

# Free will versus determinism philosophy essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Kenisha: Determinism is the idea that every event has a cause and if human actions can be considered events, then every choice that they make is determined by a cause and not by free will. In other words, if a devastating event occurs in a person's life, it is a result of an initial cause. Immanuel Kant suggested that the basic rule of determinism is one of the rules by which we must interpret every experience. If a person dies of lung cancer because he or she smoked their entire life against the advice of their doctor, smoking is obviously the cause behind that death. If unexpectedly that person dies, but still had the habit of smoking, it could be due to natural reason, habit formed reason or by mere choice e. g. suicide. In some cases, human thought, feelings, and behaviors are a part of the natural world. Every occurrence of events is connected to our present circumstances and our past which assumes that choices we make in present day could not have eventuated.

### **Socrates: What is the definition of free will?**

Kenisha: Free will is said that the choices we make and the choices we undertake are willful, voluntary products of human reasoning. Free will is the rational response to a variety of wants, needs, and desires. For example: A friend of yours asks you to do him a favor and as a result they will pay you \$10, 000. You jump at the opportunity not knowing the favor which is robbing a friend of your friend who has plenty of money and lives in an expensive house on the Westside of town alone. You consider your options which include completing the favor for financial reward (the motive) and possible incarceration versus being dead broke struggling and free. Money represents a reason to do the favor but also the fact that you are a product

of free will which pronounces your reason for doing the favor. Plato, on the matter argued that being free does not mean to rely on materialism, bodily sensations and worldly matters. He states that it is impossible to talk about freedom until body and mind are entwined to consider one's freedom of choice and actions.

### **Socrates: Do you agree that every event has an explanatory cause?**

Kenisha: As the old wise men say, " everything happens for a reason". I am in between on this particular topic because causality notes that just because something is cause does not mean that it has a cause and if it does has a cause there has to be other factors present to present to further explain the reason for that cause. As I have mentioned before, longtime/term smoking may cause lung cancer but in addition, cancerous cells or genetic make-up may also be a factor. After all, it is a process that leads to a cause. In some instances, I disagree that every event has an explanatory cause.

### **Socrates: How do you define event?**

Kenisha: An event is something that happens. An event can be a social occurrence, personal occurrence, etc. In a general sense, an event is anything that happens as a result of the cause for it.

### **Socrates: How do you define explanatory cause?**

Kenisha: Explanatory cause is the unexplainable cause that requires no choice in the event. Explanatory is better defined in terms of syllogism first and second. First syllogism states that 1. Every event has an explanatory cause; every human choice or action is an event; therefore human choice or

action has its explanatory cause. 2. Every human choice or action has its explanatory cause; to have explanatory causes is not to be free; therefore no human choice or action is free. According to Aristotle, there are four causal accounts of explanatory adequacy: material cause, formal cause, efficient cause, and final cause. Because of basic necessity of an event to occur for it to have a cause for that event, the cause can be determined based upon pre-existing conditions.

**Socrates: Do you agree that every human choice or event has an explanatory cause?**

Kenisha: Every event is not the product of an explanatory cause. Some things happen as a result of nature or products of society. Explanatory cause is not always formed by patterns of previous conditions. In some cases, human choice and events are coincidental and are not predicted which confuses the cause of such things. Some things in life do not require logical explanations but are incidents of coincidence. Furthermore, so things are pursued in the course of life. If human choice or events does not possess the four accounts of explanatory cause as Aristotle argues, then it must be possible that it has no explanatory cause.

**Socrates: How do you define human choice? How do you define human event? Are they different?**

Kenisha: Human choice is what encourages us to think about our choices in the right way, to make the right choices, and to engage in the right actions. What should I do is the very question that a person asks as a result of human choice and have options as to what course of action is appropriate in a situation. Human choice means to do either A or B. On the contrary, human

events are human experiences in life. In a sense, human choice and human events are similar and correspond with one another with a cause and effect thing. If it weren't for human choice in events, then there would be no human experience. Human experience and human events are closely related because if it weren't for human events, there would be no human experience to call a particular event. For example: cosmetic surgery, giving birth, or a vacation. You had a choice to undergo cosmetic surgery, a choice to have a baby only if it was planned and finally a choice to pick the place and dates of a vacation. It takes a natural thing to assume the connection.

### **Socrates: Do you agree that to have an explanatory cause is not to be free?**

Kenisha: To determine if explanatory cause is not to be free, one must understand the meaning of freedom consistent with their own values including personality, and/or character. To be free means to not have to choose an alternative course of action if two of the alternative actions do not work. Explanatory cause is not to be free because in some situations and in some circumstances, you are not free to choose because undetermined events do not circumvent the possibility of freedom of that choice or event. If an option exists in an explanatory cause, then there is no freedom.

### **Socrates: How do you define free?**

Kenisha: In a general sense, free means to be open to choice, rights, and liberty. One may think that being free means to be segregated from restrictions on any limbs of life. We are free to some extent but we are bound in some ways. Freedom is to be predisposed to some great happiness. If you cannot be truly who you are in society then you are not free. If you are

expected to act a certain way in society to avoid judgment by others, then you cannot be free. If you are influenced by people or elements in society, you are not free in every element of life. Aristotle suggests that an act would be called free if it was not performed from external compulsion or ignorance. Thus in every element of life we possess limited freedom if any.

### **Socrates: Do you think that free will and determinism can coexist in any way?**

Kenisha: We cannot automatically assume that our choices will bring out certain results while under the assumption that voluntary choices will bring promising results. For example: A bank robber may plan carefully before robbing a bank and in the course of deciding to pursue the robbery and planning process believe he will successfully do it. The possibility of financial reward, establish or further our identity by doing it, or because it is fulfilling has a thing to do with determinism but rather free will because in considering all of the possibilities, you made the choice to pursue it. Whilst, determinism suggests that every event has a cause and if every choice has is determined by a cause, then it is not free will when it contains an option to do something. Contrarily, determinism is considered predictable based upon a series of past events. David Humes argues that there is no compatibility between free will and determinism. The concept of free will branches from motive and is not the result of a cause and could have chosen to do otherwise.

## **Socrates: Is it possible to have external determinism and internal free will?**

Kenisha: To understand if you can possess the both, you must first understand what they are. External determinism seeks influences outside of the person to shape and influence thought, feelings, choices and behaviors. External determinism wants to believe that there are other factors that must be considered to shape our lives and limiting alternatives and freedom of choice. On the other hand, internal free will as Rene Descartes notes is where the soul chooses freely what it wants making the brain act accordingly. So as a result, free will can influence our destiny and future. As the final result, it is not possible to have external determinism and internal free will.