### NC

#### I negate. Determinism is true:

#### 1] Free action and moral responsibility are rendered incoherent since it would require causing one’s own actions which falls into regress.

Strawson, G. (1994). The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility. Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition, 75(1/2), 5–24. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4320507> JS

I take it that (1) is incontrovertible, and that it is (2) that must be resisted. For if (1) and (2)) are conceded the case seems lost, because the full argument runs as follows. (1) You do what you do because of the way you are. So (2) To be truly morally responsible for what you do you must be truly responsible for the way you are - at least in certain crucial mental respects. But (3) You cannot be truly responsible for the way you are, so you cannot be truly responsible for what you do. Why can't you be truly responsible for the way you are? Because (4) To be truly responsible for the way you are, you must have intentionally brought it about that you are the way you are, and this is impossible. Why is it impossible? Well, suppose it is not. Suppose that (5) You have somehow intentionally brought it about that you are the way you now are, and that you have brought this about in such a way that you can now be said to be truly responsible for being the way you are now. For this to be true (6) You must already have had a certain nature N in the light of which you intentionally brought it about that you are as you now are. But then (7) For it to be true you and you alone are truly responsible for how you now are, you must be truly responsible for having had the nature N in the light of which you intentionally brought it about that you are the way you now are. So (8) You must have intentionally brought it about that you had that nature N, in which case you must have existed already with a prior nature in the light of which you intentionally brought it about that you had the nature N in the light of which you intentionally brought it about that you are the way you now are Here one is setting off on the regress. Nothing can be causa sui in the required way. Even if such causal 'aseity' is allowed to belong unintelligibly to God, it cannot be plausibly be supposed to be pos- sessed by ordinary finite human beings. "The causa sui is the best self- contradiction that has been conceived so far", as Nietzsche remarked in 1886

#### 2] Bivalence – a statement capable of being proved true or false must be either true or false – that means the question of whether a particular action will occur in the future is always answered by either “true” or “false,” and proves that everything in the future either happens or doesn’t happen by necessity – nothing can change that.

#### 3] Empirics flow neg – Neuroscience proves conscious will is an illusion.

Wegner, Daniel M., 2002, *The Illusion of Conscious Will*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. JS

RP = Readiness Potential,

The results were truly noteworthy, although in some sense this is exactly what you would have to expect: The conscious willing of finger movement occurred at a significant interval after the onset of the RP but also at a significant interval before the actual finger movement (and also at a significant interval before the awareness of movement). The time line for the RP, W, M, and actual movement events is shown in figure 2.8. These findings suggest that the brain starts doing something first (we don’t know just what that is). Then the person becomes conscious of wanting to do the action. This would be where the conscious will kicks in, at least, in the sense that the person first becomes conscious of trying to act. Then, and still a bit prior to the movement, the person reports becoming aware of the finger actually moving.6 Finally, the finger moves. Libet and colleagues suggested that the S series could be used as a guide to estimating how long any hand-to-brain activity might take. It took about 47 milliseconds for people to report being consciously aware of a stimulus to the hand, so Libet reasoned it might be useful to subtract this number from the W and M series values to adjust for this part of the process. This doesn’t really change the overall conclusion; it just moves the “aware of wanting” time to 157 milliseconds and the “aware of moving” time to 39 milliseconds. One other quibble: You may have noticed that the RP in this study occurred later (535 milliseconds) than the one in Kornhuber and Deecke’s experiment (approximately 800 milliseconds). This is because Libet made a special point of asking participants to mention if they had done any preplanning of the finger movement and eliminated those instances from the analysis. In a separate study, Libet, Wright, and Gleason (1982) had learned that the RP occurred as much as a second or two earlier on trials when participants were allowed to plan for their movement, so the conscious will study avoided this by emphasizing spontaneous, unplanned movements. The conclusion suggested by this research is that the experience of conscious will kicks in at some point after the brain has already started preparing for the action. Libet sums up these observations by saying that “the initiation of the voluntary act appears to be an unconscious cerebral process. Clearly, free will or free choice of whether to act now could not be the initiating agent, contrary to one widely held view. This is of course also contrary to each individual’s own introspective feeling that he/she consciously initiates such voluntary acts; this provides an important empirical example of the possibility that the subjective experience of a mental causality need not necessarily reflect the actual causative relationship between mental and brain events” (Libet 1992, 269)

#### 4] Double bind – denying the Determinist theory of causality proves that free will doesn’t exist

Colin McGinn, Problems in Philosophy: The Limits of Inquiry. London: Wiley, 1993. P. 80, //AHS PB rc

The argument is exceedingly familiar, and runs as follows. Either determinism is true or it is not. If it is true, then all our chosen actions are uniquely necessitated by prior states of the world., just like every other event. But then it cannot be the case that we could have acted otherwise, since this would require a possibility determinism rules out. Once the initial conditions are set and the laws fixed, causality excludes genuine freedom. On the other hand, if indeterminism is true, then, though things could have happened otherwise, it is not the case that we could have chosen otherwise, since a merely random event is no kind of free choice. That some events occur causelessly, or are not subject to law, or only to probabilistic law, is not sufficient for those events to be free choices. Thus one horn of the dilemma represents choices as predetermined happenings in a predictable causal sequence, while the other construes them as inexplicable lurches to which the universe is randomly prone. Neither alternative supplies what the notion of free will requires,, and no other alternative suggests itself. Therefore freedom is not possible in any kind of possible world. The concept contains the seeds of its own destruction.

#### 5] Moral luck – one cannot be held accountable for factors caused by luck since they are outside their control and hence aren’t a part of their action – however, as every action is affected by moral luck, moral responsibility is impossible.

Levy, Neil (2015). Less Blame, Less Crime? The Practical Implications of Moral Responsibility Skepticism. Journal of Practical Ethics 3 (2):1-17. JS

Consider the normally virtuous agent, going about her daily business. Perhaps someone is rude to her, or cuts her off in the car park. Perhaps, as a result, she experiences a flicker of irritation that causes her (perhaps unconsciously) to entertain the thought of punching the person in the nose. But she doesn’t do it; she doesn’t even allow herself to entertain the thought for more than a fleeting instant. The explanation of why she does not punch the offender, in circumstances in which someone else might, is that it is inconsistent with her values to do so; unless she was subject to extremely severe provocation, there is no coherent story in which those values could explain that kind of behavior. So she is resistant to this kind of responsibility undermining luck. But why is she resistant? In other words, why does she have the values and temperament she has? The explanation will cite her constitutive luck. Her genes may explain her relatively even temperament, which makes her resistant to provocation. Her upbringing was relatively stress free, thereby ensuring that she does not experience the kind of anxiety from which those with stressed infancies suffer, which dispose them to react more rapidly and less reflectfully to perceived threats. She has received a good enough education, including a moral education, through which her responses to people and situations were trained in such a manner that aggression is not an immediately accessible strategy for her. All these things are not things for which she is responsible. They are her good luck. Had she been born differently constituted, she would not have had her even temperament. Had her environment been more stressful, her role models less virtuous, or had violence been rewarded in her social setting, she would have been disposed to react quite differently. She would have been vulnerable to passing thoughts: chance thoughts might have led to her behaving badly, or well. Or she might even have been resistant to such thoughts because she is too bad for such vulnerability. Her actual lack of vulnerability to luck in what thoughts occur to her is explained by luck in her constitution. Philosophers have sometimes argued that constitutive luck does not undermine moral responsibility because normal agents take responsibility for their constitutive luck. Normal agents play an active role in shaping who they are and what their values are: they modify their initial values (those they have due to constitutive luck) or they endorse them. This claim—that agents play an active role in self-shaping—is certainly true. It is, however, false, that in so doing these agents escape the responsibility undermining effects of constitutive luck. When we shape ourselves, we do so in ways that either simply express the values and attitudes we have as a result of constitutive luck, or in ways that are vulnerable to luck in what thoughts happen to strike us and other chance events. We shape ourselves, but our self-shaping is no less subject to luck than is our initial constitution.

#### 6] Induction – because something cannot come from nothing according to the laws of thermodynamics, every action must have a cause – that means a causal chain of actions that eventually began before we existed structures our actions rather than our will.

#### Determinism proves that there is no moral obligation to do the resolution which negates substantively –

#### 1] Ought implies can since it would be unjust to expect an agent to take an action when they have no capacity to choose otherwise – that’s why we don’t expect poor people to donate to charity – if it’s impossible for an unjust agent to choose otherwise, then we can’t say that they have an obligation to do it so determinism proves moral obligations incoherent.

#### 2] Free will and determinism can’t coexist since a will is not truly free if they could not change the choice they willed, which determinism denies – moral responsibility requires free will – that’s why we don’t mark people who were misguided, deceived, or coerced into taking immoral action as inherently bad people.

## 2NR Frontlines

### AT: Quantum Mechanics

#### Quantum mechanics can’t disprove determinism.

William Lane Craig, “God and Objective Morality: A Debate,” from God? A Debate between a Christian and an Atheist (Oxford University Press, 2004), 17–21, 33–6. JS

The second clause, “this is contrary to standard quantum theory,” misrepresents quantum theory. Any physical theory is comprised of two parts: a mathematical formulation and a physical interpretation of the mathematical formulas. While the mathematical core of quantum theory has been confirmed to a fantastic degree of precision, there are at least ten different physical interpretations of the mathematics, and no one knows which of these, if any, is correct, since they are all empirically equivalent. Only some of these, principally the so-called Copenhagen Interpretation, are causally indeterministic. Others are fully deterministic. In order to show that quantum theory proves that events can happen without causes, SinnottArmstrong would have to show that these other interpretations of quantum theory are not as good as the Copenhagen Interpretation, which is, of course, impossible to do.

#### No analytical responses – they obviously aren’t experts in quantum mechanics so default to experts like Hoefer.

### AT: Oppressive

#### 1] Turn – belief in free will is the root cause of authoritarianism and conservatism that reify oppression and injustice – prefer actual studies.

Carey, J. M., and Paulhus, D. L. (2013). Worldview Implications of Believing in Free Will and/or Determinism: Politics, Morality, and Punitiveness. Journal of Personality, 81(2), 130–141. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6494.2012.00799.x JS

At the highest level, we have addressed the connection between free will belief and the broad constellation of worldview facets. The latter are often organized on the political spectrum, ranging from liberal to conservative attitudes. Our reasoning began with previous research showing that conservative values emphasize personal responsibility and punitiveness of rule breakers (Adorno et al., 1950; Baumeister, 2008; Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). By contrast, liberals tend to see people (including criminals) as victims of society and, therefore, less morally culpable (e.g., Jost, 2006; Weiner, 1993). To us, this literature suggested that free will belief should be associated with conservatism, and disbelief, with liberalism. Overall, our results supported that prediction: A greater tendency to believe in free will was linked to higher levels of authoritarianism, religiosity, just world belief, and conservative moral foundations. The common thread across this constellation of conservative beliefs is a strong sense of personal responsibility for one’s behavior. In Study 1, we found that individuals who believe in free will also believe in a just world for themselves and others. Perhaps free will belief encourages a stricter form of universal morality. Those who believe in free will are more rigid about holding themselves and others to that moral code. Not coincidentally, their moral code is a traditional, conservative one. An argument for the reverse causal direction is certainly tenable. People with strong conservative attitudes need to justify the current establishment and feel threatened about its potential collapse (Jost, 2006). To hold responsible those who threaten the system (including criminal offenders), conservatives are motivated to assign free will to offenders. Also consistent with the responsibility theme, our Study 3 analyses of criminal scenarios (molestation and rape) indicated that free will believers prefer more severe criminal punishment. Detailed analyses suggested that free will belief entails punishment for retributive (sense of justice) rather than consequentialist (crime reduction) reasons. Our understanding of the relation between free will and traditional morality is consistent with Baumeister’s (2008) notion that free will belief involves more stringent self regulation: Greater self-control helps overcome any temptation to engage in antisocial behavior. As outlined by Haidt (2008), the binding moral foundations serve to commit people to their social roles and put the needs of the community above personal desires. Only the binding moral foundations focus on constraining behavior in advance, whereas the individuating moral foundations focus on the amelioration of suffering.3 Integrating these two notions, we hold that free will belief relates to the expectation that people will control their own impulses and criticize others for not doing the same. If others misbehave, those high in free will are willing to apply the necessary sanctions, that is, punishment

#### It also increases victim blaming and acceptance of inequality.

Genschow, Oliver & Vehlow, Benjamin (2021). Free to blame? Belief in free will is related to victim blaming. Consciousness and Cognition 88:103074. JS

In three studies we tested the prediction that belief in free will is related to victim blaming. Study 1 manipulated belief in free will. Although belief in free will could be successfully manipulated, the manipulation did not affect victim blaming. However, it is important to note that on a correlational level we found evidence for our predictions that higher endorsement of free will belief is interrelated with victim blaming. This link could be reproduced in Study 2 and further replicated in Study 3. In all studies the correlation between belief in free will and victim blaming remained significant even when statistically controlling for demographics as well as other beliefs (i.e., dualism and determinism). Moreover, Study 3 revealed that belief in free will correlates with victim blaming when controlling for just world beliefs, religious worldviews and political ideology. Taken together, across all three studies we found evidence for the prediction that higher endorsement of belief in free will is positively related to victim blaming (for a mini meta-analysis, see the supplement material). Theoretical implications Past research found that belief in free will increases the tendency to punish anti-social behavior (Clark et al., 2014; Genschow et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2017; Shariff et al., 2014), but also to reward pro-social behaviors (Genschow et al., 2017). These findings can be explained by recent research showing that belief in free will is associated with an increase in perceived intentions in others’ behavior (Genschow et al., 2017, 2019) and the tendency to attribute responsibility to others for their behavior (Nahmias et al., 2005). As past research on belief in free will has neglected the view on the victims of criminal acts, in the present research we filled this gap by demonstrating that belief in free will is not only associated with the tendency to punish criminal offenders, but also with the tendency to blame victims for their bad luck. In the last couple of decades, claims that free will is nothing more than an illusion have become prevalent in the popular press (e.g., Chivers 2010; Griffin, 2016; Wolfe, 1997). Based on such claims, scholars across disciplines started debating potential societal consequences for the case that people would start disbelieving in free will. For example, some philosophers argued that disbelief in free will would have catastrophic consequences, because people would no longer try to control their behavior and start acting immorally (e.g., Smilansky, 2000, 2002). Likewise, psychological research has mainly focused on the downsides of disbelief in free will. For example, weakening free will belief led participants to behave less morally and responsibly (Baumeister et al., 2009; Protzko et al., 2016; Vohs & Schooler, 2008). In contrast to these results, our findings illustrate a more positive side of disbelief in free will, as higher levels of disbelief in free will would reduce victim blaming. Past research on studying psychological motives behind victim blaming indicated that fundamentalistic religious worldviews (Sheldon & Parent, 2002), a conservatism attitude (Lambert & Raichle, 2000; Williams, 1984), and just world beliefs (e.g., Strömwall et al., 2013; Van den Bos & Maas, 2009) contribute to victim blaming. In Study 3, we replicated these findings—a fact noteworthy in light of the current debate on the crises of confidence in psychological science (e.g., Genschow, Westfal, et al., 2020; Open Science Collaboration, 2015). Moreover, our research extends past findings by demonstrating that belief in free will explains variance in predicting victim blaming in addition to other relevant predictors such as religiosity, political attitudes and just world beliefs. This allows getting a more complete understanding of the motives behind victim blaming. Research on just world beliefs (Carey & Paulhus, 2013) suggests that when an innocent person experiences misfortune, the belief that the world is inherently just is threatened. To restore belief in a just world, responsibility is attributed to the victim (Furnham, 2003). It might well be that belief in free will is a means to re-establish the belief in a just world. As people have control over their decisions and acts, they are fully responsible for the consequences that happen to them. Therefore, negative life events can be attributed to the affected people themselves. This reasoning is in line with research showing that a stronger belief in free will increases the acceptance of economic inequality (Mercier et al., 2020), the endorsement of punishment for wrongdoers (Clark et al., 2014; Genschow et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2017; Shariff et al., 2014) and support of an authoritarian worldview (e.g., Nadelhoffer & Tocchetto, 2013). Future research may aim at applying experimental manipulations to directly test whether belief in free will is a means to re-establish just world beliefs.

#### Flow this as an independent reason why determinism is good – since oppression is a prior question, proving that free will is oppressive means you automatically lean towards determinism being good

#### 2] The NC doesn’t deny that oppression is bad but merely makes a claim that injustices are a product of environments that individuals have no control over – understanding the social conditions that makes oppressive mindsets possible is key, which requires a rejection of the belief that individuals have full control over the way they think.

[if time]

#### 3] If they’re right that determinism says nothing is right or wrong then, saying that some things are so wrong that we should reject determinism, just begs the question of whether determinism is true.

#### 4] If determinism is so obviously false, then it should be easy for you to win by philosophically disproving it. The net benefit is real world skills, since its important to learn how to substantively beat back problematic arguments, so you can convince people to abandon problematic positions outside of debate