

# Analysis of freewill by sam harris

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## Freewill by Sam Harris

“ Free will is an illusion. Our wills are not of our own making. Thoughts and intentions emerge from background causes of which we are unaware and over which exerts no conscious control” (Harris 3). Definitely from this perspective, the question everyone has is, if Harris’s statement that if free will does not exist, is there a purpose to our existence? Are we fated by nature to act out our lives? Everything that human beings do depend on a background cause, which is a determining factor to the action they partake. From a metaphysical and philosophical perspective, human actions are shown to happen in certain specific conditions. If these conditions were not present, then the action could not have occurred. Therefore, evidently the preconditions determine an event. Freewill has also been brought out as non-existent by scientific studies by Benjamin Libet (Harris 23). The studies have proved certain neurological conditions to be behind a person’s reaction to something. In totality, this agrees with Sam Harris’s logical fallacy that the brain’s motor cortex can be detected about three hundred milliseconds. This is exactly before a time, which a person feels that he has to decide to act on an activity. Anyone can deduce that truly freewill is non-existent through the excellent citations engaged by Harris (13).

A completely new range of topics arises upon reflecting on the question of if there is a purpose to our existence. Across time, existence has had a varied definition. Human beings regard any object or event as existing only if it reveals itself in an open and recognizable manner. We claim by an accepted definition that not all the objects that exist and do not manifest themselves in any way, in shape and form exist (Harris 45). It is all about the human perception, which stems these varied perspectives. Existence, therefore, is <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-freewill-by-sam-harris/>

determined by the human perceptions. Human beings on their part obviously exist because they manifest themselves to other human beings. The other important attributes like mass and appearance, which are measurable and observable through physiological and scientific ways all, prove that human beings exist.

The purpose of our existence, therefore, is based on a variety of perspectives from evolution to genetics. Basing this on non-existence of freewill, evolution has genetically made human beings not to readily and easily take away their lives through suicide. This aspect shows that human understand their cause for existence. Human beings among all animals have the most powerful and great survival instincts that make suicide almost impossible. Therefore, we act according to predetermined issues. This, thus totally rules out freewill. Our existence consequently has meaning because of the predetermining factors, which are evolution and genetics.

The other key aspect, developed from Sam Harris argument that freewill, does not exist is that are we fated, by nature, to act out our life? This is highly agreeable though contentious because freewill has a significant perspective on this matter. However, the evolution theory brings out in detail how our lives are shaped by nature. Evidently, through ages man has developed to a complex animal named Homo sapiens who is featured with advanced characteristics, unlike early man. This fundamental change has been caused by the great changes in his environment. These changes range from the tectonic processes and many other geo-activities. Basing the change on non-existence of freewill, man develops these characteristics and new ideas due to changes in the environment. Harris describes Mother Nature as uncaring for the human species, and it acts on its own terms.

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Therefore, human beings are left with no choice, but try and keep up to survive (Harris 67). The disregard by Mother Nature is, therefore, the predetermining factor of human life.

The non-existence of freewill on a larger percentage contradicts Christian values and all the societal norms. This is evident as it proves that if they are human beings, then they cannot choose their lives, and it makes no sense to punish nor rewards anybody for their actions whether bad or good. All the goals, decisions, intentions, willpower and efforts are considered as unpremeditated state of mind. All these lead to a specific behavior, and it is from these behaviors that an outcome arises to the world. Therefore, this outcome results from a long chain of predetermining factors. A deduction, therefore, can be made that life has a meaning, however, human beings are not shapers of their lives but rather their environment is.

In conclusion, the intriguing questions and explanations brought about, by Sam Harris, are quite evident enough for dismissing freewill as a determinant in human life, and everything happens because they had to happen. In other words, an action happens solely because of the preconditions and predetermining factors.

#### Works cited

Harris, Sam. Free Will. New York: Free Press, 2012. Print.