

## ABSTRACT:

Freedom is an impossibility; the dream of having the ability to choose anything one wants is hampered by reality. However, what aspect of reality ultimately hampers the birth of true freedom? What I propose is that reality itself makes freedom impossible. Furthermore, I also make the logical assumption, from the evidence I have found, that the only entity that can have freedom is a being that is formless, timeless, featureless, and is an infinite environment of nothing. While my studies today haven't been focused on that topic, it is a noteworthy observation. I also prove Determinism, and show why the definitions of free will given by Libertarians, Compatibilists, and Incompatibilists each fall. I also provide some insight into the reactive basis of human psychology, further proving Determinism. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I have reasons to conclude that humans by nature are a reactive species.

I propose that freedom and information are mutually exclusive. I also propose that, as the future is nothing but a series of cause-and-effects, that freedom cannot exist as the future has been predetermined.

First however, the definitions of abstract concepts such as “future”, “freedom”, “information”, and “impossible/mutually exclusive” must be defined.

In this paper, I define *future* as any oncoming event, situation, scenario, era, or any other words corresponding with a moment in time that can happen at any period in time. In other words, in this paper I define “future” as anything that can happen at any possible moment still to come.

I define “information” as any facts or information that are immediately present or experienced. This also includes any past facts or information, any present facts or information, and any future facts or information. This can be written, spoken, experienced, or thought. Fundamentally speaking, the very nature of information is to provide assistance in selectively picking out the best possible choice in a series of all possible choices. After all, is it not the purpose of information to merely be a means to prolong survival? And is it not that survival is the ultimately goal of each and every living organism? Fundamentally, survival and information go hand in hand; the pursuit of survival is ultimately the pursuit of information. And the pursuit of

information is ultimately nothing but the eradication of freedom. As I've said earlier, the more information one gets about his/her surroundings, the less options they have.

I define freedom in this paper as the human capacity for choice, with absolute freedom then meaning the human capacity for picking any humanly possible choice in any given scenario. Furthermore, absolute freedom means that any choice made will spur one of many possible resolutions, and so on and so forth.

Finally, I define "impossible"/"mutually exclusive" as descriptions of a scenario in which two things cannot coexist in any real or hypothetical world, in this case the things being freedom and information.

With those terms now clearly defined, I will now proceed with my case.

**1. Future events can be predicted through the processing of all possible information of the immediately previous time.**

Ultimately, the future is nothing but a response to the present, and the present being nothing more than a response to the past. With this logic, then the immediate future is nothing more than a response of the immediate present, which is nothing more than a response to the immediate past. Thus, any future will be the result of the present which is then the result of the past. Thus,

through closure, any period of time in the future is a direct result of any moment of time in the past.

What I propose is that any moment in the future can be predicted from a singular moment of the past. After all, if a moment in the past can be used to predict the next immediate moment, and if that moment could be used to predict the next immediate moment, then after enough repetitions of this procedure a singular moment in the past could predict a future far, far away from direct immediacy. Fundamentally, this means that the future can be predicted from a singular moment of either the past or present. (Obviously, this means that, in a singular moment, each and every single thing must be documented, analyzed, and understood in order to correctly predict the future. I am making the hypothetical assumption that such an object, like a supercomputer, exists that can effectively analyze, document, and chart each and every single thing). In fact, this object would have to be much like Laplace's Demon.

(<http://www.stsci.edu/~lbradley/seminar/laplace.html>)

As the future can be predicted from a singular moment, then the future is nothing but a product of that exact singular moment. This ultimately means that the action of making a choice in any singular moment has been predetermined beforehand by another moment. This rules out the possibility of freedom, as the very definition of freedom is the ability of picking one of any humanly possible choice. However, this clearly contradicts the logical process that I've just explained, as there is no room for freedom in a situation that has all been predetermined.

In the hypothetical situation I've just described, the complete openness of all information directly leads to accurate, god-like prediction, which then directly removes the possibility of any kind of freedom as there is no choice in the order of events that follows. Thus, in a situation of total information, there cannot exist any kind of freedom.

In order to explain my stance, I present a scenario in which a ball is bouncing inside a room. If one were to know all properties of the ball and the room, then they could predict where the ball would go and when it would get there. In fact, a sufficiently intelligent being could gather all these properties, and from a certain instant of time, piece back the path where the ball went and chart where it would go. The future is akin to the ball in that scenario; from any singular moment in time a sufficiently intelligent being, after gathering all properties from that singular moment in time, could show what had happened and what will happen.

Clearly, it can be observed that in a position of absolute information there exists no freedom. However, there cannot exist absolute freedom in any situation as there is no humanly possible way to achieve a position of absolute non-information.

Given that my first argument logically stands, I then proceed to my next argument. In the following three arguments, I will show why there can be no situation in which freedom exists, as freedom can only exist in a position of absolute non-information.

## **2. A person is nothing more than the sum of his/her experiences.(Set-up Argument)**

Fundamentally, the freedom, or the capacity for choice that a person may have, is only situational. In reality, as I stated in argument 1 and will state in argument 3, there is no other choice than the one we choose. In fact, if the exact same person were to be put in the same situation with the same characteristics, the same choice would be chosen each and every single time (I'll expand on this in argument 3). By saying "the exact same person", I mean that this person has the exact same characteristics and experiences as another just like him, and so on and so forth.

We differentiate a person from another, fundamentally, on their perspective. And their perspectives are nothing more than the analyses of their experiences. Thus, if the perspective determines the identity of a person, and if experience determines perspective, through closure we can clearly see that perspective determines identity.

However, if we were to remove/change/modify any experiences of that person (who I'll call Original), then the product of that change will be a vastly different person with vastly different experiences (who I'll call New). New's subsequent choices are irrelevant to today's paper, and the only person my entire paper will focus on is Original.

This idea uses the general applications of Chaos Theory, which is the basis of mathematics that a minute change has much different consequence than the original. By that logic, that means that the modification of Original's experiences changed him/her into New, by definition making a new person. This means that a person is only who he/she is solely because of the experiences

they have, and the modification of any single experience is creating an entirely different person. Thus, I use this argument as both a clarification and a statement about a person.

If we were to assume that a person in a single scenario with the capacity to make different decisions would have made different decisions, I'd disagree and state that the decision had already been made prior to the actual presentation of the situation itself, as stated by Argument One. Furthermore, I also add that the fundamental basis of the identity of a person is nothing more than the experiences they have. After all, the most basic thing that separates a person from another is the experiences, or the story, that they each have.

This rules out any possible multiverses or alternate universes that could be used as an attack against this argument, as I've clearly stated that the identity of a person is not the name, genetic code, or anything else. It is ultimately experience. And no two people across the known universe will ever share the same experiences.

I offer another example. There exists a man named Steve, and his life is somehow uploaded into a computer, which then runs a series of simulations by placing the same Steve in different locations at the same moment in time. For example, one simulation of Steve places him in Zimbabwe, whereas another places him in La Paz. Fundamentally, what I propose is that Steve would react differently in those two places solely because the environment itself is completely different.

I now extend the example. If this simulation of Steve were to be placed in the exact environment in the exact same time, they would both perform the same actions solely because the environment, in combination with his experiences, create the same reaction.

### **3. Each choice chosen has been predetermined by the experiences one has already had.(Set-up Argument)**

When making any decision, there is a logical reasoning behind it, either consciously or subconsciously. If all of those reasonings(which include experiences) were to be completely documented and analyzed for a certain person, then one can predict the decision that person would make without fail. This logically means that a person's reasonings directly provide input to the decision he or she may make. However, as I've stated earlier, all logical reasoning a person has is inherently determined by the experiences he/she may have, which fundamentally means that

The impact of this realization means that, while the facade of freedom may give the appearance of the capacity of choice, this ultimately means that the choice has been predetermined from the very start. In other words, there ultimately is no freedom when it comes to making a choice as the choice made has been predetermined from the very start. A situation having a multitude of choices is not the same as freedom, as freedom is the **HUMAN** capacity of making any possible decision.



But what about situations impacting a decision? These kind of “extraneous” situations are essentially any kind of outside events that impact the actual decision made. For example, wouldn’t the consultation of a friend or close relative then mean that the decision made couldn’t have been predicted as there was outside interference. To this, I disagree. I believe that previous conditions and situations actually indicate both what kind of people the person would listen to as well the situations in which the person would turn to for advice. To further prove this point I will split up all external scenarios into two groups: human and non-human. I will explain the latter first, then proceed to the former.

a. Non-human entities

- i. Any non-human entity is incapable of intelligent thought; that is to say they are acted upon directly by their urges or by the forces of nature. Thus, we can consider their actions themselves irrelevant to the topic today as they are independent agents that must be reacted to and cannot act themselves. Thus, these kinds of external forces are subject to the interpretation of the person viewing it/them. For the sake of understanding, I will provide an example.
- ii. Example: Imagine a rock falling from the middle of nowhere. The rock has no independent thought or thinking capabilities; this event is merely caused by the forces of nature. However, if a person were to view this rock falling from nowhere, then the person would interpret that action in a seemingly infinite amount of ways. However, this interpretation could be predicted based off the

experiences of the person that encounters the freak of nature. Depending on the position of the rock, the timing of the rock, the weather, and seemingly infinite other variables, the person(whose experiences/emotions/etc.) will make a decision solely by recollecting past memories/thoughts/etc.

- iii. Fundamentally, dependent situations are and always will be subject to interpretation, with the interpretation itself being decided by experiences/memories/etc. If a person's entire life experiences/thought process/etc be documented and analyzed, then it clear that the interpretation of an autonomous action would be decided without fail.
- iv. As dependent situations are always interpretive, and as the reaction to the dependent situation is always predictable, then

b. Human entities

- i. Human entities are independent in that they are capable of acting on their own accord. Their actions are done under the will of the human mind, either consciously or unconsciously. This means that human beings are their own agents of action, and the actions that do occur always stem from either the conscious or unconscious mind. However, each action stems from a certain place of origination. For example, one cries because he/she is sad, another screams when he/she is alone. These responses vary from person to person based on the experiences they have, meaning that these responses are reactions to the events happening around the person.

- ii. However, the cause of the action means nothing compared to the reaction or interpretation of it. Regardless of the intent of the action, the interpretation of the action decides the response. And, as stated earlier, the interpretation of the response can be predicted 100% of the time if all the sufficient information on the person making the response is found.
  - iii. However, a response made in a situation with two or more people and two or more non-human entities can also be predicted. As I stated earlier, a reaction to either a human or a non-human entity can be predicted based off the the reactor; that is to say based of the action by the human entity or any of the multitudes of variables regarding non-human entities will give a response predetermined instead of chosen. Thus, the addition of more objects, human or non-human, that the person is reacting to is ultimately just recollecting on those same experiences with the addition of new ones that may happen in terms of the order of the experiences. In other words, the reaction to a multitude of non-human and human entities is based on both the experiences that the reactor has had and the order of the things that he/she will experience.
- c. The person also has no choice both in the order of things that he/she will experience nor in the responses
- i. As I've stated in both arguments one and two, any decision made by a person can be predicted from birth with completely thorough information. While the actions of independent agents such as human or non-human entities may initially seem unpredictable, the responses to the actions by those entities are anything but.

- d. The world is nothing more than a combination of human and non-human entities
  - i. This goes without saying according to my definitions, but I think it would be helpful to make this statement explicitly.
- e. As the world is nothing but a combination of non-human and human entities, a person's choices are nothing but a reaction to the world.
  - i. These reactions have been predetermined, as I stated earlier
  - ii. There is no moment in time where anyone has the capacity of making a decision that is not just a reaction to non-human and human factors.

#### **4. Information immediately limits the freedom of action.**

First, I propose that the gathering of new information immediately limits choice. And, as I stated earlier, the limiting of choice is the destruction of freedom.

- i. Information is constantly picked up regardless of choice
  - 1. As per my definition of information, any new info is gathered each and every second of each and everyday. Colors, smells, the feeling of asphalt, everything is information. This information is stored in the supercomputer we call the brain, and is readily accessed anytime one either wishes or needs it. This ultimately means that the information we pick up is inherently limiting, as it forces acinformationment of a certain object or objects.
  - 2. This information is stored regardless of choice; we often remember information that is irrelevant. For example, whenever we take a test, don't

we remember some random song or smell or feeling instead of the information we so vitally, immediately need?

3. Furthermore, that information is never truly gone; there is no way to completely, truly remove any kind of information that one may have.
- ii. The information we have immediately limits options.
1. Any object we sense forces us to consider that object
    - a. This is either done consciously or subconsciously. For example, when reading this paper, you must consider the words, the grammar, the lighting, the smell, the location, and a variety of other objects.
    - b. This removes freedom as we do not have the ready choice to consider it or not. The information we receive forces us to consider that information.
  2. Any language we learn limits both our understanding of the world as well as the way thoughts occur inside our mind
    - a. We think in terms of language
      - i. That automatically limits our understanding of the world, as objects indescribable through a certain language either disregard that object or simplify it.
    - b. We communicate through language, inherently limiting abstract concepts into understandable, unrepresentative truths

- c. Furthermore, languages differ from person to person, groups to groups, and countries to countries.

## **5. Information is naturally obsessive**

Furthermore, I also say that information, regardless of the kind that we get, forces us to realize one's present condition and, more importantly, do whatever we can to change it. Indeed, information is a catalyst to change, regardless of choice. I argue that the information we receive points out one's conditions of life. For example, a poor man wouldn't know if he was poor if he didn't see someone richer. Likewise, a rich man wouldn't know he was rich unless he saw someone poor. Now, the poor man sees what he could be through hard work and the rich man sees what he could be without any work. Both of them, at that singular moment, attempt to change their condition as to further prevent what could happen. Clearly, the limitation of freedom in this situation is obvious as both of their efforts, from going to any infinite options, become focused on changing their respective living conditions. However, the application of information to change is found in every single aspect of life. A fat man knows he is fat, and either chooses to disregard it or to cut it down. A widow knows she is lonely, and either spends time alone or tries to find company in others. And so on and so forth. The information we see is but a catalyst to obsessive thought, and obsessive thought being the direct removal of complete choice.

I now also say that all thought is by nature obsessive. I define obsessive thought as something that sticks to the mind and forces consideration upon every moment. Thoughts by definition are

abstract concepts that come up in a time of relevance. However, no thought is truly ever gone; it is instead in the shadows waited to be used at a time of need. How often has one remembered the beat of a song they last heard years ago? Or the name of teacher of years ago? This information never really gets destroyed or lost, it just comes up when needed. This means that, subconsciously, those thoughts could be considered, handled, and thought about without direct thought. If no thought truly ever disappears, then are they not being considered by the subconscious mind at every single moment? And, as the thought never disappears or dissipates, isn't the thought by definition obsessive? Especially if it comes out of an involuntary choice. And, as all thoughts are merely the analysis of information, and as the information is involuntarily picked up all the time, as I stated earlier, then through closure all information is obsessive and restricts freedom of thought.

## **6. Freedom is fundamentally impossible to achieve.**

We can fundamentally consider freedom as a scale. On one end, which is currently the one we live in, freedom is nonexistent due to information. On the other end must exist freedom, which requires no information of any kind. Thus, the only thing that can truly have freedom is something that has no information of any kind, and the environment it inhabits cannot have any information of any kind.

However, as that is beyond base human comprehension, we won't go there. Instead, I will show why the Libertarian, Compatibilist, and Incompatibilist ideas of freedom all fall.

Let's consider a typical situation that requires choice that will stand for every interpretation of freedom for the three groups above. A man, named Steve, is in a room. In front of him are five completely different, completely unrelated, completely independent objects.

From a libertarian perspective, freedom is nothing but choice fueled by a certain desire. David Hume, defines liberty as "a power of acting or of not acting, according to the determination of the will." In Steve's scenario, according to Libertarians like Hume, the object he picks is determined by his individual, free-willed choice. As I have stated before, this Libertarian perspective clearly falls because of Arguments 1 and 3. Steve won't be able to pick up different objects unless he was a different person.

Classical Compatibilists define freedom as the capacity for making a decision when there are no impediments in the way. Hobbes says that his research showed him that a person has freedom when he/she has "no stop, in doing what he has the will, desire, or inclination to doe [*sic*]" (*Leviathan*, p.108). However, the problem with this kind of compatibilism is that the "will, desire, or inclination" is completely from the environment. In other words, that kind of desire is produced by the environment, and thus is not an indication of free will but in fact the exact opposite.

Contemporary Compatibilists have to refute the Consequence argument. For reference, the Consequence Argument is basically this:

1. No one has power over the facts of the past.
2. No one has power over the fact that the facts of the past entail every fact of the future.



3. Therefore, no one has power over the facts of the future.

As we can see, this is basically the same as Arguments One, Two, and Three, which I've already proven. Steve, in this case, has already picked his choice before entering the situation because of his past.

Finally, Incompatibilism falls as well. Incompatibilism ultimately comes down to two arguments:

1. Arguments for the claim that determinism makes it impossible for us to *cause and control our actions in the right kind of way*.
2. Arguments for the claim that determinism deprives us of the *power or ability to do or choose otherwise*.

The Argument 1 for Incompatibilism(which I'll refer to as Incompatibilism 1), ultimately follows Chisholm's argument:

“Each of us, when we act, is a prime mover unmoved. In doing what we do, we cause certain events to happen, and nothing — or no one — causes us to cause these events to happen. (Chisholm 1964, p. 32)”

However, Incompatibilism 1 clearly falls because of my Arguments One, Two, Three, and Four.

In other words, we cannot cause any certain events to happen because our free will is nothing more than an extension of our past. Steve, yet again, is determined by his past.

Next, Incompatibilism 2 falls because it implies that we have power over our surroundings.

Regardless of everything that we may assume about freedom, we are still subject to our

surroundings. Our choices are controlled by the environment, and the subsequent choices are controlled by the environment as well. Let's take the example of Steve that I brought up earlier. Advocates of Incompatibilist 2 would say that Steve has proven the existence of free will if, in the exact same situation and circumstances, he picks different objects. However, I've already argued why it would be impossible for him to pick a different object in the same scenarios in Arguments 1, 2, 3, and 4.

However, I also argue that even if he were somehow able to pick a different object, that he still does not have freedom. As I stated, freedom is the human capacity for picking an infinite amount of choices that have infinitely different repercussions. However, in my example, Steve is given 5 different objects, **removing** the freedom that he may have had. If Steve were to truly have freedom, then he wouldn't have to just pick 5 objects, but have the choice between infinite different ones. Steve is a victim to his surroundings, and that robs him of his freedom.

As I stated earlier, if a being were to have true freedom, it would have to be formless, timeless, spaceless, and ultimately be nothing. As our world today is full of information and details that limit freedom, it only logically stands to assume that a being with absolute freedom has no details at all.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout my entire paper, I made a series of statements, or contentions, that ultimately aimed to prove the mutual exclusivity of freedom and information. I've provided a series of arguments

that ultimately displayed both the mutual exclusivity of freedom and information, as well as providing a series of explanations why determinism is the only possible explanation of our interpretation of free will.

My basic point in this paper is summarized as such:

1. All information is picked up regardless of choice.
2. Choice is the basis of freedom.
3. Information being picked up is involuntary, and thus not by choice.
4. Information restricts choice.
5. Information restricts freedom.

While that is the essence of my argument, I've also shown that humans are incapable of performing an independent action, as everything a person thinks and does is a product of his/her environment. I've also shown that people have no real control over their actions, as their actions are interpretations of the environment. And, as information restricts freedom, it leads to logical reasoning that the only organism that truly has freedom is one that is not restricted by its environment, has no characteristics in either its being or its environment, and is somehow free because of no restriction. While one may argue that this organism has no freedom compared to, say a dog or a jellyfish in its ecosystem, I argue that they are products of their environment, and are controlled by the rules and law that environment enforces. This creates the illusion of freedom, or the illusion of action, not freedom itself. How the formless, timeless, and shapeless being has freedom I do not know, only that it is the only logical solution.

## **Bibliography**

### **1. Libet Experiments**

**Retrieved July 24, 2017, from Information Philosopher**

**[http://www.informationphilosopher.com/freedom/libet\\_experiments.html](http://www.informationphilosopher.com/freedom/libet_experiments.html)**

### **2. Laplace's Demon**

**Retrieved July 24, 2017, from Information Philosopher**

**[http://www.informationphilosopher.com/freedom/laplaces\\_demon.html](http://www.informationphilosopher.com/freedom/laplaces_demon.html)**

### **3. Hofer, C. (2003, January 23). Causal Determinism. Retrieved July 24, 2017, from**

**<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/determinism-causal/>**

### **4. McKenna, M., & Coates, D. J. (2004, April 26). Compatibilism. Retrieved July 24,**

**2017, from [plato.stanford.edu/entries/compatibilism/#ClaCom](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/compatibilism/#ClaCom). Accessed 24 July**

**2017**

### **5. O'Connor, T. (2002, January 07). Free Will. Retrieved July 24, 2017, from**

**<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/freewill/>**

### **6. Vihvelin, K. (2003, October 14). Arguments for Incompatibilism. Retrieved July 24,**

**2017, from <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/incompatibilism-arguments/>**