

## Peer Review

# Review of: "Self, Dignity, and the Brain: A Critical Reflection on Psychology, Free Will, and Law"

Nathaniel Anderson<sup>1</sup>

1. Independent researcher

This work addresses a wide range of topics under the umbrella of paradoxical notions of determinism, free will, moral accountability, and legal culpability. While I found the work ambitious in its scope, I also found it to be difficult to read. Primarily, I think the work would benefit from a more coherent thesis, or theses. I believe the author has attempted to make certain paradoxes apparent by describing the boundaries, limitations, and assumptions of philosophical arguments undergirding the paradigms of determinism and compatibilism and their relationships to our practical implementation of legal authority. Overall, it was difficult for me to understand (or summarize) a synthesis of ideas that would support additional clarity on these paradoxes. Indeed, the conventions of our legal system in part assume that humans act and behave as free agents with autonomy. At the same time, we are confronted with the empirical understanding that our actions (motivations, reactions, choices) are governed by the confluence of innumerable, parallel chains of deterministic events. In the end, I am still left with the impression that attempts to reconcile these conflicting ideas eventually devolve into arguments that will seem incoherent to most readers, including me.

## Declarations

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.