

Review of: "How to Amend Christian List's Theory on Free Will to Answer the Challenge from Indeterminism"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I do think several versions of higher-level, psychological indeterminism need to be distinguished before discussing to which extent psychological indeterminism is a threat to free will. Consider these different options:

1. I have decided to take up jogging, to improve my stamina and general health. However, as I'm about to put my sneakers on and go for a run, random psychological indeterminism makes me binge-watch a show on Netflix instead. I find myself doing so but have no idea why - it was just the indeterminism in my brain.

This seems like a situation in which indeterminism compromised my reasons-responsiveness and free will.

2. I ponder whether to go jogging or stay home and watch the new show on Netflix. I think to myself: I really ought to go jogging. That's what I have most reason to do. But reason or no reason, I just can't be arsed! And then I stay home and watch Netflix anyway.

Unlike option 1, this isn't completely random. It can be explained by my laziness and weak will. Weakwilled actions are traditionally considered free ones in the philosophical literature. Of course, this is controversial and debated, but it's nevertheless the traditional view that we may perform weak-willed actions of our own free will. I also think this is something most laypeople would agree with.

3. I ponder whether to go jogging, or stay home and watch the new show on Netflix. On the one hand, jogging is good for my health. On the other hand, I'm pretty tired now, the weather is bad, and I can watch TV tonight and go jogging tomorrow instead. Then again, it might be better to go jogging now, so I don't get into the habit of procrastinating...

It's just not obvious what the best choice is, but in the end, I decide to go jogging and watch TV later.

Given my preferences, beliefs, previous psychological states, etc., it could have gone either way. Another person with the same personality and who fits the same psychological description could have chosen otherwise - we have indeterminism on this course-grained, high level. But it's very difficult to see why THIS instance of indeterminism would be incompatible with free will.

Kokko might want to say that my entire deliberation was pointless if there weren't a fact of the matter re which option was favoured by reasons - I could just as well have flipped a coin. But that claim would need to be argued for! In particular since I might not have known how evenly the reasons weighed before I deliberated about the matter (just like I might need to go through deliberation to find out what I have most reason to do, even in cases where it turns out there IS an unequivocal answer at the end of the deliberative process).

