

A New Argument against Compatibilism

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There is a more or less explicit assumption in the debate on free will that causation equals determinism. On this view, a set of initial conditions, together with the laws of nature, necessitates specific chains of events. For each stage of the chain, the next stage will be fixed by the history leading up to that stage. The only way to avoid such determinism seems to be if some events are uncaused or if there exists genuinely chancy events, so that there is no more than a certain probability of an outcome. Free will seems incompatible with determinism because of the necessity it allegedly provides. If E is necessary, we are not responsible for E, since we could not have acted otherwise. But free will also seems incompatible with indeterminism if it means that everything is random or purely contingent. In this talk we present a new argument against compatibilism. Starting out from a powers perspective, we argue that the problem of free will is a problem of modal dualism and not of causation as such.