such as miss the prime minister and kill the aide) **would be done only by accident or mistake, unintentionally or unwillingly.**”

**Aff: Deconditioning Reflex Incompatibilism**

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 14.

“**The intuition that** Incompatibilism is true - **that our freedom of action depends on our actions not being determined in advance - is very general. For most people** who are new to philosophy, **nothing else makes sense.** The very possibility that when they were born their every action was already predetermined and fixed - this they see as a very clear and obvious threat to their freedom. People coming to philosophy for the first time are very reluctant to give Incompatibilism up. **But Incompatibilism presents us with deep difficulties. In fact Incompatibilism promises to make freedom something impossible.** Or so many modern philosophers suppose. The first difficulty is obvious. **Incompatibilism places an important condition on our freedom of action - the absence of causal predetermination by conditions outside our control.** But can we actually know that this condition is met? We do not normally think of how we act as determined by past causes. Yet how can we be sure? **Perhaps, after all, causal determinism is true. Perhaps everything that happens in the universe is determined to occur by prior causes. In which case, by the time of our birth, our every action will already have been causally determined in advance.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 14-15.

“The belief in causal determinism - that the world is a deterministic system - was defended, in the ancient world, by the Stoics. **Belief in causal determinism became common again among Western philosophers after the 17th century.** And this was **because the new forms of science** then being developed, and **in particular the physics of Newton, provided us with deterministic laws that appeared to explain and govern the motion of every physical object within the universe. Incompatibilism left the up-to-us-ness of our actions**, with all that morally depends on it, **pitted against** what then seemed an all-too-plausible world picture - **the picture of the world as a deterministic physical system suggested by 18th- and 19th-century science.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 17.

“**Libertarianism is, for most of us, the natural theory of freedom. But that does not make Libertarianism true. For Libertarianism**, we now see, **faces more than one problem.** It is not just that libertarians must believe that causal determinism is false - that our actions are not causally determined in advance. For all we know, that belief may well turn out true. There is another, more serious problem facing Libertarianism. Suppose causal determinism is indeed false. **Libertarians must be able to explain how the causally undetermined events that they see as free actions really are that: genuine free actions. They must explain how, despite its being to some degree chancy whether they occur, these purported free actions differ from movements, such as reflexes or twitches, that are blindly random.** But **Libertarianism has not yet provided this vital story** - a story of how incompatibilist freedom can be embodied in action that, though as causally undetermined as any mere chance motion, is nevertheless genuine free action. Libertarianism needs to explain how an action can be causally undetermined by past events without, however, being merely random or blind. **And many philosophers have doubted that such story can be given.**”

**Aff: The Exercise Problem**

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 85-86.

“**Freedom is something that we are supposed to exercise in and through how we act, through our capacity for action.** But on the Hobbesian theory, our capacity for action is identified with a kind of causal power. **Our capacity for action is identified with a particular causal power of our desires, with their power to cause us to act as desired.** That is what action comes to on the Hobbesian theory - managing to do what we want because we want to do it. But **far from ever exercising libertarian freedom through this causal power, libertarian freedom is something that this causal power actually threatens. After all, in libertarian terms we are unfree if this causal power comes in a strong enough form - if our desires causally determine our action in advance. The causal power of prior desires to influence what we do** - this causal power which, on the Hobbesian theory, constitutes our very capacity for action - **has to be limited if libertarian freedom is ever to be exercised.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 85.

“The problem facing Libertarianism now becomes clear. **Libertarianism says that free action cannot be causally determined by prior occurrences outside our control - such as by prior desires. But** the Hobbesian theory of action that we are considering says **action only counts as an action at all if it is an effect of just such prior desires. And this detaches libertarian freedom from the very nature of action, and in a way that is deeply problematic.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 83.

“**There is yet another problem that faces the libertarian.** **Is libertarian freedom something we could ever exercise**, in the only way that freedom ever can be exercised, through what we deliberately do, in genuine and intelligible action**? The worry is that it is not - that libertarian freedom is at odds with anything recognizable as genuine action.** Libertarian freedom seems to reduce what we do to no more than blind, undirected motion - to the equivalent of jerks and spasms. **I shall call this problem the *exercise problem*.** Let me now explain exactly how the exercise problem arises.”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 83.

“**Freedom**, remember, **is something that we exercise in and through intentional action or omission.** That is what our own action is: the medium in and through which we exercise our control of what happens. But **what is an action? Something done for a purpose, in order to attain some goal. Every genuine action has a purpose - something that makes the action intelligible** as a deliberate doing, and that allows us to explain why the action was performed. Actions are not blind reflexes. Actions are always events that can be to some degree understood in terms of the goals of their agent. ‘Why did you cross the road?’, someone asks me. And if crossing the road was something that I really did intentionally do, if it was not something that happened through some external accident (a landslip pulled me across) or through a blind reflex (my legs went into spasm), there is always some answer. The answer comes from my purpose in crossing the road. Perhaps I am crossing the road just for its own sake. Or perhaps my goal is to get to the newsagent on the other side. I**ndeed action and purposiveness, doing something as a means to a goal, even if only for its own sake - these seem to come to the very same thing. Not only do all actions have goals or purposes. Wherever we find purposiveness, we also find action.** To do something in order to attain a goal, in order to fulfill a purpose, is always to be involved in *doing* - to be performing an action.”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 84-85.

“**Where does the goal direction of our action come from?** The Hobbesian view of action gives a simple answer. **The purposes for which we act come from our prior desires - desires that cause us voluntarily to act in the way that we do.** Take crossing the road. Suppose I am crossing the road in order to get the newsagent. Then the following will be true. My legs will not be moving by chance, in some spasm, but as a result of a prior cause. And this prior cause will come, not from something external to me, such as a landslip, but from my own desires. I want to get to the newsagent - and to get the newsagent by crossing the road. And that is why I am crossing the road. **My action counts as a genuine action by occurring, then, not through chance, or through some external cause, but as an effect of my desire to attain some goal by what I am doing.** And the goal or purpose of my action comes from the ‘object’ of this motivating desire - from what it is that desire to do. **This story applies even when the action is being performed, the road is being crossed by me, just for its own sake.** Here too my legs will not be moving by pure chance, but as a result of some cause. And the cause will again be a desire to attain some goal. In this case, though, the goal will not be a ‘further’ end or purpose. It will simply be the doing of what I do, namely crossing the road. Crossing the road is something that I want to do for its own sake. For Hobbes then, action occurs only as a voluntary effect of prior desires. And it is from these prior causes - from desires and from the objects of these desires - that actions get their purpose, and so too their identity as genuine deliberate actions. **It follows that**, on the Hobbesian theory, **action is by its very nature an effect of prior occurrences outside our control. That is the only form that action can ever take. Actions count as such and acquire the goal direction that is essential to action, only as effects of prior desires - desires that are passive occurrences that are not our doing, and so which we cannot control. In the absence of such causes nothing could count as an intelligible purposive action.** It could be no more than a mere purposeless happening. And, as we have agreed, freedom, genuine control, can never be exercised through a mere purposeless happening.”

**Aff: The Incompatibility - Rationality Tension**

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 46.

“So **freedom is tied to capacities for deliberation and decision-making - capacities whose very function is to ensure that we act rationally.** For the point of bothering to deliberate and to take proper decisions about how to act is obvious enough. It is to ensure that we end up performing the right voluntary actions: voluntary actions that are rationally justified rather than otherwise. **So perhaps freedom,** a power that comes to us with our capacity for practical rationality, **just is that very same capacity for rationality. To be a free agent is just to be a rational agent.** In which case, since they are the same, our freedom and our rationality should never conflict. **But this view that our freedom is just an expression of our reason - that freedom and reason are the same - is quite opposed to Incompatibilism.** For Incompatibilism implies that freedom and reason certainly can conflict, as we shall see. If Incompatibilism is true, **freedom cannot be the same as reason.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 46-47.

“**Take a case where**, under the circumstances, t**here is a single most sensible thing to do - perhaps it might be taking the one medicine which, though nasty, will cure a particularly serious illness that I have.** All the other options, taking other treatments or no treatment at all, are clearly less sensible. **If so, the more reasonable I am, the less chance there should be of my failing to take my medicine.** Irrationality or unreasonableness in an agent, after all, is nothing other than a propensity to fail to do the sensible thing, and to do the foolish thing instead. The more unreasonable I am, the greater this propensity; correspondingly, the more reasonable I am, so the propensity should be less and, ultimately, when I am fully reasonable, there should be no chance at all of my failing to do the sensible thing. **So if I am completely reasonable the, first of all, I must fully realize that taking my medicine is the right thing to do; and then my realization that taking my medicine is the right thing to do must ensure that I take it. There should be no chance at all of my acting foolishly in this case. My very rationality must determine that I do the one sensible thing.**”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 47-48.

“But **if the very fact of my rationality does ensure that I take my medicine, how, in incompatibilist terms, can I ever be free to act otherwise**? Suppose I am completely reasonable. Then, if my disease needs to be cured, and can only be cured by taking this medicine, I must immediately realize this. My awareness that I should take the medicine must be something that I cannot help but possess. **My situation must causally determine my beliefs about what I should do. And then my beliefs about what I must do must causally determine what I decide to do, and ensure that I stick with that decision and carry it out. Once I am aware of what I must do, there must be no chance whatsoever of my doing anything else.** But then how, when I decide and act, can I still be free to decide and act otherwise? Incompatibilist freedom depends on my decision and actions not being causally determined in advance. But being fully reasonable seems precisely to involve one’s decisions and actions being determined in advance. **In which case if Incompatibilism is true, then the more reasonable I am, the less freedom I can possess - the less I can be in control of my actions. If I am totally reasonable, I must almost entirely lack control of what I do.** For whenever I recognize that a given action is the right thing to do, I should have no freedom in the matter - my belief that that action is right should ensure that I perform it, imposing that action on me. The only time when I would ever have any control over my actions would be in cases where, in a sense, the control matters less anyway. That would be in cases where I recognize that a number of options are equally sensible, so that it does not matter from the point of view of reason which option in particular I follow.”

Thomas Pink, Lecturer in Philosophy at Kings College, London, *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 47-48.

“**Possession of a substantial incompatibilist freedom looks, then, as though it depends on my being to some degree unreasonable.** Even when I recognize that a particular action is the right thing to do, if I am to possess incompatibilist freedom there must still be some chance that I may do the less sensible thing nevertheless. But **then incompatibilist freedom is very far from being an expression of reason. Incompatibilist freedom is often at war with reason.**”