



DISCOVERY ONE

Free-Will and Determinism

There are three different senses of freedom that can be distinguished in Philosophy...

1. Freedom of Permission – The Social/Political Notion of freedom involved in discussion of rights, the authority of the state, and law. This sense of freedom is not under consideration here.
2. Freedom of Personal Integrity – The Ability of fully developed, ideally functioning persons acting as unified selves in a responsible and mature way.
3. Freedom of moral and rational responsibility. Freedom that is part of a human action and agency in which the human being acts as an agent who in some sense the originator of one's own actions and, in this sense, is in control of one's actions. This type of freedom serves as a necessary condition for moral and intellectual responsibility.

DETERMINISM can be defined as the view that for every event that happens, there are conditions such that given them, nothing else could have happened.

COMPATIBILIST AND LIBERTARIAN FREEDOM

The central idea behind compatibilism is that if determinism is true, then every human action is causally necessitated by events that obtained prior to the action.

Libertarianism claims that the freedom necessary for responsible action is not compatible with determinism. Real Freedom requires a type of control over one's own actions and will. When an agent acts first he is an UNMOVED MOVER.

1. The Rationality Condition – requires that an agent have a personal reason for acting before an act counts as a free act.
2. Fatalism is the view that everything that happens occurs in a genuine, isolated way.
3. Actualism is another type of fatalism that says that only that which actually happens is possible. It is entirely speculative to speak of what "could have happened."

There are a number of important theological issues that interact with the debate about the nature and reality of free will.

1. God's Sovereignty as it relates to Salvation, saving faith, election, and predestination. Libertarians hold that God's sovereignty is limited in these areas and consistent with the libertarian choices of His creatures. Compatibilists hold that God's sovereignty determines what will come to pass (**supralapsarianism** is the view that God's determination of each person's eternal destiny is logically prior to his decree to create mankind and permit the fall).
2. There is the problem of reconciling God's foreknowledge of future contingent events with the fact that they are genuinely free... It is not an issue for compatibilists. For Libertarians, God is timeless. Because God frees your will to make right choices, does not take away the fact that it is you making the right choice?
3. A final theological problem is the existence of evil. The libertarian claims that the efficient cause of evil was man and his choices. Compatibilists have a tough time squaring the fact that a good God could have a use for evil at all.