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The logic of freedom

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The University of Arizona, 1992
THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

by

Joseph Michael Campbell

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1992
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Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are three philosophers without whom this dissertation would not have been possible. Henry Byerly, Robert Cummins and Keith Lehrer each served on my committee, reading every draft of every chapter, and giving extensive and insightful comments. Because of this many earlier mistakes were avoided and I was forced to express my position much clearer than I had before.

I must also add another special thanks to Professor Lehrer who served as my advisor throughout the project. I was fortunate to have him as an advisor since he is by far the most articulate supporter of the compatibilist position alive today. Through his writings, teaching and conversation he has influenced me more on the subject of free will than any other philosopher—past, present or future.

In addition to the above philosophers, I would like to thank the following for helpful comments on earlier drafts of some of the chapters: J. Angelo Corlett, Tom Christiano, John Martin Fischer, Alvin Goldman, David Owen, Russ Shafer-Landau, Jim Stone and the faculty at Kent State University.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to the staff in the Philosophy Department at the University of Arizona, especially Lois Day, Ann Hickman, and Billie Comstock for technical and spiritual assistance throughout the project.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Lillian, my brother, William, and my four sisters, Linda, Eileen, Patricia and Ann, whose continuous support made my study of philosophy and this thesis possible.
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I take it for granted that free will is a central philosophical notion. Still, throughout Western history certain philosophers have put forth arguments which claim that no person has, or could have, free will. These arguments may be grouped into three different types. First, there are metalogical arguments which argue that since all propositions are either true or false, and since propositions do not change their truth-values, no person ever has free will. Second, there are divination arguments which claim that there exists some divine being, perhaps God, with complete knowledge of all future events. Thus, no person ever has free will. Third, there are determinism arguments which suggest the truth of a general causal determinism which governs each object and event in the entire universe. Given this, it is supposed, no person ever has free will. I call these the inevitability arguments.

In this dissertation I show that all of these arguments are unsound. I do this by showing, first, that each argument type is of the same general form which I call the basic structure. So, the arguments stand or fall together. The basic structure includes, beyond the information given above, another premise which claims that the past, or the set of God's beliefs, or the conjunction of the laws of nature is fixed and, in some sense, beyond our control. It is this
premise, necessary to the validity of any inevitability argument, which I claim to be false. I show that there is some sense in which, say, the past is fixed but that this sense is unimportant to attributions of free will. Moreover, the sense of fixedness which is important to freedom is not undermined by the inevitability arguments.
1.1 Some Problems of Freedom

As I write, there is a crisis in the Middle East; but if anyone can do something about it, George Bush can. Still, either there is going to be a sea-battle in the Persian Gulf tomorrow or there is not. So, let us suppose that it is true that there will be a sea-battle in the Persian Gulf tomorrow. Then in order for, say, George Bush to prevent this event from occurring he would have to render false something that is now true. It would seem, though, that the genuine and primitive bearers of truth-values — propositions, as I use the term — cannot change from true to false or vice versa; they seem to bear an eternal relation to the truth-values that they have. Hence, if it is true that there will be a sea-battle tomorrow, then this event cannot be altered and it is inevitable. So, if it is true that there is a sea-battle tomorrow, then there is nothing that George Bush, or anyone else, can do to prevent it. The same goes if, instead, it is false that there will be a sea-battle tomorrow. Since the argument can be generalized

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1 I would like to thank Henry Byerly, Robert Cummins and Keith Lehrer for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.
in obvious ways, it follows that all events are inevitable and no person can ever do other than what they happen to do.\(^2\)

What makes this argument so interesting is that it attempts to derive a conclusion that many of us find absurd from premises which seem harmless. It is absurd to think that we cannot, in any sense, do otherwise, but it is much more absurd to think that statements concerning the bearers of truth-values could have anything at all to do with the issue. Such is the nature of a philosophical problem.

In the bulk of this essay I investigate three types of argument which purport to undermine the free will thesis, the thesis that persons often have free will. These arguments, called the inevitability arguments, all attempt to show that no event could be other than it is. Thus, no person could ever act other than they do act, and the free will thesis is false. In chapters 3 - 5 I analyze some of the various inevitability arguments that have been given throughout the history of Western philosophy. I show that all of the arguments share the same basic structure:

\[
\begin{align*}
Lp \\
L(p \implies q) \\
Lq,
\end{align*}
\]

\(^2\) This is an adaptation of Aristotle's famous argument given in De Interpretatione, Chapter IX. See Aristotle 1963, pp. 50-3. I discuss this argument in detail in chapter 3.
where "L" is a non-truth-functional modal operator and "Ltp" means "p is necessary," in some sense.

The second premise of the basic structure is called the connecting thesis since it logically connects one proposition, p, which is claimed to be necessary in the first premise, with that of another proposition, q. The three groups of inevitability arguments are distinguished with respect to their corresponding connecting theses. The argument at the beginning of this chapter, for instance, tries to show that the denial of the free will thesis follows from a particular theory of truth, which I call the traditional theory of truth. Inevitability arguments which utilize this theory as a connecting thesis I call metalogical arguments, for reasons stated in chapter 3. One might also use the divination thesis, which states that some divine being has knowledge of all future events, as a connecting thesis. Such arguments are called divination arguments. Lastly, determinism arguments use some variant of the thesis of determinism as a connecting thesis.

Each type of inevitability argument is associated with its own compatibility problem. Hence, the determinism argument is associated with the problem of the compatibility between free will and determinism since the denial of the free will thesis follows, it is claimed, from the supposition of the determinism thesis. It is commonplace among contemporary
philosophers to think that the three compatibility problems, and thus the inevitability arguments, differ with respect strength. Indeed, many philosophers think that the determinism argument is the strongest of the three and that the metalogical argument is the weakest. One important thesis of my essay maintains that this is not the case: all of the inevitability arguments are on a logical par, and they stand or fall together.

In addition, I try to solve the various compatibility problems in light of the above insight. Since the inevitability arguments stand or fall together the incompatibility problems do, also. I argue that each inevitability argument is ambiguous. In one sense they all sound, nothing can categorically be other than it is. But this sense is unimportant to our concerns about free will and moral responsibility. The sense of "inevitable" that is important to us is compatible with all of the connecting theses noted above.

Given that the inevitability arguments are all on a logical par, if an incompatibilist is willing to give up determinism in an effort to save the free will thesis, she should be willing to reject the divination thesis and the

---


4 See section 1.5 below.
traditional theory of truth, as well. It seems, though, that most philosophers have a rather cavalier attitude with respect to the metalogical problem: they do not find arguments like the one in the first paragraph of this essay to be very compelling. I agree, with respect to the particular sense of "could have" which is important to us. I simply argue that this attitude should be extended to the divination and determinism arguments and their respective compatibility problems, too. The free will thesis is compatible with each of the three connecting theses.

1.2 Propositions and Possible Worlds

The logic of freedom is a modal logic since it is the logic of propositions which express facts either about free will or about some form of necessity. A person has free will only if she could have done otherwise, and a person could have done otherwise only if there are other ways the world could have been. But any logic which concerns facts that could have been, or facts about some form of necessity, is a modal logic.

Much of the contemporary literature on modal logic incorporates the notion of a possible world. A possible world is a way that this world, the actual world, could have

---

been. George Bush is president of the United States, but he might not have been. Thus, we can imagine a possible world in which, say, Jerry Lewis, and not George Bush, is currently the president. There are infinitely many possible worlds other than the actual world since there are infinitely many ways that this world could have been.

Propositions, as I use the term, are the genuine and ultimate bearers of truth-values. Sentences, too, can be either true or false, but sentences get there truth-values by virtue of their relationships to propositions. A sentence is true if and only if the proposition which it expresses is also true. A proposition is a set of possible worlds. Specifically, I identify a proposition with the worlds in which the proposition is true. Thus, the proposition

Jerry Lewis is president of the United States

is the set of possible worlds in which Jerry Lewis is the president. For much of this essay, my concern is with a particular kind of proposition, called an R-proposition. An R-proposition has the following form:

\[ \mathcal{S} \text{ does } \mathcal{A} \text{ at } \boldsymbol{t}, \]

where \( \mathcal{S} \) denotes a person, \( \mathcal{A} \) an action and \( \boldsymbol{t} \) a time.

---


7 This is derived from the notion of an R-statement used in "Diodorus Cronus" 1965.
1.3 Moore's Argument

Compatibilism is the theory which claims that the free will thesis is compatible with the thesis of determinism. Perhaps the most influential compatibilist of the past century has been G.E. Moore. In the final chapter of Ethics, Moore constructs the following determinism argument, which he later rejects:

It is assumed (for reasons which I need not discuss) that absolutely everything that happens has a cause in what precedes it. But to say this is to say that it follows necessarily from something that preceded it; or in other words, that once the preceding events which are its cause had happened, it was absolutely bound to happen. But to say that it was bound to happen, is to say that nothing else could have happened instead; so that if everything has a cause, nothing ever could have happened except what did happen. 8

The conclusion of this argument is that "nothing ever could have happened except what did happen." Note that this conclusion is perfectly general; it concerns events of all kinds not simply human actions. It concerns human actions, also, but only because actions are a kind of event. I call this conclusion the inevitable conclusion since it is the conclusion of every inevitability argument 9, and because it claims that all events are inevitable.

---

8 Moore 1912, p. 89.

9 See section 1.8 for a clearer statement about the relationship between the inevitability arguments and the inevitable conclusion.
According to Moore's argument the inevitable conclusion follows from the thesis of universal causation, or TUC, which Moore seems to identify with determinism. As I show later\textsuperscript{10}, in general we should not assume that TUC and determinism are equivalent but it will do little harm regarding them as such, for the moment. The thesis of determinism suggests that, given the laws of nature and the events of the past, a particular future follows, necessarily. So, determinism entails

\[ \mathbb{I}((p \cdot n) = f), \]

where "p" is the conjunction of propositions about the past, "n" is the conjunction of laws of nature, and "f" is the conjunction of propositions about the future. Clearly, this consequence of determinism can be used as a connecting thesis.

Based on what I have said so far, Moore's argument contains at least two-thirds of the basic structure: the connecting thesis and the inevitable conclusion. But there is nothing in Moore's words that indicate anything like the first premise of the basic structure. Moreover, the inference from either TUC or determinism to the inevitable conclusion is not valid, in and of itself. So, if Moore's argument is a good argument, then there must be a suppressed premise. Let's try to reveal it and see if the argument fits the basic structure.

\textsuperscript{10} Section 5.3.
1.4 Thomas's Response

A popular response to Moore's argument is given by Stephen N. Thomas. The idea goes back to Leibniz and been given more recently by Susan Haack, among others. Thomas accepts that the premise and conclusion already noted are part of the structure of Moore's argument. In addition, he makes a stab at trying to provide the missing premise and gives the whole argument this form:

Argument A:
1. p
2. L(p → q)
3. Lq.

This argument is invalid. The mistake, according to Thomas, is that the proponent of Moore's argument confuses argument A with:

Argument B:
1'. p
2'. p → Lq
3'. Lq,

which is an instance of modus ponens and, thus, is valid. The difference between (2) and (2') is, perhaps, subtle since it concerns only the scope of the model operator, L.

Of course, the conjunction of past propositions is true. Hence, both (1) and (1') are true. If we accept the thesis of

---

11 Thomas 1970.
12 Leibniz 1973b and 1973c.
determinism, then argument A has true premises but is not valid. On the other hand, though (2') is false, argument B is valid. Thomas's response to Moore's argument is that there is a scope fallacy: the proponent of the argument thinks that determinism implies (2') rather than (2). Thus, the proponent believes that Moore's argument is valid, perhaps of form B but not of form A.

The distinction of (2) and (2') is well known by philosophers of logic. The confusion is between the necessity of the conditional versus the necessity of the consequent. Determinism entails that the past (together with the laws of nature) is necessarily connected with the future, but it does not entail that either the past or the future is necessary. This is related to Leibniz's distinction between hypothetical and absolute necessity.

The one is absolutely necessary, whose contrary implies a contradiction; this kind of deduction holds in the case of eternal truths, such as those of geometry. The other is only necessary by hypothesis, and so to speak by accident; it is contingent in itself, since the contrary does not imply a contradiction.14

Thus, according to Thomas's reply, determinism implies a hypothetical necessity between past events and future events, not that the future is absolutely necessary. So, Thomas concludes, Moore's argument is invalid.

---

Unfortunately, Thomas's strategy will not work.\textsuperscript{15} For the incompatibilist need not use either argument $A$ or $B$ in order to reach the inevitable conclusion. Instead, she might think that the conjunction of past propositions together with the laws of nature are not only true but \textit{necessarily} true. Granted they are not \textit{logically} necessary but they might still be necessary in a sense that is relevant to the free will thesis. To understand this point, let's construct a new modal operator, "$N$", such that "$Np$" means "$p$ and no one has, or ever had, any choice about whether $p$."\textsuperscript{16} $N$ seems to represent a kind of inevitability or necessity. Furthermore, $N(p \cdot n)$ appears to be true since the past and laws of nature seem to be beyond our control. Thus, the incompatibilist may abandon both $A$ and $B$ in favor of the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
N(p \cdot n) \\
N((p \cdot n) \Rightarrow f) \\
Nf.
\end{align*}
\]

This argument fits the basic structure and is unaffected by Thomas's criticism.

1.5 "Could Have Done Otherwise"

Often the compatibilist will put forth an analysis of the phrase "could have done otherwise" in an effort to show that

\textsuperscript{15} See van Inwagen 1983 for an example of the line of argument that follows.

\textsuperscript{16} van Inwagen 1983, p. 93.
the free will thesis is compatible with determinism. Usually, the incompatibilist will complain that the account is inadequate. For instance, a standard compatibilist account, often attributed to Moore, is the following:

$g$ could have done otherwise if and only if $g$ had chosen (or wanted or willed) to do otherwise.

Following C.A. Campbell, I will call this the hypothetical analysis of "could have done otherwise."17

Campbell is very critical of the hypothetical analysis, as well he should be.18 He points out that the "question immediately arises: 'But could $g$ have chosen otherwise than he did?'"19 If the answer to this question is "No," then it seems that $g$ could not have done otherwise. So, the hypothetical analysis seems incorrect. Campbell goes on to suggest the following:

The proposition which we must be able to affirm if moral praise or blame of $g$ is to be justified is the categorical proposition that $g$ could have acted otherwise because — not if — he could have chosen otherwise ....20

Unfortunately, Campbell does not provide much more detail with respect to the categorical analysis of "could have done otherwise" though I think that one can be eked out.

17 Campbell 1957.
18 See Lehrer 1968, among others.
19 Campbell 1957, p. 163.
20 Ibid., p. 164.
According to the incompatibilist, such as Campbell, any proper analysis of "could have done otherwise" must be in keeping with the following principle:

The Principle of Transfer of Powerlessness [PTP]: If you cannot prevent one thing, and you cannot prevent that thing's leading to another, you cannot prevent the other. 21

Thus, if I cannot prevent the choices that I make, then I cannot prevent my actions, and I cannot do otherwise. Given PTP it seems that the categorical analysis is not strong enough since it does not require that I be able to choose otherwise in order to be able to do otherwise. Moreover, given determinism, all actions are part of causal chains that proceed back in time to events that occur prior to the birth of the agent. So, if we accept PTP, then it seems that the proper analysis of "could have done otherwise" is an indeterminist one.

The categorical analysis, since it is in keeping with PTP, is indeterministic. We can use this point as a basis with which to construct a more formal account of the categorical analysis. David Lewis gives this definition of determinism:

First, a system of laws of nature is deterministic if and only if no two divergent worlds both conform to the laws of that system. Second, a world is deterministic its

21 Fischer 1986b, p. 19.
laws comprise a deterministic system. Third, determinism is the thesis that our world is deterministic.\textsuperscript{22}

According to Lewis, "two possible worlds diverge if and only if they are not duplicates but they do have duplicate initial temporal segments. Thus our world and another world might match perfectly up through the year 1945, and go their own separate ways thereafter."\textsuperscript{23}

In keeping with Lewis's model, I will say that two possible worlds diverge\textsuperscript{*} at a time, \( t \), if and only if they diverge at \( t \) and they have the same system of laws. Then the following is the basis for any categorical analysis:

\[
\text{\$ could have done otherwise at } t \text{ only if there is another possible world which diverges\textsuperscript{*} from the actual world in which \$ does otherwise at } t.\]

My guess is that something is categorically possible for an individual at a time if and only if it is possible given the way that the world is at that time. Thus, for something to be possible at a time, \( t \), in the categorical sense it must be possible given the past, the present, the laws of nature and anything else that happens to be the case at \( t \). But clearly if determinism is true, then we are not able to choose or do otherwise, in the categorical sense, since there will be no worlds which diverge\textsuperscript{*} from the actual world. I will call an analysis of "could have done otherwise" a \textit{categorical analysis}

\textsuperscript{22} Lewis 1983, p. 360.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p. 359.
if and only if it includes the basis noted above. Also, something is categorically possible if and only if it occurs at a possible world which diverges* from the actual world.

1.6 The Dilemma of Determinism

Consider the following argument, called the dilemma of determinism.

1. If determinism is true, then none of our actions could have been otherwise; so we are never morally responsible for them.

2. If determinism is not true, then all of our actions are the product of some spontaneous motion; so we are never responsible for them.

3. So, we are never responsible for our actions.²⁴

(1) is a determinism argument that fits the basic structure, and I discuss it and other similar arguments in chapter 5.

Throughout the history of philosophy, a great deal of space has been given to discussion of the soundness of (1) and fairly little to the soundness of (2). Indeed, since (1) is an inevitability argument the present essay is guilty of this, as well. Over exposure of (1) leaves one with the feeling that determinism is the only road block to a theory of free will, as the name "the problem of free will and determinism" suggests. This is a mistake.

According to Moore, for instance, the thesis of determinism is equivalent to TUC. If this is true, then where there is no determined connection there is no causal connection. But if our actions are not caused, then how can we be responsible for them? This is the essence behind the second horn of the dilemma of determinism. We want the agent to be free, but we also want her to be causally responsible for her action. Yet indeterminism seems to sever this link between the agent and her act.

Libertarianism is the view that the free will thesis is true and it is incompatible with determinism. The second horn of the dilemma of determinism, (2), is important to keep in mind since we are often too anxious to accept libertarianism in an effort to account for free will. We might not notice that the theory receives only negative support: it is supported because it is not a compatibilist theory. If we remember that libertarianism has troubles of its own we might be more receptive to the idea that the problems surrounding free will have nothing to do with determinism. For problems remain even if we suppose determinism is false.

1.7 The Compatibility Problem and the Traditional Problem

According to Peter van Inwagen, the problem of free will and determinism has two parts: the compatibility problem and
the traditional problem.\textsuperscript{25} We are familiar with the former, which concerns the compatibility of the free will thesis with determinism. The traditional problem is the problem of establishing the truth, or falsity, of the free will thesis.

As I have already noted, there are really three compatibility problems, and they are related to the three inevitability arguments. If the arguments are all valid, then one way of avoiding the conclusion is to reject the corresponding connecting thesis, and this is precisely the strategy that the incompatibilist with respect to each problem will take. The incompatibility theses and the inevitability arguments are two sides of the same coin.

For the hard determinist, the incompatibilist who denies the free will thesis, the solution to the traditional problem, that the free will thesis is false, follows because of the alleged soundness of the determinism argument. And for the libertarian, her particular account of free will includes assumptions that follow from the incompatibility thesis. So, we cannot give an answer to the traditional problem without first settling the compatibility problem. This means understanding the various inevitability arguments.

\textsuperscript{25} van Inwagen 1983, p. 2.
1.8 The Basic Structure

Since free will is a fundamental notion, the logic of freedom extends itself into other seemingly unrelated issues. These include concepts which are particular to persons, such as free will, agency and morality, as well as those which are not, such as causation.

All of the inevitability arguments can be understood by reference to the basic structure given above. I have already explained the second premise in detail. The first premise is called the fixer since it specifies that a certain conjunction of propositions is fixed, that is, unalterable or necessary, in some sense. Often, the fixer claims that the set of past propositions, propositions which express facts about the past, is necessary.

Above I claimed that the conclusion of an inevitability argument is perfectly general and is called the inevitable conclusion. Strictly speaking, the inevitable conclusion is not part of the basic structure. The conclusion of the basic structure is of the form "P" and \( g \) will usually not refer to the conjunction of all true propositions. In most cases \( g \) will represent either a particular proposition, such as "The sea-battle tomorrow," or a particular type of proposition, such as all propositions about the future. The point is that the inevitability argument is given in such a way that it can be generalized to cover all propositions. Thus, the
inevitable conclusion should logically follow from the conclusion of any argument that fits the basic structure. Given this I will refer to the conclusion of the basic structure as the inevitable conclusion, as well.

In addition, many other propositions follow from the inevitable conclusion. Consider these claims:

No person is ever morally responsible for her actions.
Persons cannot perform free actions.
No person is ever causally responsible for her actions.
Persons lack free choice.

These propositions all concern persons but it should not be too surprising to note that there are other conclusions that do not directly concern persons which follow from the inevitable conclusion. As I shall show, the following can be added to our list:

Possible propositions are either true or will be true.
All counterfactuals are vacuously true.
There is never causation between events.

Clearly it would be hard to find a philosopher who would agree with all of these statements. But each seems to follow given the inevitable conclusion. This is why the inevitability arguments are so important.

1.9 Outline of the Remainder of the Essay

In the second chapter I try to motivate concern for the inevitability arguments by showing that the propositions noted
above are all consequences of the inevitable conclusion. Most importantly, I establish the following principle:

The Principle of Alternate Possibilities [PAP]: A person is morally responsible for what she has done only if she could have done otherwise.\(^{26}\)

Despite PAP's plausibility, philosophers have recently provided examples which appear to show that the principle is false.\(^{27}\) I respond to these examples and show that they do not disprove PAP. Moreover, I show that the examples seem to add support to my claim that a compatibilist analysis of "could have done otherwise" should be accepted over a libertarian or categorical one.

In chapters 3 - 5, I consider the three kinds of inevitability arguments, in order. The first has to do with what is commonly called the issue of fatalism. In the opening sections of chapter 3 I discuss the various meanings of this term and conclude that it is synonymous with inevitability. Thus, all of the problems I consider are problems of fatalism. The particular kind of fatalism discussed in chapter 3 is called metalogical fatalism since it arises due to certain assumptions about the objects which bear truth-values. These are metalogical concerns, as I explain in this chapter.

\(^{26}\) Frankfurt 1971, p. 143.

\(^{27}\) See Frankfurt 1971 and Davidson 1973.
The second argument concerns the problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom. It is here, in chapter 4, that I argue for the claim that all of the inevitability arguments stand or fall together. It is often assumed that there is a hierarchy with respect to the problems. Thus, the metalogical problem is thought to be less threatening than the divination problem, and the divination problem less threatening than the determinism problem. Part of the reason for this stems from a theory called Ockhamism, which pretends to be a kind of middle theory between compatibilism and libertarianism. I show that Ockhamism is not tenable.

In the final chapter I discuss the problem of free will and determinism and the incompatibility arguments concerned with it. In many ways the main purpose of this essay is to solve this incompatibility problem. The information included in chapters 2 - 4 is preliminary to this final effort. One way in which the compatibilist may respond to the incompatibilist is to construct an analysis of "could have done otherwise" that seems compelling but is not a categorical analysis. Unfortunately, this strategy will never convince the incompatibilist since she will not accept any analysis which is not a categorical one.

In an effort to combat the incompatibilist I do two things. First, I show that the same motivation which leads the incompatibilist to deny determinism should also lead her
to deny divination and the traditional theory of truth, as well. Thus, I point out that the price of incompatibilism is a very high one. Second, I show that the requirements of the categorical analysis are too strong, and are unnecessary. Since the inevitability arguments undermine categorical possibilities only a compatibilist theory should be preferred.
CHAPTER 2: FREE WILL AND RESPONSIBILITY

2.1 Possibilities and Responsibilities

Why are the inevitability arguments important? Why should they concern us? Traditionally, philosophers have responded to these questions by maintaining that there are necessary connections between alternate possibilities and free will, on the one hand, and free will and moral responsibility, on the other. Since the arguments do away with alternate possibilities, they do away with free will and moral responsibility, as well. In this chapter I defend this view against arguments to the contrary. I also establish logical relations between alternate possibilities and other philosophical concepts such as control, agency and causation. In short, I widen the interest of the inevitability arguments while reestablishing traditional views on the subject of free will.

As a start, we may note that a person has free will only if she has alternate possibilities of action. A person has alternate possibilities with respect to an action, at a

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28 I would like to thank Henry Byerly, J. Angelo Corlett, Tom Christiano, Robert Cummins, John Martin Fischer, Alvin Goldman, Keith Lehrer, David Owen, Russ Shafer-Landau, and Jim Stone for helpful comments on earlier versions of this chapter.

particular time, if and only if, at that time, she both could have performed the action and could have performed some mutually incompatible action. So, to use a phrase more common among philosophers today, a person has alternate possibilities, with respect to an action at a time, only if they could have done otherwise than perform the action at that time.

Since Aristotle\textsuperscript{30} philosophers have thought that alternate possibilities of action were essential to moral responsibility. This view is adequately expressed by the following thesis:

\textit{The Principle of Alternate Possibilities [PAP]: A person is morally responsible for what she has done only if she could have done otherwise.}\textsuperscript{31}

Intuitively, PAP seems correct. C.A. Campbell notes:

\begin{quote}
We do not consider the acts of a robot to be morally responsible acts; nor do we consider the acts of a man to be so save in so far as they are distinguishable from those of a robot by reflecting an inner life of choice.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

Persons are unlike robots in that we are able to perform actions other than the ones that we do perform. If we lacked this ability it seems that we would also lack the requirement of causal control over our own actions which is necessary for

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{30} Aristotle 1985.
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\textsuperscript{31} Frankfurt 1971, p. 143.
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\textsuperscript{32} Campbell 1957, p. 160.
\end{flushright}
moral responsibility. Yet despite PAP's plausibility, Harry Frankfurt has recently provided examples which appear to show that the principle is false.\textsuperscript{33} In this chapter I critique the \textit{Frankfurt-type counter-examples}\textsuperscript{34} and prove that PAP is in fact true. Moreover, my response to the Frankfurt-type counter-examples is such that it also adds support to the \textbf{compatibilism thesis}: the thesis that free will is compatible with determinism.

That alternate possibilities lie at the heart of our views about morality and moral responsibility will not come as a shock to many philosophers but the inevitability arguments do not stop there. If we think of ourselves as sometimes having control over our actions, as being autonomous, as sometimes originating our actions, or even as sometimes acting as opposed to always being acted on, then we should be concerned with the inevitability arguments since all of these notions presuppose alternate possibilities, too.

Moreover, the arguments do not only undermine alternate possibilities of action they undermine alternate possibilities \textit{in general}. Recall the conclusion of Moore's argument: "nothing ever could have happened except what did happen." In

\textsuperscript{33} Frankfurt 1971. See also Davidson 1973. The examples are similar except that Davidson assumes an instance of causal overdetermination.

\textsuperscript{34} This phrase comes from van Inwagen 1978.
the sections that immediately follow I show that alternate possibilities are necessary for the proper analysis of counterfactuals. According to Nelson Goodman:

... if we lack the means for interpreting counterfactual conditionals, we can hardly claim to have any adequate philosophy of science.\textsuperscript{35}

For, as Goodman also notes,\textsuperscript{36} counterfactuals are used in the analysis of the notions of law of nature, causation and disposition, all of which are central to the empirical sciences. Thus, if we accept the inevitable conclusion, we dismiss the tenability of these notions as well as the others noted above. So, the inevitability arguments are of concern to both philosophers of science and moral philosophers alike.

\section*{2.2 Possibilities, Counterfactuals and Causation}

As I noted above, the inevitable conclusion removes alternate possibilities of action by removing alternate possibilities in general. If George Bush cannot render a true proposition false, as the argument in section 1.1 suggests, it is because nothing can render a true proposition false. But the denial of alternate possibilities in general has further ramifications.

\textsuperscript{35} Goodman 1947, p. 113.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
Consider the following contrary-to-fact conditional, or counterfactual proposition.

1. If Sal were a round square, he'd be a millionaire.

(1) is true in the same sense that arguments with inconsistent premises are valid; that is, (1) is vacuously true.\(^{37}\) (1) is true because if Sal, or anyone, were a round square, anything could happen. Our confidence in the truth of (1) rests on our knowing that the antecedent is not possible.

A subjunctive conditional is any proposition which has the form

If \(x\) were to obtain, then \(y\) would obtain,

where \(x\) and \(y\) are variables which range over events (or states of affairs). A subjunctive conditional of this form is a counterfactual just in case \(x\) never actually occurs (or obtains). (1) is a counterfactual in which the antecedent is impossible, and as I have shown such counterfactuals are only vacuously true. They cannot tell us ways the world might have been, for no world could have been that way. So, if any counterfactual is going to be informative or helpful in some philosophical analysis, it needs an antecedent which is, in some sense, possible.

Given what I have said above, alternate possibilities are necessary for the (non-vacuous) truth of any counterfactual

\(^{37}\) See Lewis 1973a, pp. 24-6.
proposition. I will call this the **counterfactual thesis**. According to Goodman, among others, counterfactuals are necessary to the proper analysis of various important notions in the philosophy of science. For my purposes, it is enough to establish the following claim:

**The Principle of Causal Analysis (PCA):** A necessary condition for any causal fact is that some (non-vacuous) counterfactual is true.

According to PCA, (non-vacuous) counterfactuals are necessary for the truth of any *causal proposition*, i.e., any proposition which specifies a causal relation between two events (or two states of affairs, or between an agent and an event, etc.). Given PCA together with the counterfactual thesis, if there are no alternate possibilities in general, then no causal proposition is ever true. The inevitability arguments, thus, seem to undermine causal relations in general as well as free will.

PCA does not imply that the proper analysis of causation is some particular counterfactual analysis, such as the theory endorsed by David Lewis. For instance, according to Lewis's earlier view, causation can be completely analyzed by appeal to the following two propositions:

1. An event \( e \) causally depends on an event \( g \) just in case if \( g \) had not occurred \( e \) would not have occurred.

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38 Lewis 1973b.
2. An event $g$ is a cause of an event $e$ just in case there is a chain of events from $g$ to $e$, each event in this chain being causally dependent on its predecessor.\textsuperscript{39}

Jaegwon Kim criticized this analysis by noting that counterfactuals like the one given in (1) are not sufficient for causation. He showed that such counterfactuals will be true, for instance, when the occurrence of $e$ logically follows from the occurrence of $g$.\textsuperscript{40} But Kim did not claim that such counterfactuals were not necessary for the truth of a causal proposition. PCA is much weaker still. It is simply the claim that the (non-vacuous) truth of some counterfactual is essential to the truth of propositions which specify causal relations. Again, there is nothing in Kim's criticism to deny PCA.

Of course, I have said nothing so far that proves that PCA is true. Indeed, there are only two ways that I can think of which would conclusively establish PCA. First, I could give an actual counterfactual analysis of causation. But this would clearly exceed the intended purpose of the essay. Second, I could provide an example of a counterfactual which was also a necessary condition for the truth of any causal proposition. For instance, in his most recent account of causation Lewis notes the following:

\textsuperscript{39} Kim 1973, p. 570.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
c is a cause of e only if without c, e would have been very much less probable than it actually was.\footnote{Lewis 1986a, p. 176.}

This seems to hold for any type of causal relation in which c is a cause of e. If Lewis is correct that this specifies a necessary condition for any causal relation, then PCA is true.

Some philosophers may remain unconvinced by Lewis's example. Thus, I have three points to make in conclusion to anyone who still has doubts about PCA. First, dispositions are obviously analyzable in terms of counterfactuals and our inability to provide such an analysis does not hinder our view on the subject.\footnote{I would like to thank John Carroll for noting this point as well as several others in this section. Any mistakes or unclarities in presentation are my own.} So, the fact that no correct counterfactual analysis of causation has been given, if it is a fact, should not lead us to think that PCA is false. Second, I challenge anyone to come up with a counter-example to Lewis's own theory of causation that shows that the dependence upon counterfactuals is unnecessary. Third, every particular analysis of causation that I am familiar with happens to make use of some counterfactual(s). This is obviously true of necessity theories but it is true of regularity theories, as well. Again, if there is another theory in the running, I would like to know what it is.
Given everything that I have said in this section I feel confident in endorsing PCA. Since the counterfactual thesis is also true it follows that alternate possibilities are essential to the truth of causal propositions. This point is important for two reasons. First, it shows that if the hard determinist is right in claiming that the inevitability arguments are sound, then we lose much more than free will. Since the loss involves causation I take it that even the hard determinist will find this difficult to accept.

Second, if a connection between agent causation, or agency, and moral responsibility can be established, then PAP must be true. This is exactly the route that I shall take in an effort to prove PAP. Specifically, I will show that agency is essential to moral responsibility. Since none of the Frankfurt-type counter-examples seem to prove a lack of causal connection between an agent and her action they cannot undermine alternate possibilities in general. For where there are no alternate possibilities there can be no causation. At most they undermine a particular kind of alternate possibilities, categorical possibilities, and what the supposed counter-examples establish is that such possibilities are irrelevant to both claims about free will and claims about moral responsibility. As I show in section 2.9, this lends a great deal of support to a compatibilist theory of free will.
2.3 Free Will, Free Choice and Free Action

A quote from G. E. Moore will provide an initial understanding of the concept of free will.

The statement that we have Free Will is certainly ordinarily understood to imply that we really sometimes have the power of acting differently from the way in which we actually do act; and hence, if anybody tells us that we have Free Will, while at the same time he means to deny that we ever have such a power, he is simply misleading us. We certainly have not got Free Will, in the ordinary sense of the word, if we never really could, in any sense at all, have done anything else than what we did do ....

According to Moore, then, that persons have free will entails that they have alternate possibilities of action.

This point is developed in recent writings by Peter van Inwagen and Keith Lehrer, among others. Van Inwagen states:

When I say of a man that he "has free will" I mean that very often, if not always, when he has to choose between two mutually incompatible courses of action - that is, courses of action that it is impossible for him to carry out more than one of - each of these courses of action is such that he can, or is able to, or has it within his power to be able to carry it out.

According to van Inwagen the usage of "free will" is not intended to carry with it any commitment to a "faculty" called "the will" which has a certain property, viz. the property of

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43 Moore 1912, p. 87.
being free. 46 "A person, s, has free will" is simply a shorthand way of capturing the sense of any of the following:

Often, if not always, it is within s's power to do some action, a, and it is within s's power to do some mutually incompatible action, b.

Often, if not always, s is able to do some action, a, and s is able to do some mutually incompatible action, b, or simply,

Often, if not always, s can do some action, a, and s can do some mutually incompatible action, b. 47

Following van Inwagen, I take the phrases "s can do otherwise," "s is able to do otherwise," and "s has the power to do otherwise" to be equivalent.

In another important recent work, Free Will and Values 48, R. Kane writes that free will is:

a set of closely related powers associated with the notion of practical reasoning, the powers to deliberate, to engage in normal practical reasoning, to make choices and decisions, to make normative judgments, and a number of other powers associated with these .... (p. 19)

Kane's definition is like van Inwagen's since it defines free will in terms of a set of (at least two) powers. Given what I have said in the previous paragraph we can also think of free will as a set of abilities or capacities.

46 Ibid.

47 I thank Judy Crane for pointing out problems with a previous version of this analysis.

48 Kane 1985.
Traditionally, philosophers have used the term *faculty* to refer to any set of "interconnected powers." Some contemporary philosophers, like van Inwagen, seem to think that this term is mysterious and they regard it with suspicion. But a faculty is nothing more than a set of interconnected powers, and this is no more mysterious than the powers themselves. If we define *faculty* in the traditional sense, then clearly even van Inwagen must admit that free will is a faculty. For van Inwagen free will is identified with the dual powers of acting and acting otherwise.

Kane's account differs from van Inwagen's in that Kane thinks that free will implies *free choice*, also. Moreover, according to Kane, the freedom of the agent comes from free choice. I call this the R. Kane thesis. The R. Kane thesis seems correct but it is unimportant to prove it here. What is important is that since the inevitability arguments undermine alternate possibilities in general, they undermine free will in both Kane and van Inwagen's sense of the term. The inevitability arguments, of course, can be used to undermine either alternate possibilities of choice or action.

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49 See Kane 1985, pp. 19-20.

50 Specifically, Kane endorses Bramhall's thesis: "the freedom of the agent is from the freedom of the will." (Kane 1985, p. 15) Given his definition of free will it follows that he accepts Kane's thesis, as well.
2.4 The Principle of Alternate Possibilities

I have said that free will is a faculty, a set of interconnected powers. It certainly includes alternate possibilities of action. If the R. Kane thesis is correct, it also includes alternate possibilities of choice. But according to some philosophers, though alternate possibilities may be essential to free will, they are not essential to either free agency or moral responsibility. Interestingly enough, such philosophers use the same kinds of examples, the Frankfurt-type counter-examples, to prove either point.

Recall that the following principle specifies a logical connection between alternate possibilities and moral responsibility:

\[ \text{PAP: A person is morally responsible for what she has done only if she could have done otherwise.} \]

It is alleged that counter-examples to PAP have been given by at least two philosophers: Frankfurt and Donald Davidson.\(^{51}\)

Let's consider a Frankfurt-type counter-example to PAP and at a later point I will discuss how the example purports to undermine the connection between alternate possibilities and free agency, as well.

Suppose that Roscoe and Eleanor decide to rob a bank since they are both in need of money. Despite her claims to

\(^{51}\) Frankfurt 1971, p. 143.

\(^{52}\) Frankfurt 1971; Davidson 1973.
the contrary, Roscoe fears that Eleanor may change her mind about the robbery at the last minute. As a fall-back, he has a device implanted in Eleanor's brain that, when activated, will render her unable to do anything other than follow through with the robbery as planned. As it happens, Eleanor is a willing subject and she performs the crime on her own, without the activation of the device. Eleanor is morally responsible for her action but, it seems, she could not have done otherwise. So, PAP appears to be false.

Now what exactly does this example prove? To answer this question we might consider a second example. Suppose, for instance, that Roscoe is a life-time criminal. Perhaps at this time in his life Roscoe has a rather fixed character. Should we, for this reason, think that Roscoe was not responsible for his part in the crime? It seems not. For if Roscoe's character was formed by prior free acts, then his own character is something for which he is responsible. So he is also responsible for the acts that flow from this character. Still there is some sense in which, at the time of the robbery, Roscoe could not have done otherwise.

This second example suggests that in order for one to be responsible for some action it is not necessary that one have free will at the time of that action. What seems to be the case, though, is that it is necessary that one have free will
at the time of the act or at some time previous to the act.\textsuperscript{53} We might consider a slight reformulation of PAP along these lines and see how it stacks up to the Frankfurt-type counter-examples.

Unfortunately this strategy will not work. To see this, suppose that we amend the first example. Roscoe is now Eleanor's father, and the device was implanted by Roscoe at Eleanor's birth. Suppose further that Roscoe had a complete plan for Eleanor's life and that if Eleanor ever attempted to stray from it, the device would be activated and she would be forced to continue as her father wished. Still, Eleanor might always make the right decisions and lead the life she must by virtue of her own active powers. In such a case she would be responsible for her actions yet it seems that she could never do otherwise.

2.5 A Necessary Condition for Moral Responsibility

In an effort to respond to the Frankfurt-type counter-examples I begin with a discussion of some of the necessary conditions for moral responsibility. Such conditions will help me to present an argument in favor of PAP. After this I

\textsuperscript{53} Lehrer notes that "statements affirming that a person can do something have a double time index, one time reference being to the time at which the person has the capability, and the second being to the time of action." (Lehrer 1976b, p. 243.) See also Lehrer and Taylor 1965, pp. 394-6.
explain why it is that, though the supposed counter-examples are compelling, they do not prove that PAP is false. As I have said, this explanation will add a great deal of support to compatibilism.

Persons can be morally responsible for acts as well as the occurrence of other kinds of events. Perhaps George Bush will one day be morally responsible for starting World War III, but it might be that the start of World War III is not an act of George Bush's. For instance, George Bush may be morally responsible for the start of World War III because of something he did not do, his own negligence, rather than for something he did.

To say that a person can be held morally responsible for the occurrence of an event is to imply that she can be praised or blamed, in a moral sense, for its occurrence. I think that it is important to note that the words "praise" and "blame" can be interpreted here in a variety of senses. For now, let us say that, as a minimum, if a person is morally responsible, then others are justified in holding certain attitudes toward the person, such as those of moral approval or condemnation.54

One way in which a person can become the subject of moral praise or blame for the occurrence of an event is if she is

54 See Strawson 1962, among others.
causally responsible for the occurrence of the event.55 A person is causally responsible for the occurrence of an event if and only if either the event is an act that she performs or the occurrence of the event is brought about by an act that she performs.56 That one is morally responsible for the occurrence of an event need not entail that one is causally responsible. As I have noted, we may omit to act and be responsible for the occurrence of an event because of our omission. You do nothing but sit by the side of the pool, but it is because you merely sit that you are blamed for the drowning of the man.

Given what I have said, the following specifies a necessary condition for moral responsibility.

A person, S, is morally responsible for the occurrence of an event, e, only if either (a) S is causally responsible for e or (b) e occurs as the result of an omission of S's.

I call this the causal condition of moral responsibility. One may wish to condense the causal condition by trying to

55 These views on moral responsibility have been greatly influenced by "Postscript: Responsibility and Retribution" in Hart 1968, pp. 210-30.

56 In Feinberg 1970b, the author notes the "accordion effect" of sentences attributing causal responsibility. He writes that it is a "well-known feature of our language, whereby a man's action can be described almost as narrowly or as broadly as we please ...." Thus, we may say that S does a and a causes e or, simply, that S does e, for any action, a, and event, e. Given this we could shorten the analysis in this section.
incorporate omissions into our account of causal responsibility following Joel Feinberg. As we shall see this is unnecessary.

2.6 The Argument for PAP, Part I

The causal condition of moral responsibility has two parts: the omission part, part (b), and the commission part, part (a). In this section I show that alternate possibilities of action are necessary for the fulfillment of either part. So, alternate possibilities of action are necessary for moral responsibility and PAP is correct.

Consider the following principle, called the principle of possible action, or PPA, which governs events which result due to omissions:

A person is morally responsible for failing to perform a given act only if she could have performed that act. According to PPA, I could not have been responsible for failing to save the man if I could not have saved him. Given PPA it is clear that abilities to do otherwise are necessary for moral responsibility in cases of omission. Van Inwagen has already shown that the Frankfurt-type counter-examples

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57 See, for instance, Feinberg 1984, Chapter 4.
58 See van Inwagen 1978.
fail as counter-examples to PPA.\textsuperscript{59} This takes care of the part (b) of the causal condition.

Part (a) of the causal condition establishes that, in acts of commission, the agent must be causally responsible for an event if they are to be held morally responsible for it. But I have already shown, in section 2.2, that alternate possibilities are necessary for the truth of causal propositions. Thus, alternate possibilities, in general, are necessary for both causal responsibility and morally responsibility, given what I have said above. This is enough to warrant further concern for the inevitability arguments. In order to establish PAP, though, I need to show that alternate possibilities of action are necessary for moral responsibility. And this is a bit more difficult.

2.7 Some Further Conditions of Moral Responsibility

According to H.L.A. Hart, persons can be morally responsible for what they do only if they also have certain capacities. Hart writes:

The capacities in question are those of understanding, reasoning, and control of conduct; the ability to understand what conduct legal rules or morality require, to deliberate and reach decisions concerning these requirements, and to confirm decisions when made.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{60} Hart 1968, p. 227.
All of the capacities mentioned fall into two groups which I call cognition conditions and conditions of autonomy. The former are conditions of moral responsibility which concern cognitive capacities of the agent whereas the latter concern capacities of another sort.

Aristotle's account of moral responsibility, though different from Hart's in many ways, is similar in that he specifies both conditions of autonomy and cognitive conditions, too. He writes:

Virtue, then, is about feelings and actions. These receive praise or blame when they are voluntary, but pardon, sometimes pity, when they are involuntary.\(^{61}\)

It matters little that in the above Aristotle is talking specifically about virtues for he is also clearly talking about acts, and other events, that can be praised or blamed; and with respect to these he says that a necessary condition for them is that they be voluntary. But what does he mean by "voluntary"?

Since, then, what is involuntary is what is forced or is caused by ignorance, what is voluntary seems to be what has its origin in the agent himself when he knows the particulars that the action consists in.\(^{62}\)

Given what Aristotle has said, it is clear that he recognizes both cognitive conditions and conditions of agency as being necessary for moral responsibility.

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\(^{61}\) Aristotle 1985, p. 53.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 58.
When discussing the voluntary Aristotle wishes to contrast it with what is forced; also he thinks that something is voluntary if it "has its origin in the agent himself." Given how these points are made, he is suggesting that what is originated by the agent is not forced; and what is not forced, yet done, is originated by the agent. If we think that one has control if and only if one is not forced, then Aristotle is saying that a person has control over her actions if and only if her actions originate in her.

The notion of a free act as having its origin in the agent, the key to the conditions of autonomy, is captured by van Inwagen when he notes that "the concept of an agent's power to act [is] ... the concept of a power to originate changes in the environment". Aristotle also talks about actions which are "up to us" and those that "result through our agency" and he seems to imply that these are alternative ways of saying that an action is originated by a person. In any event, there are a group of concepts concerning such things as control, origin of action, autonomy, etc. that comprise what I am calling conditions of autonomy.

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63 van Inwagen 1983, p. 11.
64 Ibid., p. 62.
2.8 The Argument for PAP, Part II

A counterfactual in which the antecedent concerns something a person does I call an agent counterfactual. So, agent counterfactuals are propositions of the form

If \( \mathcal{S} \) were to do \( b \), then \( y \) would obtain

where \( b \) is an action that a person, \( \mathcal{S} \), never really performs, and \( y \) is an event (or state of affairs). Given what I have said in section 2.2, if no person can, in any sense, do otherwise, all agent counterfactuals have antecedents that are impossible, and hence these counterfactuals are only vacuously true.

Just as alternate possibilities in general are necessary for causation, alternate possibilities of action are necessary for agency. But clearly agency is a necessary condition for moral responsibility. First, this seems to be entailed by part (a) of the causal condition. Second, if one cannot act, then one cannot be in control of her actions, and everything she does is forced. So, agency is necessary for fulfillment of the conditions of autonomy, as well. Thus, PAP must be true.

To summarize, I have shown that the inevitability arguments undermine alternate possibilities in general. Thus, they undermine alternate possibilities of choice and of action and, hence, free will. Moreover, alternate possibilities are necessary for the proper analysis of counterfactual
conditionals and, hence, causal propositions. And lastly, alternate possibilities are necessary for moral responsibility. This is clear in cases of commission, since agency is essential to moral responsibility, but it is equally true in causes of omission, too.

2.9 Reply to Frankfurt

What's going on in the Frankfurt-type counter-examples? Clearly, there is a sense in which Eleanor cannot do otherwise. Yet it seems that she is morally responsible for what she happens to do. Moreover, the devise implanted in her head does not deprive her of any relevant freedom nor does the existence of the devise imply that she is no longer an agent. How can all of these statements be consistently asserted?

First, it is important to keep in mind that the examples do not undermine alternate possibilities in general. For, intuitively, we regard Eleanor as being both morally and causally responsible for her action. It was something she did. If we did not have this intuition, then the examples could not possibly be counter to PAP. As we have shown in section 2.2, though, if there is a causal connection between Eleanor and her action, then must be alternate possibilities of some kind. For where there are no alternate possibilities, there can be no causation. Yet there does seem to be some
sense in which Eleanor could not do otherwise. All this shows is that this sense is not relevant to moral responsibility.

So what is this sense of alternate possibility that is ruled out by the Frankfurt-type counter-example? My guess is that it is none other than the categorical sense of "could have done otherwise." For given the devise implanted in Eleanor's head, there is no world which diverges* from the actual world in which Eleanor does otherwise. All of the worlds which share both the laws of nature and the past of the actual world are worlds in which Eleanor must rob the bank. So, Eleanor cannot do otherwise in the categorical sense. But she is responsible for her action and her action seems to be of her own free will. Thus, the conclusion that should be drawn from the Frankfurt-type counter-examples is that the categorical analysis has nothing to do with either moral responsibility or free will.

Nothing I have said implies that PAP is false. On the contrary, since Eleanor is clearly causally responsible in the Frankfurt-type counter-examples we must admit that in some sense she could have done otherwise. My suggestion is that the sense of "could have done otherwise" that is relevant to attributions of free will and moral responsibility is precisely the same sense that is relevant to attributions of agency. As of yet there is no reason to conclude that this sense is incompatible with determinism or any other connecting
thesis. This does not establish the truth of compatibilism but it does suggest that a compatibilist theory of free will is more relevant to free will and moral responsibility than an incompatibilist one.

My suspicion is that all of the inevitability arguments undermine a sense of "could have done otherwise," the categorical sense, but that the sense in which Eleanor could do otherwise, the sense that is relevant to her causal responsibility, is not in jeopardy from the inevitability arguments. This does not prove compatibilism but it does get the foot in the door. We need to look at the actual inevitability arguments in detail in order to draw any further conclusions.
3.1 The Problem of Future Contingencies

The topic of this chapter is the problem of future contingencies, which is often referred to by contemporary philosophers as the problem of fatalism. The problem is that any philosophically interesting notion of possibility, one that is relevant to free will, for instance, seems inconsistent with the traditional theory of truth, which is the conjunction of three theses:

- Every proposition has a truth-value,
- There are only two truth-values: truth and falsity,
- Propositions do not change their truth-values.

The problem is best seen in the light of arguments, some of which date back to antiquity. In this chapter I examine three of these arguments: the famous "sea-battle" argument of Aristotle, the Master argument of Diodorus Cronus, and a more recent argument presented by Richard Taylor. My aim

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65 I would like to thank Henry Byerly, Robert Cummins, Keith Lehrer and the faculty of the Philosophy Department at Kent State University for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.


67 Aristotle 1963, 18b9ff.

68 Epictetus, Long and Sedley 1987, 38A.

69 Taylor 1963, pp. 54-69.
is to expose the underlying form of these arguments; to show that there is a basic structure that they all share. Noting this will help us to better understand the problem of future contingencies as well as the other philosophical problems associated with the inevitability arguments.

Before I move on to a study of the arguments I shall first discuss the term "fatalism" since it is ambiguous in a way that often leads to misunderstandings. Thus, I begin the chapter by making three important distinctions, based on views of fatalism that have been given throughout Western history by philosophers and other writers. Any adequate definition of fatalism should be in keeping with the history of the term's use. For this reason, I reject three definitions of "fatalism" that are prevalent in the current literature on the subject. Afterward I discuss the arguments noted above, survey the possible solutions to these arguments and examine the metaphysical consequences of some of the solutions.

3.2 What is Fatalism?

According to Alexander of Aphrodisias, fatalism is the "doctrine that all things come to be in accordance with
fate." The term moira (fate) in Greek probably meant originally the share or lot granted to an individual. In Homer it is usually an impersonal power stronger than the gods; in subsequent literature it is sometimes an unpredictable, essentially nonmoral force and at other times the embodiment of universal justice. In either case it inescapably determines some course of events, but it was originally only one among several controlling or overriding forces in the universe. It is in the Stoics that moira is first identified with a fully generalized principle of fate.\(^{71}\)

Fate is an "impersonal power" to some, and "the embodiment of universal justice" to others; at times it is "one among several" forces, but often it is a "fully generalized principle". No matter its disguise, though, fate is "inescapable". We can think of this last feature as being the essential characteristic of fate. Thus, all fate inflicts events with a certain kind of necessity.\(^{72}\) The type of necessity, though, may vary.

St. Augustine considered popular astrology to be a kind of fatalism. By popular astrology I mean the view that our future actions are, at least in part, determined by the

\(^{70}\) Alexander of Aphrodisias 1983, p. 33. "The belief in fatality; the doctrine that all things are determined by fate; a particular form of this doctrine." (Oxford English Dictionary)


motions of the stars. He also distinguished between two kinds of astrology: those which "separate" the motions of the stars "altogether from the will of" some god, and those which claim that such motions are "dependent on that will". The former kind of astrology embraces what I call a natural fate in contrast to the personified fate of the latter. If the fate is personified, then the inevitability is the result of some person, or the fate is identified with the rational order of some person. In Greek mythology, for example, the Fates were three sisters, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, who determined the birth, destiny and death, respectively, of each individual. St. Augustine's own fatalism was also personified, the person being, of course, God.

Given what I have said it seems that personified fatalism is related to divination, but they are clearly not the same. For if we suppose that there is a person, God, who knows every event which will occur in the future, He still might not be the cause of each future event. So, even if there is an all

Augustine 1872, pp. 177-8.

"Nothing ... either rests or is moved otherwise than according to the reason of Zeus, which is the same thing as fate." (Plutarch, Saunders 1966, p. 101) See also: Stobaius, Long and Sedley 1987, 55M; Augustine 1872, pp. 188-9.

Hamilton 1940, p. 43; Plato 1941, pp. 354-5.

Augustine 1872, pp. 188-9.
knowing God, the fatalism which exists might only be a natural one. Of course, according to many theists, God is not only all knowing but He is the first cause of all things, as well. So, often the theses of divination and personified fatalism are joined together. Also, as we shall see in chapter 4, since divination is divine knowledge of the future, and since knowledge entails truth, if one's theory of truth is fatalistic, then so is one's theory of divination. It is clear enough now, though, that divination is a kind of fatalism regardless of its connection to personified fatalism.

Natural fatalism is any fatalism that is not personified. Hence, we can note a relation between natural fatalism and determinism, but here the relation is closer than the one noted above, as Cicero indicates in the following:

By 'fate', I mean ... an ordering and sequence of causes, since it is the connexion of cause to cause which out of itself produces anything. It is everlasting truth, flowing from all eternity. Consequently nothing has happened which was not going to be, and likewise nothing is going to be of which nature does not contain causes working to bring that very thing about. This makes it intelligible that fate should be, not the 'fate' of superstition, but that of physics, an everlasting cause of things - why past things happened, why present things are now happening, and why future things will be.\(^\text{77}\)

The fate described by Cicero is naturalistic and it is also a rather early statement of the thesis of determinism. Thus,

\(^\text{77}\) Cicero, Long and Sedley 1987, 55L.
determinism is a kind of fatalism, namely a naturalistic fatalism.

Another important distinction is that between global fatalism and local fatalism. Alexander, in reference to the Stoics's doctrine of eternal recurrence, gives us a clear example of the latter.

[The Stoics] hold that after the conflagration all the same things recur in the world numerically, so that even the same peculiarly qualified individual as before exists and comes to be again in that world, as Chrysippus says in his books On the World .... They say too that the only discernibilities between later and earlier peculiarly qualified individuals are with respect to certain external accidents; these discernibilities, in the case of the same Dion persisting and living, do not change him.\(^{78}\)

According to local fatalism, then, some but not all events are inevitable. A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley describe the view as one "in which outcomes are predetermined but not necessarily the routes to them."\(^{79}\) So, important events, such as one's birth and death, may be inevitable, but other events, even most events may be perfectly "open."\(^{80}\)

Local fatalism can also be divided into two kinds: token (local) fatalism and type (local) fatalism. Let's consider the oft sighted Somerset Maugham quotation to illustrate the difference.

\(^{78}\) Alexander, Long and Sedley 1987, 52F.

\(^{79}\) Long and Sedley 1987, p. 343.

\(^{80}\) Ibid.
Death: There was a merchant in Bagdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions and in a little while the servant came back, white and trembling, and said, Master, just now when I was in the market place I was jostled by a woman in the crowd and when I turned I saw it was death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture; now, lend me your horse, and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate. I will go to Samarra and there death will not find me. The merchant lent him his horse, and the servant mounted it, and he dug his spurs in its flanks and as fast as the horse could gallop he went. Then the merchant went down to the market-place and he saw me standing in the crowd and he came to me and said, Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant when you saw him this morning? That was not a threatening gesture, I said, it was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Bagdad, for I had an appointment with him to-night in Samarra.\footnote{The Collected Plays of W. Somerset Maugham, (London: 1931), pp. 298-9. "Sheppy", Act III. Taken from van Inwagen 1983, p. 24.}

It is clear that the servant was fated to meet Death, but there is no reason to suppose that fatalism effects any of the other events. So, the fate involved is only local. Still, it remains undecided as to whether the fated events are event tokens or event types. Was the servant fated to meet Death that night, in Samarra, at some specific time? In this case the proposition that is necessarily true is an eternal one which reports an event token. Such propositions are dated, that is, the time at which the action is performed is essential to the proposition itself. Any theory of local fatalism which claims that at least some eternal propositions are inevitable is a theory of token fatalism.
However, we might think that all that was fated in the Maugham example was a meeting with Death in Samarra, but not at any specific time; or, perhaps, it was not even fated that Death meet the servant at Samarra, but only that they meet on that day, or during that week. We might think that the example illustrates our certain mortality, the inescapable nature of death, but not the inevitability of any particular event token. Here we have examples of type fatalism. Similar remarks can be made with respect to the Oedipus example.82 We might think that fate dictated that Oedipus kill his father and marry his mother, but not that he do either at any specific time, or in any specific place. Thought of in this way, we have an example of type fatalism, but we can also imagine the fatalism involved as a token fatalism.

Contrary to the Alexander quote above, many of the Stoics embraced a global fatalism, believing that all events were inevitable.83 In fact, this is precisely the view that is under attack in Alexander's work, On Fate.84 For, as Alexander himself notes, problems of free will arise only with respect to global fatalism.85 Alexander did not reject the

82 Sophocles, Oedipus the King.
83 See, for example, Gellius, Long and Sedley 1987, 55K.
84 Alexander 1983.
85 Ibid., pp. 44-5.
doctrine of local fatalism since libertarianism is compatible with some versions of it. As I noted in the first chapter, the inevitability arguments are designed to establish a general conclusion about inevitability. Thus, they all argue for some form of global fatalism.

3.3 Some Unacceptable Definitions of Fatalism

Given what I have said in the previous section, it is tempting to define fatalism as the thesis that every event is, in some sense, inevitable. Indeed, this is the way in which I shall use the term through the remainder of this essay, but we should be clear of two things. First, strictly speaking, this is actually a definition of global fatalism. Since the inevitability arguments concern global fatalism, I can adopt the definition for use in this essay.

Second, and more important, we should be aware of the persisting ambiguity with respect to the term "inevitable". We saw in Chapter 1 that the categorical sense of alternate possibilities is incompatible with determinism. In the current chapter, though, I claimed that determinism is a kind of fatalism, more specifically, a natural fatalism. So, if we think of fatalism as suggesting that all events are inevitable

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86 van Inwagen 1983, p. 23. Van Inwagen does not endorse this definition. He simply mentions it as one of the three definitions that have been given in the literature. He endorses the Cahn definition, below.
in the categorical sense, then compatibilism is not merely incorrect, it is a contradiction. Since I think that the thesis of compatibilism is true, I would hardly be willing to accept this result. Thus, the word "inevitable" in the definition of fatalism is not meant in the categorical sense, nor any other specific sense, of the term. Of course, one may try to show that all kinds of inevitability deny the free will thesis, but one must support this claim with an argument, not with a definition.

To show that these comments are not directed at a straw man let's consider Richard Taylor's view of fatalism, expressed below.

A fatalist ... thinks he cannot do anything about the future. He thinks it is not up to him what is going to happen next year, tomorrow or the very next moment. He thinks that even his own behavior is not in the least within his power .... A fatalist, then, thinks of the future in the manner in which we think of the past, for all men are fatalists as they look back upon things. He thinks of both past and future "under the aspect of eternity," the way God is supposed to view them.87

Some might suggest that Taylor is putting forth a simple version of global fatalism; that he is using the term in the way that I am using it in this essay. For it seems to follow that nothing is in our power given that all events are inevitable. Yet for the compatibilist this is precisely the

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point at issue. Again, there is a kind of inevitability, a kind of fatalism, associated with determinism. So, Taylor's definition is harmful to the compatibilist position and for this reason it must be rejected in the absence of some sound argument.

I try to define key terms in a way similar to other contemporary philosopher's writing on the same topic. However, sometimes this is not possible. Consider this definition of "fatalism," given by Steven Cahn.

Fatalism is the thesis that the laws of logic alone suffice to prove that no man has free will, suffice to prove that the only actions which a man can perform are the actions which he does, in fact perform, and suffice to prove that a man can bring about only those events which do, in fact, occur and can prevent only those events which do not, in fact, occur. 88

Others seem to agree with Cahn. For instance, according to both van Inwagen 89 and Fischer 90 fatalism is the view that it is "a logical or conceptual truth" that no person can ever do otherwise. There are two reasons why I cannot accept this as a definition. First, it suffers from the problem noted above.

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89 "Fatalism, as I shall use the term, is thesis that it is a logical or conceptual truth that no one is able to act otherwise than he in fact does; that the very idea of an agent to whom alternative courses of action are open is self-contradictory". (van Inwagen 1983, p. 23)

90 "Fatalism is the doctrine that it is a logical or conceptual truth that no person is ever free to do otherwise." (Fischer 1989, p. 12)
It rules out, by definition and not argument, a compatibilism between fatalism and the free will thesis. Since divination and determinism are types of fatalism, it unfairly rules out compatibilism of any kind, as well.

Second, the Cahn definition implies that the denial of the free will thesis follows from "the laws of logic alone," or that the denial "is a logical or conceptual truth". For instance, in the sea-battle argument, it was suggested that the denial of the free will thesis follows given the law of the excluded middle, LEM for short, and that this principle is a logical truth. So, with this in mind, the sea-battle argument might be taken to support the kind of fatalism which Cahn and others are discussing. I call this logical fatalism.

But is LEM a logical truth? Suppose, following van Inwagen, we think that the denial of a logical truth is "self-contradictory". Then LEM would be a logical truth if and only if its denial was self-contradictory. LEM has two parts:

- There are only two truth-values; and,
- Every proposition has a truth-value.

Suppose we deny the first thesis and hypothesize that there are three, not two, truth-values. Have we said anything self-contradictory? I don't think so. We might have said

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91 This is implied given van Inwagen's quote in footnote 25, above. I am not sure that Cahn's "laws of logic" are "logical truths". He does not provide a definition of the notion.
something wrong, perhaps even ridiculous. But where is the contradiction in supposing that there are three, not two, truth-values? I have more to say about this latter, but from what has been said already we can see that Cahn's definition of fatalism is problematic.

G.E. Moore defines fatalism as "the view that whatever we will, the result will be the same; that it is, therefore, never any use to make one choice rather than another." A few things are clear about this definition. First, it denies our ability to do otherwise with respect to fated events. Thus, if this presents a global fatalism, then the free will thesis is false. Given what I have said above there is reason to reject a global reading of Moore's definition.

Second, Moore's view of fatalism suggests that we often do have the power to choose between events, but that this power is of no use with respect to fated events. Thought of in this way, Moore describes a local fatalism. Recall the servant in the Maugham example. He tries to avoid Death but he cannot do so. Still, we might suppose that he could have met up with Death in a variety of different ways. Now since this is a local fatalism, it cannot be used to argue against the free will thesis. Indeed, it seems to admit that we

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92 Moore 1912, p. 91.
sometimes can do otherwise; but sometimes we cannot, as in the case of avoiding Death.

Moore's definition should remind us of the Lazy argument, given in antiquity as a criticism of the Stoic's compatibilism.

If it is your fate to recover from this illness, you will recover, regardless of whether or not you call the doctor. Likewise, if it is your fate not to recover from this illness, you will not recover, regardless of whether or not you call the doctor. And one or the other is your fate. Therefore it is pointless to call the doctor.\textsuperscript{93}

Chrysippus, a Stoic who was also a global fatalist and a determinist, responded to this argument by bringing forth his doctrine of co-fated events. Certain events are complex. For example, if it is fated that I have a son, then it must also be fated that I conceive. One event cannot happen without the other, so the two are co-fated. Likewise, if it is fated that you will recover from a disease, then it might also be co-fated that you will see a doctor. Given global fatalism, events such as seeing a doctor and having an illness can be co-fated, and so the absurdity suggested by the Lazy argument does not arise.

I stated that each of the inevitability arguments is concerned with a type of global fatalism. I have noted that both divination and determinism are kinds of fatalism, and in the following chapters I consider the inevitability arguments.

\textsuperscript{93} Cicero, Long and Sedley 1987, 55S.
concerned with them. For now, though, we may ask: What is the kind of fatalism that is associated with the problem generally called the problem of fatalism, or the problem of future contingencies? I call it metalogical fatalism since it is the fatalism associated with the traditional theory of truth, as expressed in the beginning of the chapter, and this is a metalogical thesis. In order to motivate this use, and in an effort to understand the implications of the this kind of fatalism, we need to look at the arguments noted at the beginning of this chapter. First, a few clarifications are in order.

3.4 Time and Truth-values

There are at least four ways in which the notion of time is relevant to a proposition. The first and most obvious way is that we can think of propositions as having a tense indicating that the event reported by the proposition either has occurred, will occur or is occurring. Of course, it is possible to think of propositions as being tenseless, similar to the eternal sentences of W.V.O. Quine,94 but it seems that propositions can also be expressed as having a tense.

An R-proposition is an eternal proposition, that is, one specifying an event token, which has the form:

§ does a at t,
where § denotes a person, a an action, and t the time at which § performs a. In general, the time of event of an eternal proposition is the time at which the event reported by the proposition occurs. If the eternal proposition is an R-proposition, then the time of event, t, is the time at which the person, §, performs the action, a.

The time of event is distinct from what I call the time of utterance; that is, the time at which a sentence expressing the proposition is either uttered or written down. Let's assume that p is an R-proposition. Suppose one says that p is true, and she says this at some particular time, t', which is prior to the time, t, at which the event reported by p occurs. Thus, she makes a prediction at time t' of an event that will occur at time t. In this example, the time of event, t, is distinct from the time of utterance, t'.

There is also a forth and final sense in which time is relevant to propositions and their truth-values, namely, the time of truth. The time of truth is the time at which a proposition obtains its truth-value. To some philosophers, though, it makes no sense to speak of a proposition as becoming true or becoming false since, according to these philosophers, propositions bear an eternal relation to the truth-values that they have. I call this view the traditional theory of truth.
The traditional theory of truth consists of the following principles:

The Principle of the Fixity of Truth-values [FIX]: Propositions do not change their truth-values.

The Law of the Excluded Middle [LEM]: Every proposition is either true, or, if not true, false.

As I have shown, LEM can be broken down further into two parts.

Bivalence [BIV]: There are only two truth-values: truth and falsity.

The Principle of the Universality of Truth-values [UNI]: Every proposition has a truth-value.

Given FIX and UNI, if it makes sense to say of any proposition that it has a time of truth, then all propositions have an eternal time of truth.

Traditionalists, proponents of the traditional theory, often claim that the notion of a time of truth is based on a confusion. Consider this sentence:

1. Jack Lalane is standing.

On the one hand, (1) seems to be a proposition, something that could be the primitive bearer of a truth-value. Yet we cannot make a judgment as to whether (1) is true or false in the absence of some particular context. Imagine, for instance, that we are watching The Jack Lalane Show, and that he is doing deep-knee bends. The truth-value of (1) would seem to be fluctuating: from true to false, and back to true again.
Sentences like (1) do change their truth-values, and for this reason they are not propositions. But at any particular moment there is a proposition by virtue of which the above sentence gets its truth-value. For instance, (1) will be true when Jack is in fact standing. The claim by traditionalists is that once we understand the difference between sentences like (1) and propositions, and that the latter are the primitive bearers of truth-values, we will realize that all propositions are on a par with respect to their "time of truth".\(^{95}\)

This is not so much an argument in favor of the traditional theory as it is a response to a certain criticism of the view. The traditionalist is correct in that sentences like (1) do not provide us with an adequate reason for rejecting their view. Perhaps better reasons lie ahead. The question I shall consider now is whether or not the traditional theory is compatible with the free will thesis. The metalogical argument suggests that they are not.

3.5 Aristotle's Argument

\(^{95}\) See also: Alexander 1983, p. 137; Kneale and Kneale 1962, pp. 48-54.
Consider the following passage from Aristotle's *On Interpretation*.\(^\text{96}\)

1. If it is white now it was true to say earlier that it would be white; so that it was always true to say of anything that has happened that it would be so.

2. But if it is always true to say that it was so, or would be so, it could not not be so, or not going to be so.

3. But if something cannot not happen it is impossible for it not to happen; and if it is impossible for something not to happen it is necessary for it to happen.

4. Everything that will be, therefore, happens necessarily. So nothing will come about as chance has it or by chance; for if by chance, not of necessity.

This argument claims that, under the assumption that a proposition is true, it follows that it is necessarily true. We can easily imagine a similar argument which purports to show that under the assumption that a proposition is false, it follows that it is necessarily false. So, Aristotle's argument, in toto, can be used to argue for the claim that every proposition is necessarily true, or, if not, necessarily false. This conclusion is equivalent to the inevitable conclusion.

The conclusion of Aristotle's argument expresses a kind of fatalism. I call it metalogical fatalism, since the conclusion follows from the traditional theory of truth. The

\(^{96}\)Aristotle 1983, pp. 50-1, 18b9-18b16. I have taken the liberty of dividing Aristotle's passage into four separate paragraphs.
principles involved in this theory, LEM and FIX, are principles about propositions used to express logical truths\(^\text{97}\), and are not logical truths themselves, at least, in van Inwagen's sense. We can suppose that any one of them is false without contradicting ourselves. Yet the propositions form the backbone of any theory of logic, or theory of truth, that we are likely to believe. The principles can be coherently denied, but any such denial carries with it a drastic change in the foundations of one's logic. This is why the term metalogical fatalism is appropriate.

With respect to Aristotle's argument, (3) seems harmless, suggesting only that the following inference patterns hold:

- \(\neg \Box \neg p\) cannot not happen.
- So, it is impossible for \(\neg p\) not to happen.
- So, it is necessary for \(p\) to happen.

In general, we should treat "can" as the modal term "possible".\(^\text{98}\) Also, it is standard practice to take one modal term as primitive, and to define the others in terms of it.

Premise (1) has two parts. First, it is claimed that if something is the case now, then it was true earlier to say that it would be so. Second, it is claimed that it is always true to say of what has happened that it would be so. Also,

\(^{97}\) See Hunter 1971.

\(^{98}\) See Lehrer 1976a for a good discussion of this point.
part two of (1) contains a warranting connective indicating that it follows from the first part. I think that (1) is suggesting that neither the time of utterance nor the tense of a proposition affects its time of truth; that is, if an event does occur, then any proposition which expresses this fact is true, independent of either the proposition's tense or the time at which a sentence expressing the proposition was uttered.

Let's consider an example. Let "p" be the R-proposition "Joe is sitting at t," where \( t = \text{May 18, 1991 at 9:30 p.m.} \)

Let "g" be any sentence which expresses a proposition of the form "It will be that \( p \)" with the stipulation that the sentence be uttered at some time prior to the time of event for \( p \). Given that \( p \) is true, what is the truth-value of \( g \)? Aristotle is suggesting in (1) that \( g \), in this example, is true, also. The suggestion in (1) is that a difference with respect to time of utterance or tense can never affect the truth-value of a proposition.

If our reasoning has been sound up to this point, then we can shorten Aristotle's argument as follows:

1'. If a proposition is true, then it was always true to say that the proposition is or will be true; and if a proposition is false, then it was always true to say that the proposition is or will be false.

2'. If it is always true to say that the proposition is or will be true, then it is necessarily true; and if it is always true to say that the proposition is or will be false, then it is necessarily false.
3'. So, every true proposition is necessarily true, or, if not, necessarily false.

I contend that (1') and (2') both follow from the traditional theory of truth. As I have shown, each part of (1') follows directly given FIX and UNI, the second part of LEM; and (1') exhausts all possible truth-values, given BIV, the first part of LEM. So, (1') follows from the traditional view.

The proof that (2') follows from the traditional view is a little bit harder. Let's return to our example. Suppose that it is always true to say that \( p \) is true or \( p \) will be true. Then, given LEM and FIX, \( p \) cannot not be true. For if it is ever not true, then there must be a time at which it is false (LEM); yet, since the proposition is actually true, it would have to have changed from being true to being false in order for this to happen. Propositions, though, don't change their truth-values (FIX). Thus, if \( p \) is true it cannot not be true and, hence, it is necessarily true. So, (2') follows from the traditional view of truth, also.

3.6 Responses to Aristotle's Argument

Responses to Aristotle's argument fall into four categories. First, one may accept the traditional theory of truth, and admit that a certain form of global fatalism is true. A hard determinist would claim that this was a fatalism in the Taylor sense, also, that is, she would claim that this
fatalism denies the free will thesis. A compatibilist would hold onto both the free will thesis and the traditional theory of truth. One line she might take is to suggest that, given the traditional theory, the world is charged with metalogical fate, but that this fate is of no threat to our free will. Both responses will be discussed in further detail in the final chapter.

The remaining three responses are all libertarian since they attempt to retain the libertarian notion of free will. Each response admits the validity of Aristotle's argument but rejects the conclusion. Given what I have said, this entails a rejection of the traditional theory of truth. The three remaining responses exhaust the possible ways in which this can be done. I will look at an example of each of the three different types of responses, but there will remain particular theories within each type that I will not discuss.

The second response, and the first libertarian response, is to reject FIX but accept LEM. Such a position has been given by A.N. Prior. In a later work, Prior writes:

By a "tense logic" I mean a system with the following features: (a) it contains sentential variables ... which stand for sentences ... which in some cases are true at some times and false at others; (b) it contains the usual truth-functions ...; and (c) it contains two additional functions (say Fp and Pp) which may be interpreted as "It will be the case that p" and "It has been the case that p," the former being true when and only when the plain p

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will be true later on and the latter when and only when the plain $p$ has been true at some earlier time.\textsuperscript{100}

Thus, a rejection of FIX is built into any tense logic, according to Prior, since its denial is entailed by feature (a). Yet a tense logic also "contains the usual truth-functions", feature (b). So, they must also contain an acceptance of LEM. To understand this note that the truth-functions "$v$" and "$\sim$" are defined by the information contained in their characteristic truth-tables. These truth-tables are defined for two truth-values only, true and false, and false is defined as any proposition which is not true, making the two mutually exclusive. Thus, "the usual truth-functions" contain an implicit adoption of LEM, and an explicit adoption of LEM's formal counter-part: $p \lor \neg p$.

In the earlier work, Prior provides a model for a theory of possibility that help to explain his position.\textsuperscript{101} Imagine that, at any time, all propositions have a truth-value (UNI) and that there are only the usual two of these (BIV), but that FIX is false. Thus, a proposition may be false at some time, $t$, yet true at another time, $t'$. We would need devises more sophisticated than the truth-tables of the sentential calculus in order to represent the truth-values of a proposition of

\textsuperscript{100} Prior 1971, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{101} Prior 1967, pp. 22-3.
this kind. Prior uses the following kind of matrix to represent this structure:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0
\end{array}
\] (and then all 0's).

Here "0" means "false" and "1" means "true". The above matrix represents a proposition which is false for a duration of three time units, then true for a duration of two time units, and so on until eventually it becomes false forever.

If Prior's view is representative of the way the world is, then LEM poses no threat to fatalism. For even if it is true that there will be a sea-battle tomorrow, I might still be able to do something before then in order to make it false at the time of event. Free will and LEM are saved, but the cost is a rejection of FIX, and thus a partial rejection of the traditional theory.

One may be led to the second response in another way. Suppose one accepts LEM for reasons of simplification, similar to those given by Quine.\textsuperscript{102} Still, suppose that libertarianism is true. We might try to force LEM onto a libertarian universe. In a libertarian universe there are genuine possibilities, propositions which may turn out to be either true or false. Such propositions do not, now, have either truth-value since they are still open. So, if we accept LEM, we will classify these propositions as false.

\textsuperscript{102} Quine 1986, p.86.
Some of them, however, will become true, since they are now genuine possibilities. So, a proposition that was once false will become true, and FIX is denied.

The third response is to reject LEM but accept FIX. Recall that LEM has two parts.

BIV: There are only two truth-values: truth and falsity.

UNI: Every proposition has a truth-value.

I call a theory of truth Polish\textsuperscript{103} if it rejects BIV, but not UNI, and Fregean if it rejects UNI, but not BIV.\textsuperscript{104} Fregean theories fall into two groups, also: a weak and a strong variety. Frege himself was a proponent of the weak theory since he claimed that sentences of the form

The King of France is bald

are neither true nor false. This is because the singular term of the proposition does not denote anything.\textsuperscript{105} Propositions of this kind will not ever have a truth-value.

According to the strong view, though, all of the propositions which lack truth-values obtain them at some later time. I think that Aristotle was a Fregean in the strong sense. His solution to the sea-battle argument was to deny

\textsuperscript{103} See Lukasiewicz 1967.

\textsuperscript{104} Of course, it is possible to reject both UNI and BIV.

\textsuperscript{105} See "On Sense and Reference" in Frege 1952. Some philosophers think that Frege rejected BIV as well as UNI or that he had a Polish theory of truth.
that future contingencies have a truth-value. Propositions which lack truth-values, according to Aristotle, obtain them at some further time which is prior to the time of event for the proposition. Thus, the fixity principle can be maintained since, once a proposition obtains a truth-value, the truth-value of the proposition does not change. Not all propositions have truth-values but those that have them do not change them.

The forth response is to reject both FIX and LEM. According to some Polish theories, there are three truth-values: truth, falsity and indeterminacy. Future contingencies are indeterminate, and thus neither true nor false. BIV is false, since there are three truth-values, but UNI is true, since every proposition has one of the three. Also, FIX is false on such a view since those propositions which are now indeterminate will become either true or false at some late time. Thus, propositions change their truth-values. This is the view adopted by the Polish philosopher, Jan Lukasiewicz, who attributes the theory to Aristotle, as well.¹⁰⁶

3.7 The Master

¹⁰⁶ Lukasiewicz 1967.
The Master is a trilemma attributed to Diodorus Cronus. According to Epictetus it goes like this:

There is an incompatibility between the three following propositions, "Everything that is past and true is necessary," "The impossible does not follow from the possible," and "What neither is nor will be is possible."\(^{107}\)

Since a trilemma is a set of three inconsistent propositions, the propositions noted by Epictetus actually do form a trilemma if and only if any two of them entail the negation of the remaining one. Now Epictetus, as well as the Stoics, regarded the Master as a trilemma\(^{108}\), so any one of them would consider the following argument valid. Let us call it the Master Argument.

1. Every proposition true about the past is necessary.
2. An impossible proposition does not follow from a possible one.
3. Therefore, every proposition which is possible either is true or will be true.

The conclusion, (3), is equivalent to the inevitable conclusion.

Much of the literature on the Master Argument concerns the proper interpretation of (2) and whether or not (1) and

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\(^{108}\) According to Benson Mates, "no one challenged Diodorus' argument that the three propositions were incompatible." Mates 1961, p. 38. See also the remainder of the Epictetus quote, Long and Sedley 1987, 38A.
(2) actually entail (3).\textsuperscript{109} The second premise is hard to grasp if we try to understand it as a proposition. Let me borrow an idea from van Inwagen, however, and think of it in some other way.

In van Inwagen's argument for incompatibilism he constructs a modal operator, $N$, such that "$Np$" means "$p$ and no one has, or ever had, any choice about whether $p$."\textsuperscript{110} He then claims that according to the logic of this operator the following inference rules are sound:

(a): $\Box p \vdash Np$
(b): $N(p \supset g), Np \vdash Ng.$

Let's try to reformulate the premises of the Master argument as an inference rules similar to van Inwagen's. Thus, (1) and (2) become:

(1'): $g$ is past $\vdash Lg$
(2'): $\neg L\neg g, L\neg \neg g \vdash \neg L(g \supset \neg g)$.

Some interpretation is in order.

First, inference rules should always be expressed as metavariables. Since I am using "$p$" and "$g$" as variables, there would be an ambiguity if I expressed our rule as van Inwagen expresses his rules. Hence, the use of "$a$" and "$\#" as metavariables. Second, I have avoided use of the operator $N$ since I am only trying to construct an argument for fatalism.


\textsuperscript{110} van Inwagen 1983, p. 93.
Again, I will consider the issue of the compatibility of free will and metalogical fatalism at a later point. My operator, \( \mathcal{L} \), is to be thought of as being neutral with respect to the kind of necessity it expresses.

Third, I have rephrased (b) as (2'), though this is not obvious. If I replace \( \mathcal{N} \) in (b) with our neutral operator, \( \mathcal{L} \), and use our metavariables, "\( g \)" and "\( \bar{g} \)" I get:

(B) \( \mathcal{L}(g \supset \bar{g}), \mathcal{L}g \rightarrow \mathcal{L}\bar{g} \).

(2') is equivalent to

\( \mathcal{L}(\bar{g} \supset g), \mathcal{L}\bar{g} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}g \).

If I substitute "\( \neg g \)" for "\( \bar{g} \)" and "\( \neg \bar{g} \)" for "\( g \)" then I get

\( \mathcal{L}(\neg \bar{g} \supset \neg g), \mathcal{L}\neg \bar{g} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}\neg g \)

and, by double negation and exportation,

\( \mathcal{L}(\bar{g} \supset g), \mathcal{L}g \rightarrow \mathcal{L}\bar{g} \),

which is identical to (B).

I can justify the interpretation of the second premise of the Master argument as the rule (2'), as follows. I take, as primitive, "\( \mathcal{L}g \)" to mean "\( g \) is necessary". Thus "\( \neg \mathcal{L}\neg g \)" means "\( g \) is possible" and "\( \mathcal{L}\neg g \)" means "\( g \) is necessarily false" or "\( g \) is impossible". Also, following C.I. Lewis\(^\text{111}\), I render "\( \bar{g} \) follows from \( g \)" as "\( \mathcal{L}(g \supset \bar{g}) \)". Thus, "\( \bar{g} \) does not follow from \( g \)" becomes "\( \neg \mathcal{L}(g \supset \bar{g}) \)". An equivalent reading of (2) is:

\(^{111}\) See Hughes and Cresswell 1968, chap. 2.
If a proposition, $\beta$, is impossible and a proposition, $\alpha$, is possible, then $\beta$ does not follow from $\alpha$.

Given our interpretation, this is equivalent to (2'). So, the translation of the second premise is sound. 112

Is the Master a trilemma? Suppose I accept (1) and (2), understood as (2'). The third proposition in the trilemma can be stated as follows:

3'. There is a proposition which is possible but which neither is true nor will be true.

Let's call such a proposition "$p$". Suppose that $p$ is strictly equivalent to some other proposition, $g$, which is past. 113

Thus, $p$ follows from $g$ and $g$ follows from $p$. Since $p$ is possible, by (3'), $p$ cannot be impossible, given (2'). But $g$ is strictly equivalent to $p$, and $p$ neither is true nor will be true. So, $g$ is false, by LEM. Since $g$ is past, also, it is impossible, by (1). Given what I have said above, this is a contradiction. If I can find a proposition which is past, like $g$, but which is strictly equivalent to some future proposition, like $p$, then the Master is a trilemma.

John Martin Fischer suggests an interesting way to construct $g$. 114 We might try the following definitions:

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113 A sentence, $p$, is strictly equivalent to a sentence, $g$, if and only if $\mathcal{L}(p = g)$.

114 Fischer 1989b, p. 12. Fischer is critical of this construction and does not endorse it.
\[ g = \text{df. It was true to say at } \mathfrak{t} \text{ that there will be a sea-battle at } \mathfrak{t} ! \text{ (where } \mathfrak{t} \text{ occurs prior to } \mathfrak{t} !) ; \]

\[ p = \text{df. There will be a sea-battle at } \mathfrak{t} !. \]

For the sake of argument I will suppose that the current time is somewhere between \( \mathfrak{t} \) and \( \mathfrak{t} ! \). If we accept the traditional theory of truth, then \( g \) and \( p \) are strictly equivalent. For, given \( \text{FIX} \), \( g \) does not change its truth-value. Thus, if \( p \) is true, it will always be true to say that \( p \) will be true, so, \( g \) will be true, also; and if \( p \) is false, it will always be true to say that \( p \) is false, so, \( g \) will be false, also. As long as the traditional view is accepted, \( p \) and \( g \) must have the same truth-values. But \( g \) is about the past, whereas \( p \) is about the future. So, the Master is sound.

One might think that \( g \) is past due to its tense. But there are a variety of ways in which a proposition could be thought of as past, and a pastness with respect to tense is, perhaps, the least significant of these. I have noted in section 3.3, for instance, at least three other ways in which time is important to the truth-value of a proposition. Thus, a proposition may be past with respect to its time of utterance, or its time of truth, or its time of event, as well as its tense. The time of utterance is insignificant with respect to the sense of past in (1), and we are admitting that the traditional theory of truth is correct, for the sake of
argument. Hence, all propositions are eternal with respect to their time of truth.

The time of event, however, is very significant with respect to its sense of pastness. For we think of past events as being over and done with and, thus, "irredeemable" and "beyond our control". In this way past events are fixed, unalterable and necessary. So, a proposition would be necessary, in this sense, if its time of event has taken place. For once the time of event occurs the proposition is on the books and cannot be changed. Thus, we might think of \( g \) and \( p \) as having the same time of event, namely the time that the event reported by \( p \) occurs, that is, \( t' \). After all, both propositions are about the same event token, the occurrence of a sea-battle at \( t' \). This event is future, not past. So, \( g \) is neither past nor necessary.

Moreover, if we decide to divide propositions up into past, present, and future based on their time of event, then it appears that no sound version of the Master can be given. For, we may ask: How can a proposition with a past time of event ever affect a proposition with a future time of event unless some kind of determinism is assumed? This is why the incompatibility arguments concerned with determinism are alleged to be stronger that those concerned with fatalism. All fatalism can do is drag out some convoluted proposition, such as \( g \), which is not really about the past at all. With
respect to the determinism argument, propositions with past times of event are connected to the future. With respect to the Master argument, this seems doubtful.\textsuperscript{115}

But what is the time of event for \textit{g}? Is it the same as for \textit{p}? What, even, is the event that is reported by \textit{g}? \textit{Prima facie}, the event reported by \textit{g} is the event of the sea-battle at \textit{t'}; the event reported by \textit{p}. This judgment is incorrect, however. What \textit{g} says is that if a person were to utter a sentence expressed by the proposition \textit{p} at \textit{t} that her utterance would be true. It is the (possible) utterance of a proposition that is the event of \textit{g}; the sea-battle is the event of the proposition uttered, \textit{p}. Thus, the time of event for \textit{g} is \textit{t}, which is past. Still, \textit{p} and \textit{g} are strictly equivalent, given the traditional theory. So, the Master is a trilemma.

We can find support for (1), the necessity of the past, in FIX and the traditional theory of truth. For, though, we might, at first, think of the future as being open, with respect to the past things are different. According to Lukasiewicz:

\begin{quote}
We believe that what has happened cannot be undone .... What once was true remains true for ever. All truth is eternal.\textsuperscript{116}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{115} Lehrer has pointed out this criticism to me. It is also found in Fischer 1989b.

\textsuperscript{116} Lukasiewicz 1967, p. 22.
The past has been recorded, and it cannot be undone. History is fixed and set. The traditional theory of truth merely extends this view to the future, as well. For if future truth-values are already established, then, given the traditional theory of truth, the future is as fixed as the past. The Master tries to establish this by showing that the past contains our words about the future. If all past propositions are necessary, and the traditional theory of truth is true, all future propositions are necessary, as well.

3.8 Taylor's Argument

The final argument considered in this chapter is given by Richard Taylor. Taylor's argument rests on six "presumptions" which he gives in detail.\footnote{Taylor 1963, pp. 57-9.} I will now discuss these presumptions and point out which ones rest on the traditional theory of truth. The first presumption, for instance, is just LEM. So, it is included in the traditional theory of truth. The second, third and forth presumptions concern standard definitions of necessary condition and sufficient condition and the logical relations that hold between them. This is data that is never called into question and is accepted by all those involved in the debate.
The fifth presumption, \( P_5 \), states that "no agent can perform any given action, if there is lacking ... some condition ... necessary for the occurrence of that act."\(^{118}\) If it is inevitable, in any sense, that an event does not occur, then there is a necessary condition lacking for the occurrence of the event. Thus, \( P_5 \) can be used to argue for the incompatibility of the free will thesis and any form of fatalism. I will have more to say about it in the final chapter.

The sixth presumption, \( P_6 \), claims that "time is not 'efficacious'." According to Taylor this "means that if any substance or agent gains or loses powers or abilities over the course of time, then such a gain or loss is always due to something other that the mere passage of time."\(^{119}\) \( P_6 \) is supported by FIX. For if an R-proposition can change from true to false, then persons can gain or lose powers over time. And this loss is to be attributed to the passage of time. I have more to say about theories of time below.

In his argument, Taylor imagines himself to be a naval commander, about to issue an order of either going to battle or not going to battle. We are to suppose, also, that the outcome of his order's are ensured: if he gives the "battle"

\(^{118}\) Ibid., p. 58.

\(^{119}\) Ibid.
order, then a battle will occur, and if he gives the "no battle" order, then no battle will occur. Following Taylor, let "Q" be the proposition "A naval battle will occur tomorrow", and let "Q'" be the proposition that "No naval battle will occur tomorrow." Also, let "Q" be the act of issuing a "battle" order, and let "Q'" be the act of issuing a "no battle" order. Then Q is a sufficient condition of Q, and Q' is a sufficient condition of Q'. Thus, Q and Q' are both necessary for Q and Q', respectively. The argument is as follows.

1. If Q is true, then it is not within Taylor's power to do Q'.
2. If Q' is true, then it is not within Taylor's power to do Q.
3. Q is true, or, if not, Q' is true.
4. So, either it is not within Taylor's power to do Q, or it is not within Taylor's power to do Q'.

Since this argument can be generalized, the inevitable conclusion follows.

It is clear that the argument is sound if we accept all of the presumptions. Q' is a necessary condition for Q'. If Q is true, then Q' is false. (LEM) So, if Q is true, a condition necessary for Q', namely Q', is lacking. Thus, it is not within Taylor's power to do Q'. (P5) And the

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120 Taylor 1963, p. p. 61. I have made some minor revisions that do not affect the argument.
presumptions are all supported by the traditional theory, at least all of the presumptions other than P5. So, any rejection by one who thinks that the argument is valid, includes a rejection of the traditional theory.

3.9 What Price Freedom?

In this section I examine some of the consequences that follow given that one rejects the traditional theory of truth. If what I have said is correct, the libertarian must reject this traditional view. So we may think of these as the consequences of libertarianism.

A. Truth and Logic

If one rejects the traditional theory of truth, one must deny either LEM or FIX. If one denies LEM, one rejects classical logic, which includes the sentential calculus, in favor of a three-valued logic, at least so far as future contingencies are concerned. This is admitted by Polish theorists, such as Lukasiewicz\textsuperscript{121}, but it is true of Fregeans, as well. For if UNI is denied because of future contingencies, as Aristotle would suggest, then there will be future propositions that are neither true nor false, and don't conform to classical logic. Such a logic is, hence,

\textsuperscript{121} Lukasiewicz 1967a.
unequipped to handle future contingencies. Recall that classical logic admits to both parts of LEM.

If one denies FIX, then they may retain the sentential calculus, as Prior does. But in order to have a logic that captures the future as well as the past they will need to extend the sentential calculus with the addition of non-truth-functional operators, as Prior also does.\(^{122}\) Such operators are used to discuss changes in the truth-values of propositions. This logic is not extensional, and many would regard it with suspicion, though I am not one of them.

B. Truth and Modality

A libertarian will need a semantical theory in order to support her particular notion of "could have". In the version I have sketched out earlier, I adopted a possible worlds semantics and it would seem that any libertarian would have to do similarly. One popular view, which has influenced van Inwagen\(^ {123}\) among others, is the theory of Alvin Plantinga.\(^ {124}\) Plantinga defines a possible world as a maximally consistent sets of propositions. A set of propositions is maximally consistent if and only if for every proposition, either it or


\(^{123}\) van Inwagen 1983, p. 79.

\(^{124}\) Plantinga 1974.
its negation is a member of the set. The claim that the actual world is a possible world, and that the actual world maintains its identity over all times, is equivalent to the conjunction of LEM and FIX. So, if the traditional view is denied, the actual world is not a possible world, in Plantinga's sense.

To see this more clearly, consider the following argument. Let "$\mathcal{A}$" be the actual world, in Plantinga's sense, and let "$g$" be the proposition that there will be a sea battle tomorrow. Given LEM, $g$ will either be true or false and we shall suppose that it is true. Then we can give an argument the conclusion of which is that not even George Bush could render $g$ false.

Let "$p$" be any well-formed conjunction of all of the propositions in $\mathcal{A}$. Suppose that Bush can render $g$ false. Then, according to van Inwagen's rule (b), Bush can render $p$ false. Bush cannot render $p$ false, however. To do so he would have to change the actual world into another possible world, but what is the actual world has been settled for some time, and no matter what Bush does it will not change. So, Bush cannot render $g$ false. Clearly the argument can be generalized to show that no person can render a future true proposition false. Also, one can give a similar argument to show that no person can render a future false proposition true. This seems to suggest that no person ever can do
otherwise, given that the actual world is a possible world, in Plantinga's sense. The argument is no different than any of the other arguments that we have seen so far. Given the argument, it is clear that the traditional theory of truth is equivalent to the thesis that the actual world is a possible world, in Plantinga's sense.

C. Truth and Time

Rejection of the traditional theory of truth has ramifications on one's theory of time, as well. For instance, if the traditional theory of truth is correct, then the future is as real as the past, and there is no asymmetry between them. Thus, we may use a Minkowski model of the universe as a four-dimensional space-time manifold. According to Albert Einstein, the Minkowski model is accurate, and it is connected to relativity theory, as well.

... there is no more common-place statement than that the world in which we live is a four-dimensional space-time continuum. ...

The four-dimensional mode of consideration of the "world" is natural on the theory of relativity, since according to this theory time is robbed of its independence.125

Thus, given the connections noted above, rejection of the traditional theory of truth will lead to a rejection of the Minkowski model of time and, perhaps, part of the theory of

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125 Einstein 1931, p. 55-6.
relativity, as well. There is no four-dimensional space-time manifold, or, if there is, it is incomplete. The future is open, according to the libertarian. It does not exist, so there is no manifold to represent it.

One can sense another argument on the horizon, since, if what has been said is correct, it must be possible to rephrase metalogical argument so that it follows from assumptions about time instead of truth. T.S. Eliot is responsible for the most eloquent version.

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.
What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.
Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden. My words echo
Thus, in your mind.¹²⁶

It is clear that Eliot's view of time, a more poetic statement of the four-dimensional manifold, goes hand and hand with the traditional theory of truth. Both must be rejected by the libertarian. William James, a libertarian, was well aware of

¹²⁶ T.S. Eliot, "Burnt Norton"
this when he wrote: "Admit plurality, and time may be its form."\textsuperscript{127}

D. Concluding Remarks

In the next chapter I will prove that the inevitability arguments stand or fall together. Thus, if one is inclined to give up determinism in an effort to save free will, one should give up the traditional theory, too. What we have seen in this section is that in giving up the traditional theory one must give up a lot of other things, as well. The consequences of libertarianism, in and of themselves, do not constitute a reason for rejecting the theory. But freedom has its costs, and the price of libertarian freedom is a rather complicated metaphysics. Before we pay it, we should make sure that there is not another kind of freedom that will suit our needs but is within our budget. We will have to wait until the final chapter to see if there is one.

\textsuperscript{127} James 1948, p. 63, fn. 10.
4.1 Divination Delineated

The divination thesis claims that a divine being, God, has complete knowledge of all events -- past, present and future. The problem of divination is the problem of showing that this thesis is compatible with the free will thesis. In this chapter I focus on versions of the divination argument given by two American philosophers: Jonathan Edwards and Nelson Pike. I show that these arguments conform to the basic structure. I also draw conclusions about the comparative strength of the various compatibility problems given the first observation. For instance, I show that the problem of divination is no less troublesome than the problem of determinism and no more troublesome than the metalogical problem, contrary to the views of many philosophers.

Finally, I critically examine one attempt at solving the divination problem, called Ockhamism, which appeals to a distinction between hard and soft facts about the past.

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128 I would like to thank Henry Byerly, Robert Cummins and Keith Lehrer for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.


130 Pike 1965.

Ockhamism represents a kind of middle theory since it remains noncommittal with respect to the compatibility between free will and determinism. My criticism of Ockhamism is part of a more general rejection of middle theories as a whole.

I use the term "God" as a proper name which designates a person who has the divine attributes essentially, and who is, thus, worthy of worship. For my purposes I need not discuss all of the divine attributes since the problem of divination arises given only two of them: omniscience and eternality. I understand that God, by definition, has all of the divine attributes, but in this section I only analyze the two noted above.

Omniscience is perfect knowledge. Thus, if God is omniscient He cannot have contradictory beliefs and He knows every proposition that is true. There are two ways in which God could know everything. God has weak omniscience if and only if He knows every proposition that is true at the present time. God has strong omniscience if and only if He knows every proposition that either is true at the present time or will be true at some future time. Given the traditional theory of truth, the two views are equivalent. But if I suppose, for instance, that some future propositions are

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\[132\] Pike 1984, p. 608; Fischer 1988, p. 236.

\[133\] See Pike 1984, p. 605.
neither true nor false, then there will be propositions which are not now, at this time, true but which will be true at some later time. Such propositions may not be known by God, if He is only weakly omniscient, until their time of truth occurs, since prior to that time there may be nothing for Him to know. In this essay I understand the thesis of divination to entail that God has strong omniscience since without this assumption the divination argument cannot be constructed. Weak omniscience implies only a local fatalism, not a global one.

The infallibility thesis claims that God is infallible, that is, He cannot believe anything that is false. This thesis follows from the fact that God is strongly omniscient. For if God is strongly omniscient, then He knows the totality of facts, that is, He knows everything that is or will be true. But, as Wittgenstein noted, "the totality of facts determines both what is the case, and also all that is not the case." For if God's knowledge is complete, then He cannot

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134 Some theistic libertarian's, who deny bivalence, hold that God is only weakly omniscient. According to some of them, it is no imperfection on God's part that He doesn't know the truth-values of future contingent propositions since these propositions lack truth-values. Thus, there are no truth-values to know. See James 1948b, pp. 62-3.


136 Wittgenstein 1922 p. 31.
believe a proposition that is false without also having inconsistent beliefs. But God cannot have inconsistent beliefs. So, the divination thesis entails the infallibility thesis.\textsuperscript{137}

There are also two kinds of eternality that God might possess.\textsuperscript{138} First, we might claim that "God is eternal" means "if God exists, He is omnitemporal", that is, He exists at all times. Second, we might claim that "God is eternal" means "if He exists, His existence is atemporal", that is, He does not exist at any time. We can say that His existence is outside of time. Many philosophers think that the atemporal view of eternality provides a solution to the problem of divination.\textsuperscript{139} Many others think that such a view is incomprehensible.\textsuperscript{140} In this essay I regard God as being omnitemporal.\textsuperscript{141} At a later point I will show why the

\textsuperscript{137} According to Adams 1967, p. 494, "two claims" about God follow if He is omniscient. First, that He is infallible. Second that His knowledge is complete. (See also Pike 1965, pp. 28-9.) Here we have seen that the second claim entails the first. Pike 1984, p. 611, gives a different argument for this conclusion.

\textsuperscript{138} See Pike 1965, pp. 29-30.

\textsuperscript{139} See Boethius 1981.

\textsuperscript{140} Plantinga 1986, p. 239. Note that on this same page Plantinga also gives a divination argument designed to work against the second version of eternality.

supposition of an atemporal view of eternality does not make divination any less problematic.

4.2 Divination and Truth

Knowledge entails true belief. Thus, it is necessarily the case that if a person, $s$, knows that a proposition, $p$, is true, then $s$ believes that $p$ and $p$ is true. So, that God knows that $p$ entails that $p$. Also, since He is omniscient, that God believes that $p$ entails that $p$. Either one of these entailments can be used as a connecting thesis in a divination argument, that is, either one can be used to connect the necessity of the past with the necessity of the future in a divination argument.

Also, since God is omniscient, for any proposition, $p$, if $p$ is true, God knows that $p$ and, hence, God believes that $p$. So, $p$, God believes that $p$ and God knows that $p$ are all strictly equivalent, under the assumption that God exists. Given these logical relations we might be led to suspect that the problem of divination is the same as the metalogical problem. We might think that the problem arises within the traditional theory of truth, and that divination suffers because of the strict equivalences noted above.\(^{143}\)

\(^{142}\) Pike 1965, p. 28-9.

\(^{143}\) See Pike 1965, pp. 35-6, for a criticism of this view.
Still many, perhaps most, philosophers see the problem of divination as being much **stronger**, much more of a problem, than the metalogical problem. ¹⁴⁴ Indeed, one might note that there is more to divination than truth. Thus, it is at least possible that there is more to the problem of divination than what lies behind the metalogical problem. And this difference may be reflected in the strength of the corresponding inevitability arguments. I have not, as of yet, looked at any of the divination arguments. So, I am not in a position to comment on this debate, but I will return to this issue in section 4.8.

### 4.3 Edwards's Argument

The 18th century philosopher Jonathan Edwards gives a version of the divination argument that is very similar to the Master argument.¹⁴⁵ His first premise should look familiar.

1. ... [I]n things which are past, their past existence is now necessary: having already made sure of existence, 'tis too late for any possibility of alteration in that respect: 'tis now impossible, that it should be otherwise than true, that that thing has existed.

This is just a restatement of the first premise of the Master argument, which can be reformulated as:

1a. Past propositions are necessary,


where *past propositions* are propositions which are about the past.

Edwards's second premise, though, is clearly not part of the Master argument.

2. If there be any such thing as a divine foreknowledge of the volitions of free agents, that foreknowledge, by the supposition, is a thing which already has, and long ago had, existence; and so, now its existence is necessary; it is now utterly impossible to be otherwise, than that this foreknowledge should be, or should have been.

Let us say that a *G-proposition* is a proposition which reports a belief of God's. Given that God has strong omniscience, His knowledge is immutable, that is, it cannot change. Thus, God not only believes everything that is or will be true at this point in time, He had this same set of beliefs at every prior time, as well. It follows from (2) that

2a. All G-propositions can be expressed as past propositions.

That is, for every proposition expressing a belief held by God there is a proposition which is strictly equivalent to it yet which is about the past. Given (1a), it also follows that

2b. G-propositions are necessary, in some sense. Below, in section 4.8, I shall have much more to say about the difference between this premise and the corresponding one for the Master argument.

It is not obvious but Edwards's third premise is also related to the Master argument.
3. 'Tis also very manifest, that those things which are indissolubly connected with other things that are necessary, are themselves necessary. As that proposition whose truth is necessarily connected with another proposition, which is necessarily true, is itself necessarily true.

Edwards mentions two inference rules in (3). The first inference concerns propositions which are "indissolubly connected" to one another and the second concerns propositions which are "necessarily connected". As I have shown, one way in which two propositions, \( p \) and \( q \), can be "necessarily connected" with each other is for it to be the case that \( q \) follows from \( p \), that is, necessarily that, if \( p \), then \( p \). So, the second inference of (3) can be expressed as follows.

3a. \( \triangledown q, \quad \triangledown p \rightarrow \triangledown q \)\(^{146}\)

In section 3.6 I noted that (3a) is equivalent to the inference rule in the second premise of the Master argument.\(^{147}\)

I can assume that the second inference of (3) concerns the notion of logical necessity and that Edwards took this to be a kind of indissoluble connection, but he also seemed to

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\(^{146}\) See Prior 1967, pp. 113-4, and Widerker 1989, p. 98, for similar rules. If we add (3a) to the sentential calculus of, say, Whitehead and Russell 1910, then we get a system equivalent to \( K \), which is contained in system \( T \). Also, Lewis's system \( S1 \) contains (3a). See Hughes and Cresswell 1968, chapters 2 and 12, and 1984, chapter 1. Their version of (3a) is the characteristic axiom of system \( K \) (1984) and the axiom \( A6 \) of system \( T \) (1968).

\(^{147}\) This inference rule is: \( \neg \triangledown \neg q, \quad \neg \triangledown q \rightarrow \neg \triangledown (q \rightarrow \neg q) \).
think that propositions can be indissolubly connected in other ways. Thus, he thought that (3a) was an instance of a more general claim, which is the first inference of (3).

3b. Given both that a proposition, \( p \), is indissolubly connected to another proposition, \( q \), and that \( p \) is necessary, we can infer that \( q \) is necessary, also.

So, Edwards's argument literally contains the Master argument. It mentions one premise of the Master argument explicitly in (1), and the other is included in (3).

Edwards concludes with the following comments, which can also be divided into two parts.

4. 'Tis no less evident, that if there be a full, certain and infallible foreknowledge of the future existence of the volitions of moral agents, then there is a certain infallible and indissoluble connection between those events and that foreknowledge; and that therefore, by the preceding observations, those events are necessary events; being infallibly and indissolubly connected with that whose existence already is, and so is now already necessary, and can't but have been.

The first part of (4) is a premise about the connection between G-propositions and future propositions, i.e., propositions about the future.

4a. There is an indissoluble connection between G-propositions about the future and the future propositions that they predict.

G-propositions about the future are propositions which express beliefs that God has about the future. Such propositions make predictions, and (4a) claims that these G-propositions are indissolubly connected with the propositions that they predict.
The connecting theses noted in section 4.2 are all instances of (4a). Consider, for instance,

That God believes that g entails that g,

where g is a future proposition. This last proposition, given the restriction of g, is an instance of (4a) in which the "indissoluble connection" is entailment. The second part of (4) claims that, given the conjunction of (1a), (2b), (3b) and (4a), we can conclude:

4b. So, future propositions are necessary.

Thus, all propositions are necessary, given (1a), and the inevitable conclusion follows.

4.4 Ockham's Way Out\(^{148}\)

A popular reply, called Ockhamism, is to deny (2a) above.\(^{149}\) The Ockhamist will accept (1a), (3b) and (4a) of the Edwards argument but will make a distinction between two kinds of past facts: hard facts about the past and soft facts about the past. The necessity of the past, the Ockhamist claims, refers only to hard facts, not soft facts. But the facts expressed by past G-propositions are soft facts. So, the divination argument is unsound.

\(^{148}\) The title of this section is borrowed from Plantinga 1986.

\(^{149}\) See Ockham 1983.
There have been numerous attempts to analyze the notions of hard and soft facts. As a starting point let's say that hard facts about the past are facts that are genuinely and strictly about the past.\textsuperscript{150} That is, hard facts are facts that are about the past but are only about the past. We can contrast these two propositions.

Jack was standing yesterday.

It was true yesterday that Jack will be sitting tomorrow. The first proposition is genuinely and strictly about yesterday, the past, whereas the second partly concerns tomorrow, the future. So, the second proposition is not strictly about the past. The Ockhamist claims that the first proposition expresses a hard fact about the past and the second expresses a soft fact. God's knowledge of future events, according to the Ockhamist, concerns soft facts about the past since they are of the form

God knows that Jack will sit tomorrow

and such propositions are not strictly about the past.

Recall that the fixer used in the Master argument concerns the future, too.

It was true yesterday that there will be a sea-battle tomorrow.\textsuperscript{151}

\textsuperscript{150} Plantinga 1986.

\textsuperscript{151} See Widerker 1989, p. 98.
So, this proposition is not strictly about the past and, by the above criteria, it is not a hard fact. If we agree with the Ockhamist that the necessity of the past applies only to hard facts about the past, then it seems that the Master argument is unsound, also. Thus, the Ockhamist strategy can be used as a response to both the divination problem and the metalogical problem. I will need a more formal account of hard facts than the one that I have given thus far in order to comment on Ockhamism as to whether it solves either or both problems. First, let us look at another version of the divination argument since it is fair to say that it began the contemporary debate on the subject.

4.5 Pike's Argument

Perhaps the most compelling of all recent inevitability arguments is the one given by Nelson Pike.\[162\] Suppose that there is a person, Jones, who exists and performs some act, \(X\), at some time, \(T_2\). If God exists, then, since He is omniscient, He knows the \(R\)-proposition which reports that Jones does \(X\) at \(T_2\). Further, there was a time well before the birth of Jones, say \(T_1\), at which God existed, and knew this, as well. Pike gives the following argument for the claim that

\[162\] Pike 1965.
if God existed at $T_1$, then Jones could not perform an act other than $X$ at $T_2$.

1. "God existed at $T_1$" entails "If Jones did $X$ at $T_2$, God believed at $T_1$ that Jones would do $X$ at $T_2".$

2. "God believes $X$" entails "'$X$' is true."

3. It is not within one's power at a given time to do something having a description that is logically contradictory.

4. It is not within one's power at a given time to do something that would bring it about that someone who held a certain belief at a time prior to the time in question did not hold that belief at the time prior to the time in question.

5. It is not within one's power at a given time to so something that would bring it about that a person who existed at an earlier time did not exist at that earlier time.

6. If God existed at $T_1$ and if God believed at $T_1$ that Jones would do $X$ at $T_2$, then if it was within Jones's power at $T_2$ to refrain from doing $X$, then (1) it was within Jones's power at $T_2$ to do something that would have brought it about that God held a false belief at $T_1$, or (2) it was within Jones's power at $T_2$ to do something which would have brought it about that God did not hold the belief He held at $T_1$, or (3) it was within Jones's power at $T_2$ to so something that would have brought it about that any person who believed at $T_1$ that Jones would do $X$ at $T_2$ (one of whom, by hypothesis, God) held a false belief and thus was not God -- that is, that God (who by hypothesis existed at $T_1$) did not exist at $T_1$.

7. Alternative 1 in the consequent of item 6 is false (from 2 and 3).

8. Alternative 2 in the consequent of item 6 is false (from 4).

9. Alternative 3 in the consequent of item 6 is false (from 5).

10. Therefore, if God existed at $T_1$ and if God believed at $T_1$ that Jones would do $X$ at $T_2$, then it was not within
Jones's power at T2 to refrain from doing X (from 6 through 9).

11. Therefore, if God existed at T1, and if Jones did X at T2, it was not within Jones's power at T2 to refrain from doing X (from 1 and 10).\textsuperscript{153}

It is not easy to see that this argument fits the basic structure. Premises (1) - (3) follow given assumptions that I have made about God. This should be clear from the definitions discussed in sections 4.1 and 4.2. Thus, (1) - (3) comprise the connecting thesis of Pike's argument. Premises (4) and (5), on the other hand, comprise the fixer part of the argument since both are instances of the more general rule, the past is necessary.

The rule behind (6) is similar to (A6) of the previous section except that Pike's claim concerns the notion of power as opposed to that of necessity. The Pike principle is as follows.

\textbf{The Principle of Power [POP]}: It is within S's power to make it that g is false, and p brings it about that g, then it is within S's power to make it that p is false.

This principle is not an explicit part of the basic structure. The principle is similar to that of PTP from chapter 1. I will discuss it and other similar principles in the final chapter. I will note here that the structure of POP is similar to that of the second premise of the Master argument.

\textsuperscript{153} Pike, pp. 33-4.
According to Pike, given POP, Jones can refrain from doing X only if it is within Jones's power at T2 to bring it about that at least one of the following alternatives is true:

(A1) God held a false belief at T1;
(A2) God did not hold the belief he held at T1;
(A3) God did not exist at T1.

God cannot hold a false belief, as I have shown in section 4.2. Thus, alternative (A1) is ruled out independently of any assumptions that we may make about the fixity of the past. This is not so with respect to the other two alternatives. Both (A2) and (A3) depend upon the necessity of the past. Here, then, is where the Ockhamist makes her move.

The Ockhamist can argue in either of two ways. First, she may try to show that all G-propositions express soft facts. If all G-propositions express soft facts, then none of them are genuinely and strictly about the past. So, there is no reason to think that any of them are necessary. Thus, alternative (A2) seems plausible since there is nothing preventing Jones from bringing it about that (A2) was the case. Second, she may try to show that the proposition "God exists" expresses a soft fact. Again, if this proposition expresses a soft fact, then we have no reason to think the proposition is necessary. Thus, (A3) expresses a contingent proposition, and it is possible that Jones can bring it about that (A3) is true. The first solution has been endorsed by
Alfred J. Freddoso and the second by Marilyn McCord Adams. In the following section I consider both of these options in more detail, beginning with Adams's Ockhamism.

4.6 Ockhamism Revisited: Hardness and Accidental Necessity

Adams gives an account of what it is for a proposition to be about a time that is the basis of her analysis of the hard/soft fact distinction. According to Adams:

"Proposition $p$ is at least in part about a time $t$" =df. "The happening or not happening, actuality or non-actuality of something at $t$ is a necessary condition of the truth of $p$."

Adams then defines "hard fact" in terms of the above notion.

"Proposition $p$ expresses a hard fact about a time $t$" =df. "$p$ is not at least in part about any time future relative to $t$."

We can assume that a proposition expresses a soft fact about a time if the proposition is at least in part about any time future relative to that time.

Let's recall some previous examples and evaluate them given Adams's Ockhamism.

1. Jack was standing yesterday.
2. It was true yesterday that Jack will be sitting tomorrow.
3. God knows that Jack will sit tomorrow.


155 Adams, pp. 493-4, italics mine. Adams's definitions are expressed in terms of "statements" but these are just what we are calling "propositions".
and

4. It was true yesterday that there will be a sea-battle tomorrow.\textsuperscript{156}

Since propositions (2) - (4) all refer to events that will occur tomorrow, they are all in part about the future, according to Adams. Thus, they express hard facts. However, (1) expresses a soft fact. For (1), it seems, is not even in part about the future.

According to Adams, Pike's inference from (5) to (9) is invalid.\textsuperscript{157} This is because the proposition

God exists

expresses a soft fact, not hard fact, about the past. Her reasons for accepting this are easy to follow. First, I should note that the notion of hard facthood is closed under entailment.\textsuperscript{158} That is, if a proposition, $p$, expresses a hard fact about the past, and if $p$ entails another proposition, $q$, then $q$ expresses a hard fact about the past. Next, that God exists entails that God is omnitemporal, that is, that God exists at all times, as we know from section 4.1. But the proposition that God exists at all times "is in part

\textsuperscript{156} See Widerker 1989, p. 98, for a sentence equivalent to this one.

\textsuperscript{157} Adams, p. 499.

\textsuperscript{158} Plantinga 1986, pp. 248-9. See also Freddoso 1983, p. 139.
about the future," so it is not a hard fact.\footnote{Adams, pp. 495-6. See Pike 1984, p. 613. Adams gives another similar argument on pp. 497-8.} Thus, there is no reason to believe that it is necessary, and alternative (A3) is plausible.

Freddoso explains Ockhamism in terms of the kind of necessity that is associated with the past. Let's call this necessity \textit{accidental necessity}. The first thing that I will note about accidental necessity is that it is unlike any of the other kinds of necessity that we are more familiar with. First, the past is not \textit{logically necessary}, that is, the negations of propositions which are genuinely and strictly about the past are not contradictory. Second, accidental necessity is not \textit{causal necessity} since there may be past events which were not causally determined yet which are now \textit{accidentally} necessary. What this means is that propositions which are not accidentally necessary at some time, may become so at a later time. And this is not true with respect to either logical or causal necessity.\footnote{See Freddoso 1983, pp. 138-9.}

According to Freddoso, the logic of accidental necessity reflects the primacy of the pure present.\footnote{Freddoso 1983, p. 145.} What the past has over the future, which makes the former fixed but the later not, is that it \textit{has been}. Its truth, and falsity, has
been recorded. Thus, each moment of the past was once a part of the pure present. If we can somehow separate those propositions that are genuinely and strictly about events that have occurred, then we will have found the class of propositions that are accidentally necessary.

Freddoso calls purely present-tense propositions immediate propositions. Other propositions are nonimmediate. We can assume that present-tense propositions are genuinely about the present, and that a proposition is purely present-tense if it is also strictly about the present, as opposed to being about some other past or future time, as well. He then claims that "we can characterize the Ockhamistic position most accurately by the assertion that the pure present is metaphysically primary, since what is true at any given moment t is true at t because of what, at t, has been or is or will be purely present." Intuitively, propositions are accidentally necessary at some time, t, if and only if they are true in every world which shares the immediate propositions of the actual world at t. The class of immediate propositions will be equivalent to the class of propositions that are genuinely and strictly about the past or present.

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Freddoso responds to the Pike argument by rejecting the inference from (4) to (8). His main point is that the doctrine of essential omniscience implies that G-propositions are not immediate propositions.

Briefly, if God is, as is frequently held, essentially omniscient, then it can be argued persuasively, I believe, that every proposition attributing to God a belief about the future is nonimmediate. So, all G-propositions are nonimmediate. They are not accidentally necessary, and cannot be used to fix the truth of future propositions in the divination argument. So, the argument is unsound.

These arguments share an idea that was first introduced in the contemporary literature by Pike. The idea is that the omnitemporal nature of God renders it the case that no proposition which expresses a fact about Him can express a hard fact. Adams makes this clear. Since an omnitemporal God exists at all times, any proposition about Him is about all times. Thus, it seems that no G-propositions express hard facts, and no adequate defense of the divination argument can be given.

4.7 Divination and Determinism

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164 Freddoso 1983, p. 158.

Before I evaluate Ockham's way out, let's consider two claims made by philosophers about the comparative strength of the inevitability arguments. In this section I consider Freddoso's claim that the determinism argument is stronger than the divination argument and is, thus, more threatening. In the next section I consider David Widerker's claim that only the divination argument and not the metalogical argument "possess a real threat to human freedom." Interestingly enough, each of these philosophers uses Ockhamism to support his claim. I show that both claims are false and this will help us to see the troubles behind Ockhamism.

In order to evaluate Freddoso's claim I need to compare arguments. First, let's recall Edwards's argument in a shortened form.

1. Past propositions are necessary.

2. G-propositions can be expressed as past propositions.

3. So, G-propositions are necessary.

4. There is an indissoluble connection between future G-propositions and the future propositions that they predict.

5. So, future propositions are necessary.

\[166\] Freddoso 1983.

\[167\] Widerker 1989, p. 97.
Second, let's try to construct a determinism argument using Edwards's argument as a model.

1'. Past propositions are necessary.

2'. There is an indissoluble connection between past propositions and future propositions.

3'. So, future propositions are necessary.

One might try to argue that (2') follows given determinism. If it does, then clearly the determinism argument is stronger than the divination argument.

But, of course, (2') does not follow given determinism alone. What follows given only determinism is:

The conjunction of past propositions together with the laws of nature are indissolubly connected with future propositions.

However, the laws of nature are not past propositions. For the laws of nature are about the future as well as the past; the laws of nature entail propositions about the future. So, the laws of nature are neither accidentally necessary nor do they express hard facts about the past. Perhaps Ockhamism can be used in the determinism problem, too.

The incompatibilist will naturally point out that the laws of nature can be fixed in some other sense even if they do not express hard facts. If I add a premise to the determinism argument which expresses this fixity of the laws, then the argument will be valid. However, this move is available to the proponent of the divination argument, as
Let $\Gamma$ be any set of G-propositions such that the predictions made by those propositions form a complete set of true propositions about the actual world. $\Gamma$ is fixed and unalterable as the laws of nature. At least there is no more reason for thinking that the laws of nature are fixed than there is for thinking that the set $\Gamma$ is fixed. So, why think that divination is less problematic than determinism?

What I have pointed out is that the fixer for the determinism argument is complex. It does not simply concern the necessity of the past. Thus, a premise about the fixity of other kinds of propositions is needed. But it is always open to the proponent of the divination argument to use this premise, also. If the laws of nature are thought to be necessary in some sense, perhaps this type of necessity applies to the set $\Gamma$, as well. At least Freddoso has given us no reason to assume that the two classes of propositions are not alike in this respect. So, he has given us no reason to think that the divination argument is any weaker than the determinism argument.

4.8 Divination and Metalogical Fatalism

Widerker thinks that the divination problem is more worrisome than the metalogical problem, and he supports his claim by arguing that Ockham's way out will work for the latter but not for the former. Let's assume, for now, that
Widerker is correct in what he says about the divination argument. Why think that Ockhamism solves the metalogical problem? According to the Master argument these two propositions are strictly equivalent.

A1. There will be a sea-battle tomorrow.
A2. It was true yesterday that there will be a sea-battle tomorrow.

And it was understood that the equivalence between (A1) and (A2) follows from the traditional theory of truth. The Ockhamist, it seems, can agree with all this but claim that (A2) expresses a soft fact since it is obviously about the future, and it entails (A1). So, neither (A2) nor (A1) are accidentally necessary.

This is all well and good but now let's compare these next propositions:

B1. There was a sea-battle yesterday.
B2. It will be true tomorrow that there was a sea-battle yesterday.

Given the traditional theory of truth, these propositions are strictly equivalent, as well. I might argue that (B1) expresses a soft fact about the past since (B2) is not strictly about the past, and (B2) entails (B1). Or I could say that (B2) expresses a hard fact about the past since (B1) is genuinely and strictly about the past, and (B1) entails (B2). It is not clear which alternative I should choose.
The above example is inspired by a criticism of Ockhamism presented by Fischer.\textsuperscript{168} Fischer considers the following two propositions.

\textbf{C1.} Smith existed yesterday.  
\textbf{C2.} The first day of Smith's existence will not be tomorrow.\textsuperscript{169}

Clearly, (C1) entails (C2). But (C2) is in part about the future. So, (C1) cannot express a hard fact, contrary to what we might expect. A similar argument can be used to show that any proposition expresses a soft fact. For any true proposition, $p$, entails that God believes that $p$.\textsuperscript{170} But according to the Ockhamist, this last proposition expresses a soft fact. So, every proposition expresses a soft fact about the past. Fischer concludes that reflections of this sort undermine the hard/soft fact distinction. But given the same data Fischer could have argued differently.

Up to this point, I have explained Ockhamism in three ways. First, in terms of hard and soft facts. Second, in terms of immediate propositions. Third, in terms of accidental necessity. And I have shown that all of these can be defined in terms of one another. Also, I have noted that the intuition resting behind Ockhamism is the notion of a

\textsuperscript{168} Fischer 1983, pp. 73-5.  
\textsuperscript{169} Fischer 1983, pp. 74-75.  
\textsuperscript{170} Under the assumption, of course, that God does exist.
proposition's being *genuinely and strictly* about a time. Now, the proposition (A2), as well as (B2) and (C2), is *genuinely* about the past, and this claim is agreed upon by both the Ockhamist and the non-Ockhamist. The point of disagreement comes with respect to whether or not (A2) is *strictly* about the past.

According to the Ockhamist, (A2) is not strictly about the past since it is in part about the future. No doubt the Ockhamist is correct with respect to this point, as well, but this does not matter. For it is sufficient for the non-Ockhamist to claim that no propositions are strictly about the past. And the evidence I have presented so far supports this claim. This is the substance behind Fischer's original criticism of Adams, and it would also explain why Adams and Freddoso were able to show that propositions concerning God were about the past. Since no propositions are *strictly* about the past, a proposition is only about the past if it is *genuinely* about the past. But all propositions are equivalent to propositions which are genuinely about the past. So, if there are any past propositions, then all propositions are past.

Prior notes that the metalogical argument "is directed against those who argue that we have no control over the past"
but think that we have some over the future. 171 Thus, according to the metalogical argument, if one assumes that past propositions are necessary, in some sense that implies that we have no control over them, then it can be shown that all propositions are necessary. Everything I have said so far seems to confirm that the metalogical argument is sound. For I have shown that all propositions are on a par with respect to their past facthood -- none are strictly about the past, but all are genuinely about the past. This, again, follows given the traditional theory of truth, since given this view any proposition can be expressed as a proposition which is in part about the past. Thus, if we assume that past propositions are necessary, it can be shown that all propositions are necessary. So, the insight pointed out by Fischer in defense of the divination argument can be turned into another version of the metalogical argument.

I conclude that the Ockhamist has not shown that the divination problem is less troublesome than the metalogical problem, and Widerker's claim is unsupported. For there is reason to reject the notion of a proposition's being strictly about a time. And according to the traditional theory of truth, any proposition is genuinely about the past. There is no sense in which a proposition can be about the past besides

being either strictly or genuinely about the past. So, if past propositions are necessary, all propositions are necessary. The Ockhamist position is unable to provide a solution for either the divination problem or the metalogical problem. So, Widerker has not established that the latter problem is weaker than the former.

4.9 Concluding Remarks

As I have shown, the trouble with Ockhamism concerns the notion of a proposition's being strictly about the past. For it is clear that propositions are genuinely about times but without the notion of strictness the Ockhamist runs into trouble. If Fischer's criticism is correct, then all propositions are strictly about the future since they all entail propositions about the future. This is clear from my own example, as well. For any proposition that expresses a truth entails that God, if He exists, believes the proposition. This latter fact is expressed by G-propositions which, by the Ockhamist's own admission, are about the future as well as the past. Thus, Ockhamism cannot be correct.

While explaining his own version of Ockhamism Freddoso points out that accidental possibility is neither compatibilist nor libertarian.\(^{172}\) Thus, some propositions

\(^{172}\) Freddoso 1983.
that are accidentally necessary are compatible with determinism and some are not. But then we may ask: What relevance is the notion to free will, or to the problem of divination? Any theory of free will is either compatibilist or libertarian. If one's theory of free will can be either, I would question how much of a theory one has. What, after all, is the benefit to a propositions being accidentally possible? What is it about the soft facthood of G-propositions that makes them non-threatening to our free will? It seems that the answer to both questions is "Nothing!"

In this chapter I have studied two versions of the divination argument as well as a popular criticism of it -- Ockhamism. I have also compared the divination argument to the other two inevitability arguments: the metalogical argument and the determinism argument. As far as I can tell, there is no reason to suppose that any of these arguments is either stronger or weaker than the others. But I have yet to say anything about the soundness of these arguments. I have proved that "middle" theories, such as Ockhamism, will not work. This leaves us with two options. First, adopt libertarianism, along with the rejection of the traditional theory of truth and the theses of divination and determinism. Second, adopt compatibilism. In the final chapter I close this essay with a criticism of the former view and a defense of the latter.
CHAPTER 5: THE PROBLEM OF FREE WILL AND DETERMINISM

5.1 Free Will and Determinism

In this final chapter I do four things. First, in sections 5.2 and 5.3, I consider some of the many definitions of "determinism" that have been given by philosophers throughout this past century. My aim here is to avoid any definition which is equivalent to either metalogical determinism or divination, and I explain my reasons for doing so in section 5.2. Also, I try to define "determinism" without prejudicing the debate between the compatibilist and the incompatibilist. For this reason I dismiss the view that determinism is equivalent to the thesis of universal causation, shared by G.E. Moore, among others. 174

Second, I present two versions of the determinism argument, one by John Hospers 175 (section 5.4) and the other by Peter van Inwagen 176 (section 5.5). I show that each fits the basic structure though they both differ slightly from examples of inevitability arguments that I have presented so

173 I would like to thank Henry Byerly, Robert Cummins, and Keith Lehrer for helpful comments on earlier versions of this chapter.

174 See section 1.3.

175 Hospers 1950.

176 van Inwagen 1983.
far. Third, I discuss responses to the three types of inevitability arguments as well as the three compatibility problems (sections 5.6 and 5.7). As I have shown, these arguments stand or fall together, so solutions can be divided into three kinds: hard determinist, libertarian and compatibilist.

The forth and final purpose of this chapter is to solve the problem of free will and determinism. Since all of the inevitability arguments are on a logical par this solution holds for the other compatibility problems, as well. My argument for compatibilism is as follows. The inevitability arguments undermine categorical possibilities only. There is no reason to think that categorical possibilities are necessary for moral responsibility, though alternate possibilities of some kind are necessary. These alternate possibilities are the essence of a compatibilist theory of free will.

Much of what I have to say in support of compatibilism has been already said in the previous chapters. But in this chapter I am in a position to make the points more clearly. In addition, I also present a version of the libertarian theory of agency which I will compare to my compatibilist account. By doing so, and given everything else I've said, it should be clear that a compatibilist theory of free will and
agency is preferable to either a libertarian one or a theory of hard determinism.

5.2 Determinism and Fatalism

Of all the theses I discuss in this essay perhaps the most difficult to define is that of determinism. One problem is that determinism suffers from ambiguities similar to fatalism. In fact, many philosophers regard these two theses as synonymous. I will work toward an adequate definition of determinism by first considering some of the other definitions that are popular among contemporary philosophers.

My first definition is very formal but, thankfully, it is just as clear. It is suggested by the Polish philosopher Jan Lukasiewicz.

By determinism I understand the belief that if \( A \) is \( b \) at instant \( t \) it is true at any instant earlier than \( t \) that \( A \) is \( b \) at instant \( t \).\(^{177}\)

Here, \( A \) is a subject, \( b \) is a property and \( t \) is a time. This definition is connected with the issue of metalogical fatalism.\(^{178}\) Specifically, Lukasiewicz's definition is entailed by FIX. So, given his definition, determinism follows from the traditional theory of truth.

\(^{177}\) Lukasiewicz 1967, p. 22.

\(^{178}\) We can think of "\( R \)" as having the form "\( A \) is \( b \)."
My next definition is reminiscent of personified fatalism and divination. According to J.J.C. Smart, for instance, determinism is equivalent to the following claim.

It is in principle possible to make a sufficiently precise determination of the state of a sufficiently wide region of the universe at time $t_0$, and sufficient laws of nature are in principle ascertainable to enable a superhuman calculator to be able to predict any event occurring within that region at an already given time $t_1$.\(^\text{179}\)

As Smart notes, this definition dates back to Pierre Simon de Laplace of the late 18th century. Laplace defined determinism in terms of the capabilities of an all knowing being whereas Smart's definition mentions a "superhuman calculator." Still, each incorporates the notion of prediction in some way. Moreover, each concerns the notion of the possibility of complete foreknowledge - by a person in the case of Laplace and by a machine in the case of Smart. Thus, the divination thesis entails determinism, in Smart's sense.

Neither of the definitions I have shown so far will suit my purposes, though. As for the first one it would be hard to distinguish the metalogical problem with that of the determinism problem, and the same can be said for the second definition with respect to the divination and determinism problems. Of course, all of these problems are connected in important ways, but we should be reluctant to conclude that

\(^{179}\) Smart 1961, p. 294.
the problems are all the same or that the connecting theses are equivalent.

Let's contrast three related but different claims. First, that the inevitability theses all mean the same thing. Second, that the inevitability theses are all strictly equivalent, that is, each thesis entails and is entailed by the other two theses. Third, that the inevitability arguments are equivalent in strength, that is, they stand or fall together. One of the purposes of this essay is to establish the third claim. This task would be easier if either of the other two claims were correct since both, independently, entail the third claim. But Pike has given us reason to think that the first claim is false. Perhaps the second claim could be proven but the project would be as great as the whole of this essay. And clearly, if we were to try to establish any of the claims by first adopting a definition of determinism similar to the ones above, an opponent would contend that the reasoning was circular. So, for my purposes it is best to give a definition of determinism that is independent of both the traditional theory of truth as well as the divination thesis.

5.3 Determinism and Causation

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180 Pike 1965, pp. 35-6.
The third definition of determinism begins to get at what is particular to this thesis, and what separates it from the traditional theory of truth and the divination thesis. Keith Lehrer gives the following definition of determinism.

Determinism is the thesis of universal causation, the thesis that everything is caused.\textsuperscript{181} According to Lehrer, the thesis of universal causation, or TUC for short, is equivalent to the thesis of determinism. Not all philosophers agree with Lehrer on this point.

Van Inwagen says that in order to derive determinism from TUC three additional claims need to be established.

1. If an event (or fact, change, state of affairs, or what have you) has a cause, then its cause is always itself an event (or what have you) and never a substance or continuant, such as a man.

2. If an event (or what have you) $A$ was the cause of an event $B$, then it follows, given that $A$ happened and given the laws of nature, that $A$ "causally necessitated" $B$, that $B$ could not have failed to happen.

3. Every chain of causes that has no earliest member is such that, for every time $t$, some event in that chain happens earlier than $t$.\textsuperscript{182}

But each of (1) - (3) is rejected by the libertarian theory of agent causation, or libertarian agency. This theory will be discussed in section 5.8 but one important part of it must be mentioned here. Libertarian agency entails that not all causes are necessitating, (2) above. But clearly determinism

\textsuperscript{181} Cornman, Lehrer, and Pappas 1982, p. 85.

\textsuperscript{182} Van Inwagen 1983, pp. 3-4.
entails that all causes are necessitating. As I shall prove, the notion of libertarian agency is important to the libertarian project as a whole. Thus, in the interest of fairness, we must reject Lehrer's definition. The most we could say is that determinism is equivalent to TUC plus some combination of the (1) - (3). Thus, determinism is equivalent to the theory of universal causal necessitation.

The final definitions are both given by van Inwagen. His first definition of determinism is "the thesis that, given the past and the laws of nature there is only one possible future."\textsuperscript{183} I accept this as a workable definition of the term and note that it entails the following proposition:

$D_1. \Box((p \land n) \Rightarrow f)$,

where $p$ is the conjunction of past propositions, $n$ is the conjunction of laws of nature and $f$ is any future proposition. According to van Inwagen's second definition, however, determinism is much stronger than ($D_1$).

Specifically, the second definition suggests that determinism is the conjunction of the following two theses:

For every instant of time there is a proposition that expresses the state of the world at that instant;

If $p$ and $g$ are any propositions that express the state of the world at some instants, then the conjunction of $p$ along with the laws of nature entails $g$.\textsuperscript{184}

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid., p. 65.

\textsuperscript{184} Ibid.
This definition entails both (D1) and

\[ D2. \square ((f \land p) \Rightarrow p'), \]

where \( f' \) is a proposition which expresses the state of the world at some future time and \( p' \) is a proposition which expresses the state of the world at some past time. There are differences between (D1) and (D2), namely that the later is expressed in terms of states of the world at a time, while the former is not. These differences aside, however, there is a clear sense in which (D1) expresses the idea that the past determines a unique future, whereas (D2) expresses the idea that the future determines a unique past. Van Inwagen suggests a kind of symmetry thesis when he claims that both (D1) and (D2) follow given the definition of determinism. The symmetry is that determinism works both ways: from past to future, and from future to past. But is the symmetry thesis correct? Let's construct an example and see.

We can imagine a world, \( g \), which is identical to the actual world, \( a \), except that \( g \), at the moment of creation, was exactly as the actual world was on January 1, 1950, excluding all events that occurred prior to this date. After 1950, \( a \) and \( g \) are identical. It seems that determinism can be true in both \( a \) and \( g \). Moreover, it seems that \( a \) and \( g \) can share the same set of laws. Since they are identical after 1950 we can assume that both worlds are in the same state on January 1, 1951, one year after the beginning of \( g \). Let \( p \) be the
proposition which expresses the state of \( g \), or \( \varrho \), a year after \( \varrho \)'s creation.\(^\text{185}\) Let \( g \) be a proposition which expresses the state of \( g \) at some time prior to 1950. If (D2) is correct, that \( p \) entails that \( g \). Thus, \( g \) will be true in \( \varrho \) since \( p \) is true in \( \varrho \). But no proposition, such as \( g \), which expresses the state of the actual world prior to 1950 is true in \( \varrho \). So, (D2) does not follow from determinism and the symmetry thesis is false.

It is tempting to respond to this argument by claiming that the state of \( g \) at \( t \) might differ from the state of \( \varrho \) at \( t \), even after 1950. Thus, the state of \( g \) on January 1, 1951 might be distinct from the state of \( \varrho \) on that same date. But I constructed the example so that \( g \) and \( \varrho \) are supposed to be identical during and after 1950. In what sense, though, are \( g \) and \( \varrho \) the same? The worlds only differ with respect to the past, but if the past can effect propositions expressing future states of the world, then in what sense are these propositions future?

The last question is significant. In my investigation of the metalogical problem I noted that the traditional theory of truth makes it difficult to talk about propositions being strictly about a time. I also noted, in chapter 4, that all

\(^{185}\) Given any particular time after 1950 the same proposition will express the state of the world both at \( g \) and at \( \varrho \).
propositions are genuinely about a time, but none are strictly about a time. Given this, talk of propositions expressing past or present states of the world seems empty. If the traditional theory of truth is correct, we will have to say that the state of the world, at any particular time, is always the same. So, the traditional theory of truth entails van Inwagen's second definition.

None of this has any bearing on the determinism argument, however, since (D1) can serve as a connecting thesis, and both of van Inwagen's definitions entail this claim. My main reason for adopting the first definition over the second concerns the similarity between the second definition and the traditional theory of truth. Again, I want to avoid making the determinism problem look like either of the other two. Accepting the first definition is the easiest way to do this. My claim about the inevitability arguments is this: different theses give rise to different problems all of which require the same solution.

5.4 Hospers's Argument

The first determinism argument I will discuss was presented by John Hospers. Unlike the arguments I have shown so far, Hospers's argues that we are never responsible for any of our actions. The sense of "responsibility" intended here by Hospers could be either causal or moral, though I think
that he intends it to mean the latter, and this is how I shall interpret him. Hospers's argument is as follows.

1. An occurrence over which we had no control is something we cannot be held responsible for.

2. Events $E$, occurring during our babyhood, were events over which we had no control.

3. Therefore events $E$ were events which we cannot be held responsible for.

4. But if there is something we cannot be held responsible for, neither can we be held responsible for something that inevitably results from it.

5. Events $E$ have as inevitable consequence Neurosis $N$, which in turn has inevitable consequence Behavior $B$.

6. Since $N$ is the inevitable consequence of $E$ and $B$ is the inevitable consequence of $N$, $B$ is the inevitable consequence of $E$.

7. Hence, not being responsible for $E$, we cannot be responsible for $B$.\(^{186}\)

The conclusion of this inevitability argument is different than the inevitable conclusion but I have already shown how the two are related.\(^{187}\)

Hospers's premise (1) is important since it establishes the link between responsibility and control. According to Hospers, control is a *necessary* condition for moral responsibility. I have already established this claim in chapter 2, so we can accept (1) as true.

\(^{186}\) Hospers 1950, p. 328.

\(^{187}\) See section 1.8.
Premise (2) is the fixer premise, similar to the claim that the past is necessary. Hospers says, instead, that the past is beyond our control. But it is beyond our control only because we lack the power to change it. So, again we can transfer control-talk into power-talk, and power-talk into freedom-talk, and so on. Eventually one can see that the words have changed but the song is still the same: we cannot do anything about the past. Premise (3) follows from the first two premises, (1) and (2).

Premise (4) is related to the collection of propositions, inference rules and argument forms similar to premise (2) of the Master. For simplicity I symbolize (4) as the following inference rule:

\[ N\neg p, L(p \supset q) \vdash N\neg q, \]

where "\( N\neg p \)" means "No person is even partly responsible for the fact that \( p \),"\(^{188}\) and "\( L(p \supset q) \)" expresses that \( p \) follows (inevitably) from \( q \)^{189}. I have said a lot about this and similar inference rules, and I will have more to say about it below, so I'll move on.

The connecting thesis is contained in premise (5). Hospers states the thesis in terms of a rather primitive theory of psycho-analysis, but this is beside the point.

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\(^{188}\) van Inwagen 1980, p. 33.

\(^{189}\) The word "inevitably" is redundant here.
Given the thesis (D1), our behavior is the inevitable consequence of events that occurred prior to our birth. So, any determinist should accept a claim similar to premise (5), though they may object to Hospers's precise formulation of the view. Premise (6) expresses the fact that the relation of inevitable consequence is transitive. Thus, the conclusion, (7), follows given premises (3), (4), (5) and (6).

It is easy to see that Hospers's argument fits the basic structure since it contains the fixer, the connecting thesis and the basic structure form, which is contained in premise (4). The only difference is that the conclusion is narrower than the inevitable conclusion but, as I have said, the latter conclusion entails Hospers's conclusion.

5.5 Van Inwagen's Argument

Van Inwagen gives three arguments all of which are attempts to formalize what he calls the consequent argument.

If determinism is true, then our acts are the consequences of the laws of nature and 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 present acts) are not up to us. 190

Already this argument seems different from the divination argument and the metalogical argument. The second premise, for instance, claims that both laws of nature and past

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190 van Inwagen 1983, p. 56.
propositions are fixed. Clearly, this second premise is a fixer premise, though.

One version of van Inwagen's argument\textsuperscript{191} suits my purposes best, though similar remarks may be made with respect to either of the other two. In this argument, van Inwagen constructs a modal operator, "\(N\)", such that, "\(Np\)" means "\(p\) and no one has, or ever had, any choice about whether \(p\)." He then claims that according to the logic of this operator, the following two inference rules are sound.

(a) \(\Box \alpha \vdash \alpha\) 
(b) \(N(\alpha \Rightarrow \beta), \alpha \vdash \beta\)

The first rule claims that under the assumption that a proposition is logically necessary, we may deduce that it is also necessary in a sense that rules out free choice. Unlike Descartes's God, we have no control over the logical truths.

Note that here the operator, \(N\), is distinct from our operator, \(\mathcal{L}\). The latter is neutral with respect to the issue of free will whereas the former refers a kind of necessity that, by definition, rules out free will. Since this difference is important I will henceforth refer to the \(N\) operator as "the unalterability operator" specifying that the word "unalterable" means "necessary in a way that rules out free will." The second rule should be very familiar, by now. It is similar to the second premise of the Master argument.

\textsuperscript{191} See van Inwagen 1983, pp. 93-104.
except that it includes the $N$ operator, not the neutral $L$. Again, I'll have more to say about it below.

Van Inwagen's version of the determinism argument can be stated as follows. From (D1), by exportation, we get,

\[ \Box(p \Rightarrow (n \Rightarrow f)) \]

where $p$ is the conjunction of past propositions, $n$ is the conjunction of laws of nature and $f$ is any future proposition. Recall that determinism entails (D1). So, this is a connecting thesis. Given rule (a) it follows that:

\[ N(p \Rightarrow (n \Rightarrow f)) \]

Now, according to van Inwagen, both the conjunction of past propositions and the conjunction of laws of nature are unalterable. So,

\[ Np \]

and

\[ Nn. \]

(3) seems equivalent to the second premise of the Master argument. Given rule (b) we may deduce:

\[ N(n \Rightarrow f), \]

from (2) and (3). It follows, given rule (b), (4) and (5), that:

\[ Nf, \]

or any future proposition, $f$, is unalterable.

The argument seems to fit the basic structure. This is clear given the following simplified version it.
Rule (a) justifies the move from (2) to (3) and rule (b) justifies the move from (1) and (3) to (4). The only differences between the argument directly above and the basic structure concern the occurrences of the non-general N and □ operators. Thus, van Inwagen's argument is a particular example of the basic structure. I will have more to say about the more general basic structure, as well as this and other particular instances of it, below.

5.6 Incompatibilist Responses to the Inevitability Arguments

There are four parts to the basic structure. The fixer premise, Lp; the connecting thesis, L(p ⊃ q); the inevitable conclusion, Lq; and, the structure itself, that is, the argument form itself. All responses to the inevitability arguments can be understood by reference to these parts. Of course, it may be the case that another necessity operator, like the unalterability operator, is substituted for the neutral operator, L.

If we concentrate on the basic structure, then there are four possible responses that one can give to any inevitability argument. These fall into two groups: incompatibilist responses and compatibilist responses. An incompatibilist,
with respect to any of the three compatibility problems, in turn can respond in either of two different ways. First, she can accept the inevitable conclusion and claim that the argument is sound. This is the hard determinist solution. Second, she might, in an effort to save free will, deny the corresponding connecting thesis of the inevitability argument, the second premise in the basic structure. This is the libertarian solution. I will discuss each incompatibilist solution, in order.

The hard determinist admits that the free will thesis is false because some connecting thesis - divination, the traditional theory of truth, or determinism - is true and there is an incompatibility between them. As I have shown, if we accept the inevitable conclusion, we must deny several other propositions concerning counterfactuals, causation and agency. Such denials are not easy to accept, especially for the hard determinist since a theory of causation seems necessary for any theory of determinism.

One way in which the hard determinist can avoid the above conflict is to try to argue that the incompatibility arguments rule out alternate possibilities that are relevant to free will but not ones that are relevant to causation. For instance, the hard determinist could suggest that categorical possibilities are essential to attributions of free will whereas some non-categorical possibility is essential to the
truth of causal propositions. But this move seems ad hoc. Since agency is a kind of causal relation it seems that the hard determinist would admit that only non-categorical possibilities are relevant to a theory of agency. Moreover, I have shown in chapter 2 that alternate possibilities of action are essential to any theory of agency. Thus, the hard determinist, given that she accepts a theory of agency, must admit that there is some sense in which agents can do otherwise. So, she must explain why this sense is not relevant to free will and moral responsibility.

Since the inevitability arguments are all on a logical par the libertarian must deny all of the connecting theses. The point here is that the fixer premises of each type of inevitability argument are equally compelling. And the validity of the argument is not dependent upon which connecting thesis is used. Thus, the libertarian must deny each connecting thesis if she thinks that she should deny determinism. In addition, the denial of the traditional theory of truth carries with it a commitment to a three-valued logic, an asymmetrical theory of time, and a rejection of some commonly held views about possible worlds. 192

Everything in the previous paragraph was established in chapters 3 and 4. I suspect, though, that some philosophers

192 See section 3.9.
still do not accept my claim that the inevitability arguments stand or fall together. Perhaps I can restate my comments of sections 4.8 and 4.9 in order to convince these opponents. I need to reestablish that the fixer premises of the inevitability arguments are all equally compelling. If I can do this, then obviously the arguments are on a logical par.

Suppose one thinks that the conjunction of past propositions is necessary, or beyond our control. Then, if they accept the traditional theory of truth, they must also think that all future propositions are beyond our control. Given the traditional theory, the following propositions are strictly equivalent:

\[
g = \text{df. It was true to say at } t \text{ that there will be a sea-battle at } t' \text{ (where } t \text{ occurs prior to } t').
\]

\[
p = \text{df. There will be a sea-battle at } t'.\]

But \( t \) may be past and \( t' \) future. So, if past propositions are necessary, then so are future propositions for the strict equivalence with respect to \( g \) and \( p \) suggests that any future proposition can be expressed as a past proposition. In order to deny this one must deny the traditional theory of truth.

As we saw in chapter 4, it will do no good to deny that \( g \) is strictly about the past for the traditional theory suggests that no propositions are strictly about the past.

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193 Fischer 1989b, p. 12. Again, Fischer is critical of this construction.
Thus, one can make this reply only if they reject the traditional theory in the first place. If one accepts the traditional theory of truth, then the determinism argument and the metalogical argument are on a logical par. The point is that there is no more reason to reject the determinism thesis, in light of the determinism argument, than there is to reject the traditional theory of truth, in light of the metalogical argument.

Suppose one also thinks that the conjunction of the laws of nature are necessary, or beyond our control. Well then it follows that the set of God's beliefs is also necessary, or beyond our control, provided that God does exist. For just as we cannot now do anything about the laws of nature so, too, we cannot now do anything about the set of God's beliefs, even his future beliefs. They seem as timeless and beyond our control as the laws of nature.

One cannot, following the Ockhamist, suggest that God's beliefs are not necessary since they are timeless and, therefore, not past. For, first, the same could be said with respect to the laws of nature since they are timeless and not past, also. And, second, one need not claim that the set of God's beliefs is past in order to show that it is necessary. One could simply say that this set is analogous to the laws of nature. Thus, if conjunction of the laws of nature is necessary, then so is the set of God's beliefs. Hence, the
determinism argument and the divination argument stand or fall together.

Given all that I have said above, the fixer premise of the determinism argument is no more or less compelling than the fixer theses of the other two inevitability arguments. Thus, the three kinds of inevitability arguments all stand or fall together. So, the libertarian, if she is to remain consistent, must deny all three connecting theses and accept the implications of such denials. As I have also shown, the hard determinist, if she is to remain consistent, must deny the possibility of either a counterfactual analysis or the truth of any causal proposition.

None of this conclusively rules out either theory. For the libertarian might accept the consequences of her view and the hard determinist might still claim that a theory of free will implies the existence of categorical possibilities but a theory of causation, or a counterfactual analysis, does not. But the plausibility of both theories rests on the requirement of categorical possibilities with respect to a theory of free will. In section 5.8 we shall investigate such a theory, called the libertarian theory of agency. So, our judgment concerning the correct response to the inevitability arguments will have to wait until after that point.
5.7 Compatibilist Responses to the Inevitability Arguments

Both of the first two responses were incompatibilist responses. The compatibilist believes that determinism is compatible with the free will thesis. So, the compatibilist would claim that all inevitability arguments are unsound.\(^{194}\) Also, the compatibilist cannot reject any connecting thesis. Hence, there are only two compatibilist alternatives.

The third response to the inevitability arguments, and the first type of compatibilist response, is to claim that the basic structure is invalid. This seems to be Chrysippus's reply to the Master. He denied the second premise of the Master, and claimed that the impossible does follow from the possible. As I have shown, the second premise of the Master is similar in form to van Inwagen's rule (b). Is the basic structure a valid form of argument? Recall that the basic structure is:

\[
\frac{Lp}{L(g)}
\]

This is related to the following proposition,

\[A6. L(p \Rightarrow g) \Rightarrow (Lp \Rightarrow Lg),\]

\(^{194}\) This is true at least with respect to the sense of "inevitable" that undermines attributions of free will and moral responsibility.
in the sense that the former is valid if and only if the latter is a logical truth.\footnote{This should be clear if one formulates the corresponding conditional of the argument, which is easily seen to be equivalent to A6.} Likewise it can be reformulated as an inference rule, similar to the second premise of the Master argument or van Inwagen's rule (b).

As I have stated, (A6), or some equivalent proposition, is included in most basic modal systems, the systems $\mathcal{K}$, $\mathcal{T}$, and $\mathcal{S}1$, for instance.\footnote{See Hughes and Cresswell 1968, chapters 1 and 12, and Hughes and Cresswell 1984, chapter 1.} So, it is valid for modal operators of very weak systems, the weakest systems yet constructed by modal logicians. Thus, there is reason to suspect that it holds for any plausible necessity operator, such as our $\mathcal{L}$, van Inwagen's $N$, and Hospers's $N'$ operators. Hence, unless we can come up with an adequate counter-example, and one does not appear to be forthcoming, we should accept any inevitability argument as valid.

The final response to the inevitability arguments is to deny the fixer premise. For instance, in his reply to the Master Cleanthes claimed that the past is not necessary. If he was correct, then we can deny the fixer premise of the determinism argument, van Inwagen's premise (4), as well. Similar moves will allow us to deny the fixer premise of each of the inevitability arguments. Since the past is not fixed,
it cannot be used to fix the future. This response to van Inwagen's argument has been given more recently by Keith Lehrer.\textsuperscript{197} Also, Plantinga gives a similar response to the divination argument of Pike's.\textsuperscript{198} Yet another version of this response is given by David Lewis who denies that the laws of nature are necessary.\textsuperscript{199}

This line of defense is \textit{prima facie} implausible. For \textit{everyone} admits that the past is necessary, at least in the sense that we cannot now do anything about it. That is, we cannot have control or power over the past; we cannot change it. Nonetheless, Lehrer makes some good points in defense of the final response. According to Lehrer, the "defect" in the determinism argument involves the assumption that if a person could have done otherwise, then she could have brought it about that either the laws of nature are different or the past is different. But, he adds that if a person had done otherwise "then, of course, either the laws of nature would have been different or the state of the universe would have been different. But that is not to say that the person could have brought about these conditions."\textsuperscript{200}

\textsuperscript{197} Lehrer 1980, p. 199.

\textsuperscript{198} Plantinga 1974b.

\textsuperscript{199} Lewis 1981.

\textsuperscript{200} Lehrer 1980, p. 199.
I think that what Lehrer is suggesting here is that in one sense, what I am calling the categorical sense, the past is necessary. But this sense is irrelevant to attributions of free will and moral responsibility. In the sense that is relevant, the past is not necessary. Thus, as I suggested in chapter 1, there is an ambiguity with respect to the inevitability arguments. In one sense they are sound, but not a threat to our freedom; in the threatening sense they are unsound, since the fixer premise is false.

Lehrer's response is a bit tricky so let's go over it slowly. First, let's say that a model of a proposition is an interpretation such that the proposition comes out true. In this essay I am partly concerned with models for what I call freedom propositions, that is, propositions which express that a person has a particular kind of freedom or power. Let's assume that a proper model for a freedom proposition is a possible world. Thus, a freedom proposition is true if and only if there exists a certain possible world. The question now becomes: How do we decide which possible worlds provide adequate models? To answer this question one needs to specify the accessibility relations that hold between the actual world and the possible worlds which count as models for freedom propositions.

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201 Hunter 1971, p. 6.
The incompatibilist would say that the only worlds which are relevant to attributions of free will are worlds which diverge* from the actual world. Since it is not categorically possible for me to change the past, I cannot do so, and if this is required for doing otherwise, I cannot do otherwise. Now Lehrer would admit that we cannot change the past in the categorical sense. There is nothing that we can do now that would make the past any different from what it is. What Lehrer claims, though, is that there are still relevant possible worlds, ones which are accessible to the actual world, in which the past is different than it actually was and in which I do other than I do in the actual world. The existence of such words provides the appropriate model for the freedom propositions without suggesting that anyone can categorically change the past.

One may ask: Why are these other possible worlds, which do not diverge* from the actual world, relevant to the truth of freedom propositions? My response is that these are precisely the same worlds which provide models for propositions ascribing causal or moral responsibility of the agent. I proved in chapter 2 that alternate possibilities are essential to the truth of causal propositions. But clearly I did not suggest that the possible worlds which provide models for our causal judgments diverge* from the actual world.
For instance, if an event, \( g \), causes another event, \( e \), we require there to be other possible worlds in which \( g \) occurs. But we do not require that there be another possible world which diverges from the actual world in which some other event, \( e' \), follows \( g \). In fact, the existence of such a world would probably cause us to retract our original judgment. Thus, divergent possible worlds do not provide an adequate model for causal judgments. So, they do not provide an adequate model for agency and there is no reason to think that they should provide such a model for free will, either. In the absence of such a restriction, our models for freedom propositions may include worlds in which the past is different. In this sense the past is not necessary for it could have been otherwise. I return to this response below.

5.8 Theories of Agency

In order to complete my response to the inevitability arguments, I need to further investigate the notion of agency. As I have shown, this notion is crucial to the compatibilist/incompatibilist debate. What distinguishes libertarian agency from compatibilist agency are precisely those features that are unobtainable in a deterministic model. If these features are necessary for a theory of agency, then compatibilism is untenable. On the other hand, if it is found that the additional features are of no value to the concept of
agency, then a response to the inevitability arguments will be forthcoming.

Unfortunately, most theories of agency have been given by libertarians. There have been exceptions - Sophie Botros claims that the Stoics held a compatibilist theory of agency\(^2\), and the determinist Spinoza wrote about the active nature of persons\(^3\) - but since Thomas Reid, in the eighteenth-century, agency theories have been predominantly libertarian. In fact, contemporary philosophers use the term agency theory to refer specifically to a theory held by Reid, C.A. Campbell, Richard Taylor and Roderick Chisholm, among others, all of whom are libertarians.\(^4\) I refer to this theory as the libertarian agency theory, though be warned that in the literature the word "libertarian" is never included in the title. Perhaps the reason for this is that many people think that there cannot be a compatibilist theory of agency. Of course, this is the topic of the current section. In order to answer the question about compatibilism and agency we need to first understand the libertarian theory.

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\(^2\) Botros 1985.

\(^3\) Spinoza 1949. Spinoza did not think that freedom was essential to agency, so he would not have called himself a "compatibilist." But the only freedom he seems to deny is freedom of indifference.

According to the libertarian theory of agency\(^{205}\), persons are sometimes morally responsible for their actions because they are agents. An agent, in the libertarian sense, is an entity distinct from a mere collection of events, and distinct from her own "formed character".\(^{206}\) They are substances, not collections of mental states or events. Agents are influenced by their characters, but characters "incline" the agent without "necessitating" that any particular action ensue.\(^{207}\) The agent is the appropriate bearer of moral ascriptions since she sometimes causes events, but she causes them in such a way that in the exact same set of circumstances she could have caused some different event. Thus, the agent has freedom of indifference. Chisholm speaks of the agent as a "prime mover unmoved", as a being that originates events since the causal chain leading to them stops with the agent.\(^{208}\) Thus, the agent bears the ultimate causal responsibility for her actions.

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\(^{205}\) This sketch of the libertarian theory is drawn from the following works: Reid 1983, Campbell 1951 and 1957, Taylor 1963, and Chisholm 1964.

\(^{206}\) Campbell 1957.

\(^{207}\) "At the time of choice the agent must have the power to 'rise above' past circumstances, including past influences on character and motives, in such a way that the resulting choice is not inevitable given its past." (Kane 1985, p. 8) See also: Campbell 1957 and Chisholm 1964.

\(^{208}\) Chisholm 1964.
Kane claims that the libertarian agency theory sketched above has three clauses.

(a) The self (or person or rational agent) is the sole cause of its free choices or actions; (b) its causation can be exercised in two directions, to choose (or do) and to do otherwise; and (c) its causation of choices or actions is the causation of an occurrence by a thing or substance which cannot be explained as the causation of an occurrence by other occurrences, either simultaneous with, earlier than, or later than, the choice or action.\(^{209}\)

Sometimes it is added that clause (b) refers to a special sense of alternate choice, the *categorical sense*.\(^{210}\) But given an argument for the incompatibility thesis, which Kane accepts, this addition is redundant. As I noted in chapter 1, the categorical sense is clearly incompatible with determinism, and the libertarian will stress this point, either through an incompatibility argument or by literal inclusion in clause (b).

But what distinguishes a categorical sense of freedom from a non-categorical sense? What the former has yet the latter lacks is called the *liberty* or *freedom of indifference*. It is best understood by appeal to Buridan's ass which, given determinism, will sit forever frustrated between two equal bails of hay. The ass lacks freedom of indifference for it cannot decide between two choices of equal preference. Given

\(^{209}\) Kane 1985, p. 70.

\(^{210}\) Campbell ?.
freedom of indifference, one has the power to make decisions independently of its preferences. So, freedom of indifference is the basis of what William James calls the ambiguity, or freedom, of choice.

To illustrate the notion of free choice, James imagines himself to be walking in England. He comes upon two streets, either of which he could take in order to reach his destination. What does it mean to say that he has a genuine choice as to which road to take?

It means that both Divinity Avenue and Oxford Street are called; but only one, and that one either one, shall be chosen. Now I ask you to seriously suppose that this ambiguity of my choice is real; and then to make the impossible hypothesis that the choice is made twice over, and each time falls on a different street. In other words, imagine that I first walk through Divinity Avenue, and then imagine that the powers that be annihilate ten minutes of time with all that it contained, and set me back at the door of this hall just as I was before the choice was made. Imagine then that, everything else being the same, I now make a different choice and traverse Oxford Street.211

The power that James is alluding to, the power to make different choices in exactly the same set of circumstances, rests on the liberty of indifference since this latter power frees us from our character and our preferences. Thus, though the compatibilist might claim that one can do otherwise, given a change of the past or laws of nature, the libertarian states that this is not good enough. If freedom is to be cashed-out

211 James 1948b, p. 44.
in terms of possible worlds, then the following captures the libertarian requirement of freedom of indifference.

**Libertarian Stipulation (1):** A person has free choice only if there is a possible world which diverges* from the actual world in which she chooses otherwise.

This stipulation is included in the categorical analysis of "could have done otherwise," and is possible only if agents have a liberty of indifference.

Any determinist could talk about causation since determinism can be defined in terms of universal causal necessitation. But what the determinist can't provide is the notion of an *unmoved mover* or an *ultimate cause.*

Everything has a necessitating cause, according to the determinist, so all causal chains proceed backward to the beginning of time. Ultimately, causal chains go right through the agent; nothing is unmoved. Thomas Nagel expresses this point quite clearly.

A person can be morally responsible only for what he does; but what he does results from a great deal of what he does not do ....

If determinism is true, the agent may be a causal factor, and a very significant one, but she cannot be the *ultimate* cause of the action; she does not originate the action and the causal story does not stop with her.

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212 Lehrer

213 Nagel 1976.
Thus, the notion of ultimate or *sole* cause is particular to libertarian agency. This gives us the following.

**Libertarian Stipulation (2):** A person has free agency only if she is the sole and ultimate cause of her action. The libertarian is trying to solve a problem, or a set of problems, with stipulation (2). The problem is how to peg the agent with the act. If we make the agent the sole cause of her action, then she bears the ultimate causal responsibility. There is a reason why *she* must be blamed, as opposed to her parents, or their parents, or anything else.

If we combine stipulation (1) with stipulation (2) we get this further requirement:

**Libertarian Stipulation (3):** A person has free agency only if she is the *occurrent* cause of her action.

That is, an agent must have caused her action in such a way that she could have caused another action in precisely the same set of circumstances. So, though the choice and action are perfectly free, they are none the less connected with the agent. This is another condition that the compatibilist cannot meet since it requires that some causes be non-necessitating.

There is nothing to say about Kane's clause (c). Perhaps the notion of *substance* is essential to libertarianism, perhaps not. It hardly seems essential to the notion of agency, in general, but since we cannot embark on a study of the concept of substance at this point, we are best to ignore
the final stipulation. The issue of self-as-substance versus self-as-set-of-events seems irrelevant to the incompatibility problems.

If we strip the agency theory of the three libertarian stipulations we'd have the basis of a compatibilist theory of agency. But can the theory be stripped down in this way and still remain adequate? Yes. For, as we shall see, the addition of these stipulations adds nothing to the notion of agency that is helpful toward solving any of the philosophical problems which surround it. But it is these same problems which motivate the stipulations in the first place. Solutions which don't solve problems are not really solutions. So, if the stipulations do not solve the problems of freedom why think that they are necessary?

Given freedom of indifference for any particular choice each of our options are truly open. But in this case is the choice truly a our own? What is the difference between an indifferent choice and a flip of the coin? Certainly the libertarian agent is free, but it is less clear that the choice is hers and not just something that happens. The second horn of the dilemma of determinism begins to surface.

Libertarian agency also includes the notion of occurrent causation which leaves the agent free yet causally responsible for her actions. But how exactly does this take place? Above, we had reason to think that stipulation (1),
indifference, cuts the agent from her choice, and undermines her agency. How does adding a stipulation about sole causation, such as (2), help? Certainly, one cannot simply stipulate that the agent is the free and sole cause of her actions. Without further explanation the mystery of free agency remains.

What we desire in a theory of free agency is connection without compulsion. This is the whole story. The compatibilist can easily provide the first half of the story since she has causation in abundance. But for this same reason the threat of compulsion is constant. The libertarian decides to avoid compulsion by opting for the liberty of indifference and formulating her theory around this power. In doing so she abandons the first half of the agency story in an effort to save the second half. For stipulation (1) cuts the agent off from her own character, motivations and preferences. Libertarians require that the agent take her decisions off to some quiet room where she can make her choices undisturbed by her character and inclinations. But what is this "agent" apart from her character and preferences? And why should the views of such an impartial judge be of any value?

In the libertarian account of agency there is something, the "agent", which mediates between our character and our choices. Our characters incline us toward certain choices but the ultimate choice is not determined by this inclination, but
by the agent. Thus, either the agent will choose in agreement with the inclination or the agent will choose against the inclination. Herein lies the problem. For either the agent will always choose in agreement with the inclinations of the character or she will not. If the agent always chooses in accordance with her inclinations, then the "agent" part of the libertarian theory does not seem to be doing any work. But if the agent ever goes against her inclinations, then we have to question the claim that it is the agent's choice. For what else has the agent to go on except her own preferences? Moreover, even given the extra metaphysical apparatus of stipulations (1) - (3) the notion of agency still remains a complete mystery. On the compatibilist side we have the simplicity of determinism and the mystery of free agency. On the libertarian side we have the complexity of indeterminism and just as great a mystery about free agency. We would be better off to opt for simplicity.

5.9 Toward a Compatibilist Theory of Agency

At this time all of the pieces to the puzzle are on the table, I simply need to put them together in the right way. In an effort to do this I begin with a clearer statement of the compatibilist response to the inevitability arguments. Second, provide a sketch of a compatibilist theory of agency.
I think that the theory I endorse here is correct but even if it is not it should establish that compatibilism is true.

A. The Compatibilist Response

The compatibilist can concede that the past is necessary, in some sense. That is, there is nothing that we can do about the past now, at this time. But this much is true of the future, as well. We cannot now change the future. At most we can only change it when it comes. Neither of these statements gives us any reason to suppose either that we lacked any powers of freedom in the past, or that we will lack any powers of freedom in the future. Thus, we can distinguish between these two conditionals:

(1) If the past is (now) unalterable, the future is (now) unalterable.

(2) If the past was unalterable, the future will be unalterable.

(1) is true, but unimportant. (2) is true, but there is no reason to suppose that the past was unalterable, only that it is unalterable at the present time. The issue is not whether we can change the past now but whether the past was ever changeable. The compatibilist says that it was, and, in this sense, the past is not necessary, and could have been otherwise.
Let's return to the problem of specifying accessibility relations for models of freedom propositions. Few would suggest the following, but it is helpful to consider it.

**Condition (1)** Each accessible world must contain the set of future propositions.

Condition (1) will have the effect of rendering all false future propositions impossible since there will be no possible world, no consistent set of propositions, which contains a future proposition that is not true. Only the hard determinist can accept this condition.

The incompatibilist, whether she be a libertarian or a hard determinist, will specify the following.

**Condition (2)** Each accessible world must contain the set of past propositions.

But, independently of determinism, this condition will collapse all future possibilities into those which are true just as easily as condition (1). For, given the traditional theory of truth, every proposition is genuinely about the past but no proposition is strictly about the past. Thus, if any proposition is past, they are all past. So, condition (2) together with the traditional theory of truth will lead to the conclusion that no one has free will. Again, this is independent of determinism. We cannot accept condition (2) as a condition for accessibility relations without accepting that free will is impossible.
Again, the theory of agency that I would advocate would rest on a theory of causal responsibility. But no theory of causation would have a stipulation like condition (2) as a requirement. If we take the libertarian theory of agency, strip it of all the incompatibilist features, and add conditions which are relevant to causal and moral responsibility, we would have the beginnings of a theory of agency which is compatible with determinism and which requires a sense in which the agent could have done otherwise. As I have shown in section 5.8, the categorical analysis of "could have done otherwise" does not seem to benefit a theory of agency. So, why think that categorical possibilities are essential to explaining our freedom? And if they are not, stipulations like condition (2) are unnecessary when considering the accessibility relations for models of freedom propositions.

B. The Basis of a Compatibilist Theory of Freedom

In section 5.6 we noted that the categorical analysis of "could have done otherwise" was essential to either of the incompatibilist positions. For each inevitability argument is clearly sound with respect to categorical possibilities. Thus, if a theory of free will required us to be able to do otherwise in a categorical sense, then no theory of compatibilism is tenable. But in section 5.8 we noted that
the libertarian theory of agency seemed as problematic as the compatibilist one. The point is that even if we allow the incompatibilist to stipulate that the agent can categorically do otherwise, and that the agent is the original cause of her action, it is not any easier to account for free agency. So, how can one think that such conditions are essential to a such a theory?

I will not provide the details of a compatibilist analysis of free will and agency but I will suggest what such an analysis would include. As I noted in section 2.3, free will is a faculty, that is, a set of "interconnected powers." For instance, we could specify the powers noted by R. Kane or van Inwagen. Also, in chapter 2 I noted that there where three conditions which were necessary for moral responsibility. I will henceforth call these the conditions of moral responsibility which are as follows:

A. Causal conditions;
B. Cognitive conditions;
C. Conditions of control.

My suggestion is that the powers which are important to freedom are precisely those powers which are important to moral responsibility. Thus, a person has free will at a given

\(^{214}\) See Kane 1985, pp. 19-20.

\(^{215}\) See section 2.3.

\(^{216}\) See sections 2.5 and 2.7 for a review of the conditions of moral responsibility.
time if and only if she satisfies the conditions of moral responsibility at that time.

All of the conditions of moral responsibility can be specified in terms of powers or abilities that the agent has at a given time. One can give an analysis of these powers and abilities only by reference to alternate possibilities, as I have shown in chapter 2. Thus, given such an analysis one would be able to specify the accessibility conditions of models for freedom sentences. Such models would include possible worlds which are relevant to the analysis of the conditions of moral responsibility. Since there is no reason to think that the conditions noted above require categorical possibilities, there is no reason to think that free will requires categorical possibilities. Thus, the inevitability arguments do not undermine a compatibilist theory of free will.

The inclusion of the cognition conditions would explain both why we do not regard certain animals as having freedom and why we often think that the insane are neither free nor morally responsible for their acts. The inclusion of the conditions of control would likewise justify our thoughts about cases of hypnoses, drug induced behavior, and "actions" which occur as the result of devices like the one implanted in Eleanor of chapter 2. In all of these cases we would regard the person as not having freedom if and only if they lacked
control over their actions. The inclusion of the requirement of causal responsibility is essential, as well, since we do not regard a person's act as free unless she is the cause of the act.

Moreover, it seems that any case in which we would regard a person as lacking free will is also a case in which the person fails to satisfy one of the conditions of moral responsibility. Either the person is not causally responsible for her act, or she is lacking certain cognitive capacities, or she lacks control over her actions. These seem to exhaust the times in which we would regard a person as not having free will. If we recall the case of Eleanor from section 2.4, we can see that none of the conditions of causal responsibility entail the existence of categorical possibilities. For Eleanor could not categorically do otherwise but she was the cause of her act, and satisfied the conditions of control and cognition, as well.

In conclusion, I will add that the conditions of moral responsibility might not all be necessary for free will. But they are certainly sufficient. That is, if a person satisfies the conditions of moral responsibility, then she has free will. Since none of the conditions entail categorical possibilities, as seen by the Eleanor example of section 2.4, free will must be compatible with determinism, as well as any
of the other two connecting theses. Thus, compatibilism is true.
Bibliography


