

Philosophy 2300: Beginning Philosophy
Spring 2019
Third homework assignment

Please type your answers and bring them to class on Mon, March 4th. **ALSO** please make your answers anonymous by putting your R# at the top of the page and **NOT** your name.

You are to answer the following questions:

- 1) Galen Strawson argues that in order to be ultimately responsible for any action you would have to be responsible for an infinite series of choices. Explain why he thinks this.
- 2) What does Chisholm mean by “immanent” (or agent) causation? Explain how Chisholm would use this idea to respond to Strawson’s Basic Argument that we are never responsible for what we do (in other words, which premise of Strawson’s argument would Chisholm say is wrong and why?)
- 3) Does A.J. Ayer think that determinism is true? What does he think that determinism requires? Ayer is a “compatibilist” which means that he thinks that free will is compatible with determinism. But how could our actions be free if our choices were determined? What mistake does Ayer think that people are making when they say that free will and determinism are incompatible?
- 4) What does Frankfurt think it means to do an action “of your own free will”? What does he think it means to “have free will”? [You are to answer both of those previous questions]. Now in the following two cases, say whether Frankfurt would think that the actions were done of the person’s free will and whether or not they have free will:
 - 4a) Alice is in her bedroom reading. Bob texts her on the phone and asks her to meet him for dinner. She says no thanks and decides to stay in her room reading. What she did not know is that her room has been padlocked from the outside and it would be impossible for her to leave if she tried. Did she stay in her room of her own free will? Does she have free will?
 - 4b) Charlie is trying to eat only healthy foods. He is also trying to save money. He is at a fancy restaurant (he got a free meal) with expensive desserts (his dessert would not be free) and he knows that at the end of his meal he will be asked if he wants dessert and he plans to say ‘no’. When the time comes the waiter brings a tray of sample desserts and he sees a huge brownie with vanilla ice cream and hot fudge syrup on it that looks amazing. So he orders it. Did he order it of his own free will? Does he have free will?

5) Watch Michio Kaku's video on youtube called "Why physics ends the free will debate" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jint5kjoy6I> In your own words, briefly describe his argument that we do have free will. Do you think this is a good argument? Pick at least one of the authors we have read in class and describe how they would respond to Kaku's claim that physics shows that we do have free will (HINT: it isn't that any of our authors would disagree with anything that Kaku says about physics. The reason they don't talk about the details of physical theories is that they don't think they are relevant).