

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

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The fundamental weakness of the article is the reliance of its author on the belief that “the challenge from indeterminism” is more or less fatal to libertarianism. If determinism is the thesis that the system allows only one possible continuation of its past states, and indeterminism the thesis that the system allows more than one possible continuation of its past states, it by no means follows that, in the case of indeterminism, the actual continuation is random or a matter of chance. For, what the system leaves undetermined, other factors than chance may determine: for example, an agent choosing between various options which are in his/her power. It is true that under indeterminism the continuation of the past is a matter of contingency (*not* of necessity); it does not follow that it is a matter of chance. Thus, the author seems to confuse contingency and chance.

The following quotation from the paper is rather revealing: “If an agent’s choices are indeterministic, then nothing strictly makes it so that one choice is made rather than another.” This is far from being cogent, or even plausible. The most plausible view is this: If an agent’s choices are indeterministic [not determined by the system], then *the agent* makes it so that one choice is made rather than another.

The author believes that indeterminism compromises reasons-responsiveness. If this were true, what should we say about determinism? Determinism in a very clear and obvious sense compromises reasons-responsiveness, since under determinism whatever an agent does is done by the necessity of the system; the agent’s reasons are otiose. In contrast, indeterminism gives reasons a chance of being relevant in the first place; for agents in making their choices (which they can make only under indeterminism; under determinism, the system determines everything) also choose (determine) by which of the reasons that their intelligence and their desires more or less forcefully suggest to them, they let themselves be guided.

The author believes that free will is not only compatible with determinism but *requires* determinism; because indeterminism is actually incompatible with free will, as the author argues following the lines of “the challenge from indeterminism.” There seems to be no good reason for this *other* – very *other* – incompatibilism.