

Review of: "Free Will Stands When Properly Explained and Correctly Defined and Neuroscience Shows This to Be the Case"

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This may be a difference in fields, but this paper seems overly focused on different people's arguments, and asking whether one person or another is correct. From my social psychological perspective, I don't care if anyone's right or wrong—I'm merely concerned with the arguments, wherever they come from. I therefore agree with some of the other reviewers who suggested shortening the intro and focusing it more tightly on the core idea.

I also think this article is a little muddled at the beginning because at each juncture it states what it doesn't mean, before stating what it means. It would probably be clearer if it stated its definitions. Then stated why those definitions are clearer or better than the ones used by others, rather than the other way around.

I also find it a little hard to follow because several different definitions are given for free will. I think the intention is to refine the definition over the course of the article, but that strategy isn't made clear at the beginning and I became a bit lost.

Kant distinguishes freedom by whether an action is done by impulses or by deeper, often moral values that override undue influences by desires, addictions, etc. A guard doesn't abandon his post for food—there is a deeper morality guiding his actions.

The key question: Is the will conditioned by nature or by freedom?

Does it execute volitions driven by rational considerations, unencumbered by impulses and inclinations? This seems a high bar—completely unencumbered? Or is partial enough? Partial would be consistent with how ordinary people seem to think about free will. You can have more or less, depending on your situation and how it impedes your ability to make certain choices. It also seems consistent with psychological research. We shouldn't dismiss a choice as unfree because there is some moderate degree of influence on it from the situation, because situations influence almost every choice in little or large ways.

Vonasch, A. J., Baumeister, R. F., & Mele, A. R. (2018). Ordinary people think free will is a lack of constraint, not the presence of a soul. *Consciousness and cognition*, 60, 133-151.

Vonasch, A. J., Clark, C. J., Lau, S., Vohs, K. D., & Baumeister, R. F. (2017). Ordinary people associate addiction with loss of free will. *Addictive behaviors reports*, 5, 56-66.

Monroe, A. E., & Malle, B. F. (2010). From uncaused will to conscious choice: The need to study, not speculate about people's folk concept of free will. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 1(2), 211-224.

“So far so good, we can define “free will” as a *will unencumbered by impulses and inclinations which forms and executes volitions driven by rational considerations*. But how does defining free will as such impact our notions of agency, choice, and action or does it? I submit, it does – it shows that an agent always chooses its actions or inactions freely even when its will is not.”

But you haven’t made any arguments in relation to choosing freely—you’ve only talked about free will. I don’t see how it shows this. In fact, it seems likely that agents sometimes choose in ways that are encumbered by impulses and inclinations. It’s not only the will that’s influenced by impulses. Also choice.

The author makes the argument that Libet’s definition of free will is inappropriate because will conditioned by desires is not free. I can see how you’d need to show that will conditioned by reason is unfree would be a true test of free will. But I disagree that any influence on decision by desires make an action unfree. If my reason and desires happen to coincide (e.g., I like helping people, and I think it’s good to do, so I do), does that make my action unfree? Can’t we have desires consistent with reason?