

3: Arguments against Free Choice

In this chapter, we examine arguments for *Nfc*. Some have proposed that people are directly aware that choices are caused; those who hold this view might challenge our description of the experience of choice and urge that a more adequate description makes any further argument for *Nfc* otiose. Others have proposed that *Nfc* follows directly from logical truths.

We take up these two proposals and argue that neither experience alone nor logic alone can settle *Sfc/Nfc* in favor of *Nfc*. Thus it becomes clear that in *Sfc/Nfc*, neither side bears a special burden of proof. In this respect, the opposing views are on an equal footing; they offer contending accounts of the initiation of those choices which people think are free. Once we have criticized the proposals that experience alone or logic alone can settle the controversy, we examine physical determinism, psychological determinism, and other arguments for *Nfc*. Finally, we criticize the theological argument that divine causality precludes human free choice.

In trying to establish his position, a *PNfc* faces some of the same problems as a *PSfc*. Both must avoid using or assuming premises which an opponent need not admit. Our examination of arguments for *Nfc* will show that those which are not question-begging or otherwise fallacious are very weak. It is important to bear in mind that we do not claim that the weakness of arguments for *Nfc* establishes *Sfc*. This weakness shows only that our inquiry is not unnecessary. The question has not been settled.

A. Is one aware that his choices are caused?

One basis for thinking *Nfc* true, though seldom baldly stated, is to regard it as an obvious fact. This view corresponds to the argument for *Sfc* from immediate experience.

Someone who regards *Nfc* as an obvious fact would claim that the description of the experience of choice given in chapter one is incomplete and therefore seriously misleading. John Stuart Mill appears to attack a similar description of the experience of choice:

Take any alternative: say to murder or not to murder. I am told, that if I elect to murder, I am conscious that I could have elected to abstain: but am I conscious that I could have abstained if my aversion to the crime, and my dread of its consequences, had been weaker than the temptation? If I elect to abstain: in what sense am I conscious that I could have elected to commit the crime? Only if I had desired to commit it with a desire stronger than my horror of murder; not with one less strong. When we think of ourselves hypothetically as having acted otherwise than we did, we always suppose a difference in the antecedents: we picture ourselves as having known something that we did not know, or not known something that we did know; which is a difference in the external inducements; or as having desired something, or disliked something, more or less than we did; which is a difference in the internal inducements.¹

Thus Mill contends that in making a choice one is aware that knowledge and desire—including horror, liking, and other “internal inducements”—settle whether one elects to act or to abstain.

Mill’s claim does not show that the description of the experience of choice provided in chapter one is inadequate. We do not claim to describe there an experience *everyone* has, nor do we claim that people who have this experience call it “the experience of choice.” In chapter one, section C, we point out that there are acts arising spontaneously from given desires or settled dispositions, acts preceded by no deliberation and choice. The description also allows for a kind of reflection and choice which is limited to the working out of a practical application of purposes which are taken for granted; such choice need not carry with it any sense of freedom, and does provide an experience which Mill aptly describes.

A *PSfc* can point to aspects of the experience of choice described in chapter one, sections E and F, which are ignored by Mill’s description. One of these aspects is the experience of conflicting motives, neither of which seems strong enough to override the other, and the subsequent experience of one’s very choosing, endorsing one motive or the other and thus ending their conflict by *making* one motive effective and rendering the other ineffectual.

Thus, the *PSfc* can admit that Mill describes an authentic experience but deny that Mill describes the only relevant experience. One can claim to have had, at one time or another, both sorts of experiences. For example, a person can say that he has had the experience Mill describes when he gave in to a strong temptation to overindulgence in some way, but that he has had an experience which Mill’s description does not fit when he decided to go to graduate school rather than to accept an attractive invitation to enter a large corporation’s management trainee program.

Still, it should be noted that although the *PSfc* and many ordinary people have an experience of choice which the description provided in chapter one, sections E and F, fits and which Mill's description does not fit, this fact does not settle *Sfc/Nfc* in favor of the *PSfc*. What the experience does settle is that there are some data of which *Sfc* is an interpretation to be defended against the interpretation provided by the *PNfc*.

The preceding comments about the experience of choice and its relevance to *Sfc/Nfc* suggest the lines along which a *PSfc* might respond to the claim that *Nfc* is an obvious fact. The *PSfc* can maintain that an account like Mill's would be conclusive evidence for *Nfc* only if there could be no other interpretation of *any* experience of choosing. By offering his alternative for consideration, the *PSfc* shows that there can be another interpretation of some experience of choosing.

The *PSfc* also can point out that the *PNfc* asserts a universal negative proposition, a proposition which will be falsified by a single counterexample. The possibility of such a counterexample cannot be excluded by a supporting example, such as that offered by Mill, or even by any multitude of such supporting examples. Moreover, the *PSfc* will point out that his opponent not only claims that no one *does* make a free choice, but that no one *can* make one. The *PNfc* denies free choice in principle—that is, denies that anyone ever has this ability. The *PNfc* makes a claim so strong that no experience by itself could warrant it.

Thus, both a *PSfc* and a *PNfc* can appeal to experience in an effort to settle the dispute as easily and directly as possible. Neither appeal can exclude the other interpretation of the data; both appeals beg the question at issue in *Sfc/Nfc*. The appeal to the experience of choice by a *PNfc* is even less plausible than the analogous appeal by a *PSfc*, however, since *Nfc* is a universal negative proposition and it excludes an ability, while the *PSfc* makes a more modest claim—that someone at some time makes or *can* make some free choice.

Consequently, it is clear that the *PNfc* must provide some sort of reasoning or argumentation in support of his position. In fact, there already is a minimal argument in Mill's approach, for he insists upon a more complete account of the data, taking for granted an assumption—one surely correct—that a more complete account of the data is to be preferred. Only on this assumption can he even begin to draw a conclusion from the facts.

Another very simple form of argumentation, one related to Mill's, is direct generalization from instances of the sort Mill describes. Brand Blanshard summarizes such an argument:

You may remember that Sir Francis Galton was so much impressed with this possibility that for some time he kept account in a notebook of the occasions on which he made important choices with a full measure of this feeling of freedom; then shortly after each choice he turned his eye backward in search of constraints that might have been acting on him stealthily. He found it so easy to bring such constraining factors to light that he surrendered to the determinist view.²

A *PSfc* can deny that a fact about Galton is representative of the experience of everyone. But Blanshard's point seems to be that the induction Galton makes is one which anyone else would make if he considered the facts as meticulously as Galton does.

The *PSfc* can reject this simple induction by saying that people who make free choices will not reach Galton's conclusion. Blanshard can only be certain that everyone must reach the same conclusion if he assumes *Nfc*—that is, if he begs the question.

Moreover, the *PSfc* need not accept Galton's description of the facts. Does Galton's ability to think of constraining factors show that they were sufficient to determine the choice? How could anyone, even Galton, be certain that he is not deceiving himself by considering his experience with a deterministic bias in order to rationalize questionable choices and thus avoid feelings of guilt or of personal failure? Just as the *PSfc* cannot rule out in principle the possibility that factors of which he is not aware determine the choices in which he experiences a sense of freedom, so the *PNfc* cannot rule out in principle the possibility that self-deception and rationalization blind him to the data which would otherwise give rise to a sense of freedom.

Setting aside this rather personal counterattack, the *PSfc* can admit the experiential basis of the induction and concede the adequacy of the sample but still maintain that the conclusion to *Nfc* is far stronger than the conclusion warranted by any sound canons of induction. At best, Blanshard's argument shows that people *do not* make free choices, not that they *cannot* make them.

To sum up. An attempt to establish *Nfc* by appealing directly to immediate experience fails. Like the analogous argument for *Sfc*, this one is question-begging. One certainly can grant Mill's assumption that a full description of the data is to be preferred to a partial description and Blanshard's assumption that a generalization based on meticulous observation is to be accepted, but the arguments shaped by these assumptions also fail to support *Nfc*, for these arguments either are question-begging or they draw conclusions which logic does not justify, or both. The fact that a *PNfc* rarely limits the defense of his position to such simple forms of argument also indicates his awareness that his position needs stronger support.

Thus, a *PNfc* usually argues from a general thesis of determinism, from a theory of human behavior, from the unintelligibility of free choices, or from the fruitlessness of regarding choices as free. The strongest possible argument for *Nfc*, however, would be one showing that *Sfc* is logically impossible.

B. Is free choice logically impossible?

The view that *Nfc* follows from logical truths alone has had few serious supporters. Still, if this view were correct, *Sfc* would be absurd, and further

discussion of *Sfc/Nfc* would be pointless. Therefore, we consider this line of argument with some care and attempt to make clear why it is mistaken.

The thesis that the truths of logic entail *Nfc* often is called “fatalism.” However, “fatalism” also has a popular sense which must not be confused with the technical sense it has in philosophy.

Fatalism in the popular sense is the view that a certain state of affairs will inevitably obtain at a certain time in the future even though nobody can foresee with certitude when that state of affairs will obtain. It is not fatalism in this sense to hold that there are some inevitable future states of affairs which can be foreseen with certitude—for example, the next eclipse of the moon.

It is vulgar fatalism to maintain that a certain state of affairs (for example, the death of the authors of this book) will occur at a certain future time (for example, on January 1, 2000) and that this will happen regardless of what anyone does or does not do in the meanwhile. The event is inevitable since nothing can prevent its happening. Thus, vulgar fatalism amounts to picking out a particular future event, detaching it from the context of its determining conditions, asserting that the event will occur at a determinate time, and denying that the context of conditions in which one replaces the event will make any difference.

If the authors of this book were vulgar fatalists, they would see no point in trying to forestall their deaths, for they would be fated to die either on January 1, 2000, or on some other date. As a result, they might take extraordinary risks, confident that they could not die prior to the date already predetermined. It is obvious why vulgar fatalism is a soldier's favorite myth.

Vulgar fatalism often has been attacked by philosophers, especially by determinists anxious to prevent misinterpretation of their own position. So far as we know, no philosopher ever has defended vulgar fatalism. Since vulgar fatalism fails if the more sophisticated arguments for *Nfc* which we will consider fail, there is no need to consider its merits. We note it for clarificatory purposes only.

Philosophical fatalism is the position that one can deduce *Nfc* from logical truths.³ Any conclusion which can be deduced validly from logical truths alone is logically necessary. Thus, if *Nfc* can be deduced from logical truths alone, it is logically necessary. The fatalist argument proceeds by trying to show that logically necessary truths by themselves exclude the alternative possibilities which are a necessary condition for free choice, and thus that *Sfc* is logically impossible.

Arguments for philosophical fatalism have been constructed in such a way that they involve reference to future events. This reference to future events might be useful in such arguments, but this reference is not part of the meaning of philosophical fatalism.

Since we are more interested in philosophical fatalism as a position than in

the details of diverse formulations of the argument for it, we propose a formulation which we think captures the essential features of any argument for fatalism. In the argument itself—as distinct from our example—we avoid time-reference, which we consider irrelevant to the position. We also make explicit the claim that *Sfc* is logically impossible, for we consider this implication of fatalism alone to be relevant to *Sfc/Nfc*.

1) Every proposition must be either true, or if not true, then false.

2) Assume that one man affirms proposition *p* and another denies *p*, then it is logically necessary that either *p* is true or *not-p* is true. (Let “*p*” name the proposition: “The authors of this book will attend next year’s meeting of the Western Division of the American Philosophical Association.”)

3) Let “*R*” name the state of affairs which would be sufficient to make *p* true, and let “*not-R*” name the state of affairs which would be sufficient to make *not-p* true. It is logically impossible that both *R* and *not-R* obtain.

4) Therefore, if *p* is true, it is logically impossible that *not-R* obtain, while if *not-p* is true, it is logically impossible that *R* obtain. (If it is true that we will go to the meeting, it is logically impossible that all the conditions for our not going should obtain; if it is true that we will not go, it is logically impossible that all the conditions for our going to it should obtain.)

5) If it is logically impossible that the sufficient condition for any particular event obtain, then the occurrence of the state of affairs alternative to that event is logically necessary.

6) Therefore, if *p* is true, *p* is logically necessary; if *not-p* is true, *not-p* is logically necessary. (Whether we do go or not, whatever we actually will do is logically necessary.)

7) Therefore, it is not the case that both *p* and *not-p* are logically possible. Since one of them is logically necessary, the other must be logically impossible.

8) There can be no alternative possibilities.

9) That anyone can make a free choice is inconsistent with (8).

10) But (8) is entailed by logically necessary truths.

11) *Sfc* is logically impossible.

A *PSfc* will criticize the logic of this argument. The difficulty seems to center in step (4): “Therefore, if *p* is true, it is logically impossible that *not-R* obtain, while if *not-p* is true, it is logically impossible that *R* obtain.” As it stands, this means that if any proposition is true, the conditions which would lead to its falsification are logically impossible. Taken by itself, this statement would simply beg the question in favor of fatalism, for the nonfatalist need only grant that if any proposition is true, the conditions which would falsify it cannot also be *actually fulfilled*.

What makes step (4) plausible? It is stated as a conclusion. Step (3) states that it is logically impossible for both *R* and *not-R* to obtain, where “*R*” and

“*not-R*” name states of affairs which would be sufficient for the truth of the respective contradictories, *p* and *not-p*. Inasmuch as *p* and *not-p* are logically incompatible, it follows that *R* and *not-R* are necessarily incompatible. From this it seems to follow that if *p* is true, then *not-R* is impossible—and this is the conclusion stated as step (4).

To show why this conclusion does not follow, a *PSfc* need only reconstruct step (4) of the argument, being careful about the placement of the modal operators:

4A) The following is necessary: If *p* is true, then *R* obtains.

4B) The following is impossible: *R* and *not-R* simultaneously obtain.

4C) The following is impossible: *p* is true, and *not-R* obtains.

The trouble is that (4C) is not equivalent to the proposition required by the fatalist argument: The following is impossible: *p* is true, and *not-R* is possible.

In other words, while it is impossible that any proposition be true and that a state of affairs which is a sufficient condition of its contradictory *also obtain*, it is by no means impossible that a proposition be true and that the state of affairs which is the sufficient condition of its contradictory *also be possible*. This assumption, unlike (4C), is not a logical truth, and if a fatalist makes it, he begs the question.

To return to our example. A fatalist would conclude that if it is true that the authors of this book will go to next year’s meeting of the Western Division of the American Philosophical Association, then it is not in their power not to choose to go. The *PSfc* will admit only that if we freely choose to go to the meeting and go to it as a result of this choice, then we do not remain able to choose not to go and to stay away as a result of this choice. Free choice does not mean that one can choose both alternatives, only that one can choose either. If one could choose both, choice would be unnecessary.

Nevertheless, if it is true that as a result of a free choice we will go to the meeting, but have not yet decided to do so, then it is now possible for us to go and possible for us not to go, and the sufficient condition in virtue of which it is true that we will go, will be given only when we freely choose to go—a choice which, unless reversed, will eliminate the possibility of not going. If someone assumes that the truth of the proposition that we will go eliminates the possibility of our not going, and fails to notice that according to the *PSfc* the latter alternative will be eliminated and the former brought about by the same fact—the fact of our free choice—then he begs the question in favor of fatalism.

In formulating the controversy about free choice in chapter one, section H, we criticize a fallacious argument which is offered for the position that if there ever is a choice, it is necessary that the choice be free. This argument for free choice is an analogue of fatalism. We point out that the argument for this position involves a fallacy of modal logic: to suppose that the conjunction of *p* and the impossibility of *p* and *q* entails the impossibility of *q*, when it only

entails that q is not the case. The fallacy in the fatalist argument is similar, for the fatalist argues from the impossibility of one state of affairs being given in conjunction with another state of affairs which is sufficient to bring about something incompatible with the first, to the impossibility by itself of any state of affairs which would bring about something incompatible with any given state of affairs.

Richard Taylor considers the objection that his argument for fatalism involves this fallacy. Taylor's version of the argument is expressed in terms of propositional truth and human abilities. He argues that any proposition which is true, always is true, whether the proposition is about the past or about the future. Just as a true historical statement always will be true, a true prediction always has been true. Just as no person has the ability to change the past, no one has the ability to make false a true proposition about what will be. Taylor answers the objection that his argument involves a modal fallacy as follows:

The fatalist argument has nothing to do with impossibility in those senses familiar to logic. It has to do with unavoidability. It is, in other words, concerned with human abilities. The fact that a statement is true does not, to be sure, entail that it is necessary, nor do all false statements express impossibilities. Nonetheless, no man is able to avoid what is truly described, however contingently, in any statement, nor to bring about what is thus falsely described.⁴

The *PSfc* can agree with Taylor that no one has the ability to make true statements false, whether those statements be about the past or about the future. However, the *PSfc* can deny that *Nfc* follows from Taylor's observation. For if it is true that someone is going to make a certain choice freely, then it also is true that no one—even the individual himself—has the ability to make it false that he is going to make that choice freely. Still, according to the *PSfc*, if someone is going to make a free choice, the only thing which makes it true that he makes the choice he does is that he exercises his ability to choose thus or otherwise by choosing thus rather than otherwise. Taylor's argument, the *PSfc* will conclude, either begs the question by assuming that among past and future truths there are none about free choices, or demands a modal argument of the sort already criticized.

Some have suggested that the fatalist's conclusion can be avoided only by a drastic revision of the logical principle of excluded middle—the principle that any proposition which is not true is false.⁵ The suggestion is that propositions about future events of certain kinds, including free choices, are neither true nor false until the time comes when the condition is given which will settle what will happen. If the fatalist argument does involve the modal fallacy which we have pointed out, however, this proposed revision of a logical principle is unnecessary.

A fatalist *PNfc* might urge that if his view rests on an elementary fallacy in

modal logic, then the *PSfc* can hardly explain the appeal of fatalism to many intelligent people and the drastic measures opponents of the position have been prepared to take to avoid it. However, the *PSfc* can call attention to the following semantic point.⁶ Often if someone calls a proposition “true,” he means that someone knows it, or at least in principle *could* know it, to be true. This especially holds for propositions about particular future events. If one says that it is true that he will attend next year’s meeting of the Western Division of the American Philosophical Association, his statement normally would be taken as an expression of intention or as a commitment. One seldom has occasion to talk about the truth of statements about future events unless he is considering them as known, or at least as knowable.

Of course, no proposition is known unless the conditions which would verify it are known. The *PSfc* will point out that what anyone will do in virtue of a free choice is indeterminate until the choice is made. Since free choice is one of its own necessary conditions, the conditions which verify statements about a future free choice cannot obtain until the choice is made. Therefore, in principle no one can know what someone will choose, nor can anyone know anything which depends upon a free choice yet to be made. It follows, according to the *PSfc*, that it is not possible to make categorical statements concerning future free choices or their consequences.

This semantic point renders questionable the very first step of a fatalist argument. If “true” is taken as equivalent to “in principle knowable to someone as true” and if “false” is taken as equivalent to “in principle knowable to someone as false,” then the first step of the fatalist argument becomes: “Every proposition must in principle be knowable to someone as true, or if not in principle knowable to someone as true, then knowable to someone as false.” In other words, the conditions sufficient to verify or falsify every proposition are always knowable, which presupposes that they are always determinate.

Some fatalists perhaps have imported an epistemic sense into “true” and “false” in the argument’s first premise. An indication of such a confusion is the suggestion that there must be a middle ground between truth and falsity, if the force of the fatalist argument is to be avoided. Obviously, it is possible to suppose that there is a *tertium quid* between the extremes “in principle knowable to someone as true” and “in principle knowable to someone as false”; the *tertium quid* is: “not in principle knowable to anyone as either true or false.”

A *PNfc* could suggest that fatalism might be defended as part of a wider metaphysical theory without appeal to the line of argument we have criticized. This metaphysical theory would exclude possibility from reality; whatever is actual is necessary, while whatever is not actual is impossible.

Such a metaphysical thesis has been defended by many important philosophers beginning with Parmenides. His view is that one should not think or say what is not, for what is not, is unintelligible. In modern times,

philosophers such as Spinoza, Leibniz, and Hegel developed a more nuanced version of Parmenides' position. For them, all truths would be understood to be logically necessary if their connections to their ultimate grounds were known.

The *PSfc* can point out that all such rationalistic metaphysics must attempt to account for the apparent, the seemingly contingent, the moments in the Absolute which are not the Absolute. The metaphysicians distinguish between the logically necessary and the impossible, deny the intelligibility of talk about the latter, but continue to talk about it themselves.

One final point. A *PSfc*, confronted with a metaphysician who maintains fatalism, can refuse to accept the force of the rationalistic position, even if he can find no flaw in it. "I have my sense of freedom," he might say, "and no airy fabric of argument will convince me that I do not make free choices." The fatalist can reply that if fatalism is true, logic demands that *Sfc* be abandoned. Still, the *PSfc* can refuse to admit the priority of logic over experience.

In sum. A fatalist argument assumes that logical principles are to be adhered to consistently in all of one's thinking, even when doing so requires one to give up beliefs based upon experience. The fatalist maintains that logic implies *Nfc*, and so one should admit this position. The *PSfc*, however, need not grant the fatalist's claim that logical truths by themselves entail *Nfc*, for this claim is not supported by a sound argument. And even if he could find no fallacy in the argument, it would remain open to a *PSfc* to suspect that there was something wrong with logic, rather than with his belief in free choice, especially when logic is used to ground a rationalistic metaphysics.

C. Do the laws of nature exclude free choice?

Since the rise of modern science, many have regarded the thesis of universal determinism as the premise of the best argument for *Nfc*. Laplace gave this thesis its classic formulation:

We ought then to consider the present state of the universe as the effect of its antecedent state, and as the cause of the one which is going to follow. An intelligence which knew at a given instant all the forces at work in nature and the relative positions of the entities which make it up—provided that it were great enough to submit these data to analysis—would comprehend in the same formula the movements of the largest bodies in the universe and those of the tiniest atom. For it, nothing would be uncertain; the future, like the past, would be present to its eyes.⁷

Clearly, *Sfc* is incompatible with universal determinism of the sort Laplace posits. If *Sfc* is true, there could be events—free choices—which even the intelligence Laplace imagines could not predict.

As for the thesis of universal determinism itself, many have thought that it is either presupposed or entailed—or in some way strongly supported—by the

laws of nature formulated in modern science. Thus the development of modern science seems to provide a very strong argument for *Nfc*. This case for *Nfc* often is called “physical determinism.”

The *PSfc* can feel the force of this argument. J. R. Lucas forthrightly expresses this feeling: “. . . physical determinism is frightening. The arguments for it are forceful.” Lucas points out that the explanatory success of modern physics strongly supports its worldview; even if the scientific account of nature proves inadequate in some details, it remains “both well supported and incompatible with freedom.”⁸

Henry Sidgwick succinctly states physical determinism:

On the Determinist side there is a cumulative argument of great force. The belief that events are determinately related to the state of things immediately preceding them is now held by all competent thinkers in respect of all kinds of occurrences except human volitions. It has steadily grown both intensively and extensively, both in clearness and certainty of conviction and in universality of application, as the human mind has developed and human experience has been systematised and enlarged. Step by step in successive departments of fact conflicting modes of thought have receded and faded, until at length they have vanished everywhere, except from this mysterious citadel of Will. Everywhere else the belief is so firmly established that some declare its opposite to be inconceivable: others even maintain that it always was so. Every scientific procedure assumes it: each success of science confirms it. And not only are we finding ever new proof that events are cognisably determined, but also that the different modes of determination of different kinds of events are fundamentally identical and mutually dependent: and naturally, with the increasing conviction of the essential unity of the cognisable universe, increases the indisposition to allow the exceptional character claimed by Libertarians for the department of human action.⁹

As Sidgwick’s lucid formulation makes clear, the physical determinist need not claim that *Nfc* is entailed by one or several laws of nature. If there were a law from which *Nfc* followed, the physical determinist’s case would be most powerful.

At the same time, the *PNfc* need not regard universal determinism as an a priori truth from which *Nfc* is deduced without further argument. Rather, as Sidgwick explains, the success of the physical sciences has grounded a cumulative argument for universal determinism. The conviction grows that the deterministic thesis is universally applicable; the mysterious citadel of will is not exempt. Proponents of physical determinism, when they argue for *Nfc*, often offer an informal account of the mechanisms of thought and choice which renders plausible the project of bringing this set of phenomena within the range of the scientific method which has succeeded so well in all the rest of nature.

Paul Rée’s articulation of the view that free will would violate the law of

causality is typical. He mentions many hereditary and environmental factors which shape an individual's personality and character. Such factors account for differences in the feelings and emotional reactions of different persons. Then he suggests that the same model can be extended to thought and action:

Likewise every intention, indeed, every thought that ever passes through the brain, the silliest as well as the most brilliant, the true as well as the false, exists of necessity. In that sense there is no freedom of thought. . . .

Just as sensations and thoughts are necessary, so, too, is action. It is, after all, nothing other than their externalization, their objective embodiment. Action is born of sensations and thoughts. So long as the sensations are not sufficiently strong, action cannot occur, and when the sensations and thoughts are constituted so as to yield the sufficient cause for it, then it must occur; then the appropriate nerves and muscles are set to work.¹⁰

Physical determinism can begin as a specific deterministic hypothesis about human behavior, which then seeks some support from its conformity with the wider scientific worldview.¹¹ This form of physical determinism can be formulated by saying that no interpretive model in addition to the models used to account for other natural events and processes is required to account for human choice and action. Richard Brandt and Jaegwon Kim propose such a formulation of physical determinism: An explanation will be deterministic if and only if the inferential and nomological patterns found in the biological sciences are taken to be sufficient to explain human choice.¹²

Any instance of physical determinism of this type would be a hypothesis proposed to explain human choices. Such a hypothesis would be credible partly because it calls for the use in the investigation of human behavior of methods and models already successful in other fields. Thus even when *Nfc* is neither deduced from universal determinism nor from any particular law or laws of nature, but proposed as part of a hypothesis about human behavior, the physical determinist still argues for *Nfc* as the view of human behavior which best conforms to the deterministic worldview of the physical and biological sciences. To consider human behavior as the *PSfc* does is simply unscientific.

The *PSfc* can criticize physical determinism on a number of points which seem vulnerable. One possibly vulnerable point is the thesis of universal determinism.

Universal determinism, the *PSfc* might claim, lacks determinate reference. If one says that every event is determined by antecedents, "determined" serves only as a schema which must be specified in each context in a somewhat different way.¹³

However, one can propose a version of physical determinism within a restricted theoretical framework in which there is no difficulty in giving a specific meaning to "determined," and to such related notions as "cause" and

“lawful account.” Physical determinism can take the form of a special theory of human behavior in which the notion of cause—or some notion which functions as cause does—can be specified to fit the subject matter. For example, in behavioristic psychology the notion of cause is specified in terms of operant conditioning and genetic factors. Any special theory of the determination of human behavior would take its place in the generally deterministic worldview of science, and thus a meaning of “cause” specified to human behavior would be a legitimate member of the family of scientific meanings of the expression.¹⁴

The *PSfc* might object that a deterministic theory of human behavior is vacuous, for if one accepts determinism, there can be nothing which he would accept as a counterinstance to the deterministic theory of human behavior.¹⁵

An objection along these lines perhaps presupposes verificationism. The physical determinist need not be a verificationist, and we argue against verificationism in chapter five, section D. If a physical determinist is not a verificationist, it is not clear why the hypothesis he proposes must be disconfirmable by experience. Many truths about the world are not. For example, the truth that people learn by experience cannot be disconfirmed by experience.

Moreover, a falsifiable version of physical determinism seems possible. Jonathan Glover suggests as an analogy an imaginary computer, the inner workings of which happen to be inaccessible. One might test whether the machine was governed by causal laws by correlating inputs and outputs. One could then generalize on the data and predict future performance: “Consistently correct predictions would count as verifying the hypothesis that the machine was governed by the causal laws in question.”¹⁶

The *PSfc* might answer that no deterministic account of human behavior, given the complexity of the subject matter, can be so simple. He will point out that a convinced *PNfc* always can account for irregularity in behavior by assuming unknown variables. However, the *PNfc* can specify some degree or type of irregularity which he would be willing to admit as evidence against his hypothesis. If the *PNfc* articulates his deterministic view of human behavior in the form of a psychology like Skinner’s or Freud’s, he need not reject a priori the possibility of falsification. He can admit his position to be in principle falsifiable while in practice he can account for irregularities by positing further variables.

The *PSfc* might dispute the conviction that science will vindicate determinism by pointing out that physics itself is no longer completely deterministic; the indeterminism of quantum mechanics renders obsolete the older, mechanistic view.¹⁷

But developments in physics do not lend support to the *PSfc* as clearly as he might wish. It is a moot question whether quantum indeterminacy is even

relevant to possible scientific explanations of human behavior. Felix Mainx argues:

Almost all biological processes take place in the macrophysical domain, so that in their case the indeterminateness of the microphysical elementary processes plays no part. This also holds for enzymatic, hormonal, and stimulus-physiological processes, for which an origin from the microphysical domain has often been incorrectly asserted on the basis of superficial estimates. . . . The idea of P. Jordan of an amplifying mechanism which could allow the processes in the microphysical domain to influence the macrophysical organic event is quite conceivable. But we know of no such phenomena in the behavior of organisms, and it would be difficult to imagine how such effects within an organism, which are only statistically predictable, can be reconciled with its existence as a highly complicated system.¹⁸

If Mainx is correct, a biopsychological account of human action could be entirely deterministic; such an account would not need to mention quantum indeterminacy.

Of course, one tends to think of nature as unified to such an extent that events at the microphysical level must have some causal relation with the macrophysical processes of human biology, including brain processes. But an account of those causal relations does not exist.¹⁹ Without such an account, the claim that quantum indeterminacy makes room for free choice appears to be a speculative, not a scientific, thesis.²⁰

In short, even if some scientific theory does present a picture of an indeterministic physical world, it is not clear that this indeterministic picture is relevant to human choice and action.²¹

The *PNfc* also can argue that while quantum mechanics leaves the individual event undetermined, the theory does make definite predictions about large numbers of events, and such statistical laws exclude the possibility of free choice. Erwin Schrödinger argues:

. . . quantum laws, though they leave the single event undetermined, predict a quite definite *statistics* of events when the same situation occurs again and again. If these statistics are interfered with by any agent, this agent violates the laws of quantum mechanics just as objectionably as if it interfered—in pre-quantum physics—with a strictly causal mechanical law.²²

Schrödinger's point is that scientific laws—statistical or otherwise—do not admit of exceptions. Hence, human actions can no more violate statistical laws than they can violate strict causal laws; indeterminism does not leave room for free choice. Schrödinger's point seems to be well taken.²³

Thus, quantum indeterminism, far from indicating that the current scientific picture of the world is compatible with *Sfc*, apparently remains as incompatible with it as classical physical determinism.

Nevertheless, the *PNfc* must admit that the classical deterministic view formulated by Laplace is at least oversimplified. If Sidgwick were alive today, he would observe that the forces of determinism have been diverted from their seige upon the citadel of will by a fresh challenge in the very domain which he regarded as absolutely secure. For even if quantum physics does not lend the *PSfc* the support he might wish, it does take away the clear support the *PNfc* once enjoyed from classical physics and replaces this support with a problem. If the deterministic thesis is not universal, the *PNfc* cannot deduce *Nfc* from it. Thus, the *PNfc* not only must rebut his opponent's attempt to use quantum indeterminacy to support *Sfc*, the *PNfc* also must *show* either that quantum indeterminacy is compatible with universal determinism or that quantum indeterminacy is the only possible exception to universal determinism. The former thesis has yet to be established, and we know of no attempt to establish the latter; in fact, we can think of no way in which someone might make such an attempt.

However, the physical determinist can point out that there are several formal and methodological characteristics of science which demand that any scientific understanding of any subject matter be deterministic.

For example, it can be argued that all adequately developed scientific theories involve appeals to what Hempel calls "covering laws"—laws which connect definite antecedent conditions with the consequences which necessarily follow when the antecedent conditions obtain.²⁴ As we pointed out above, such laws, even if statistical, seem to exclude free choices. If such laws are one of the necessary features of scientific theories, science is inherently deterministic.

A *PNfc* also can argue that scientific objectivity requires certain a priori restrictions on what will count as data which can confirm or disconfirm a proposed scientific theory. These restrictions, he might conclude, make science inherently deterministic. For example, Jacques Monod takes the rejection of all teleological explanations to be a necessary condition for scientific objectivity.²⁵ Thus, Monod's position excludes the possibility of free choice, for if man is free, his choices are among perceived alternatives, that is, among options which do not themselves determine the choice. Such alternatives are means to ends. Hence, any account of human actions compatible with *Sfc* will be teleological, and a teleological account seems to be unacceptable in the scientific worldview.

Again, the possibility of predictive success is essential to the confirmation of a scientific theory. To the extent that any theory admitted free choices to be among the possible conditions of the data under investigation, the possibility of predictive success would be undercut. Thus, science seems to be inherently deterministic.

Thus far in this section we have considered a number of attempts which a *PSfc* might make to find a place for free choice *within* the scientific worldview. We have seen that the *PNfc* has resources to repel such attempts. But the *PSfc* can take a more radical approach. Why *must* he accept the scientific view of human choice if science is formally and methodologically committed to determinism, as these arguments suggest? The *PNfc* leaves no room for his opponent within the scientific worldview, insisting that this worldview is thoroughly deterministic. Having argued in this way, the *PNfc* begs the question if he simply assumes, instead of independently proves, that the scientific worldview must be accepted without restrictions or qualifications.

The *PSfc* will reject the scientific worldview to the extent that it leaves no place for free choice. At the same time, he can admit that science gives a useful and accurate account of much of man's experience. The *PSfc* can even admit that some scientific knowledge is relevant to the understanding of human behavior and choice, for every free choice has many necessary conditions which can be investigated scientifically. Thus, the *PSfc* can accept the deliverances of science which are well-confirmed yet reject the speculative thesis that science eventually will provide a complete and exclusive account of everything in nature, including human choices and acts.

A *PSfc* who takes this attitude will find that many scientists themselves share it. Werner Heisenberg, for example, points out that modern science was in its beginnings modest: "It made statements about strictly limited relations that *are only valid within the framework of these limitations.*" This modesty was lost when physics wished to turn philosopher and physical knowledge was regarded as making statements about nature as a whole. But modern physics, according to Heisenberg, is returning to its former self-limitation, and this self-limitation is necessary if physics is to generate any philosophical insight.²⁶

In other words, Heisenberg does not regard the laws of nature which physics now knows or can expect to know as even a start toward the knowledge which Laplace's intelligence would need. The statements which science makes about limited relations need not be regarded as part of a system of statements about all relations in the whole of nature.

The *PSfc* also can argue that the *PNfc's* belief that *Sfc* is incompatible with a scientific outlook rests on a naively realistic conception of scientific knowledge. This realistic conception often is challenged. Michael Scriven, for example, makes the challenge in blunt language:

The examples of physical laws with which we are all familiar are distinguished by one feature of particular interest for the traditional analyses—they are virtually all known to be in error. Nor is the error trifling, nor is an amended law available which corrects for all the error. The important feature of laws cannot be their literal truth, since this rarely exists. It is not their closeness to the truth which

replaces this, since far better approximations are readily constructed. Their virtue lies in a compound out of the qualities of generality, formal simplicity, approximation to the truth, and theoretical tractability.²⁷

The *PSfc* seems justified, then, in refusing to admit the unrestricted validity of a scientific worldview which systematically excludes *Sfc*.

The physical determinist can seek to explain the properties of present physical laws mentioned by Scriven by pointing to the complexity of the world. Physical determinists always have emphasized that the causal factors studied by science are complicated.²⁸ They can posit further unknown factors as the source of the limitations Scriven indicates.

However, the *PSfc* can reject the assumption that all the unknown factors are deterministic. One of the variables which is at present unknown could be in principle unknowable by scientific methods: free choice. If one looks at nature as a kind of mechanism and physical causality as a neat chain of events, then to suppose that free choices might occur in the world seems to posit a miraculous violation of natural laws. However, if one looks at the world as a multitude of overlapping fields, in each part of which nothing occurs except as the consequence of a great many interacting factors, then one can suppose that there are free choices occurring in the world and that such choices are a variable affecting other natural events, without regarding such choices as a violation of the laws covering other, deterministic variables. Heisenberg's conception of science does not require the hypothesis of Laplace's intelligence; the world studied by a more modest intelligence can admit the possibility of variables for which science in principle cannot account.

The *PNfc* is mistaken, then, if he thinks that science requires physical determinism and the exclusion of free choice from the world. If the scientific view of the world is thoroughly deterministic, it is reasonable to regard this view as a limited one. Moreover, the strong claims of the physical determinist are not established in the present state of scientific inquiry.

The *PNfc* can claim, however, that it is reasonable to regard the scientific view of the world as having unrestricted applicability. J. J. C. Smart, for example, has argued for a metaphysics based on the scientific view of the world. He begins by pointing out that it is the philosopher's task to seek a synoptic view of the world. Since no such view can be definitively shown to be true, the philosopher must select the most rationally plausible view—that is, the view which is most theoretically parsimonious.²⁹ Smart argues that scientific theory is the most plausible available synoptic view because of its economy. For Smart, “the ultimate laws of nature are those of physics.”³⁰ And “the physicist's language gives us a *truer* picture of the world than does the language of ordinary common sense.”³¹ Smart goes on to argue for a deterministic view; he considers it the position most consistent with the scientific view of the world.³²

The *PSfc* will object that “parsimony” need not have a single meaning. Smart assumes that the theory having the fewest theoretical entities is most parsimonious. “Parsimony” can be used in this sense, but in this sense parsimony is not a criterion of rationality. If two inquiries have different purposes, one cannot be rationally preferred to the other on the basis of a standard of parsimony which ignores their different purposes. For example, the explanation of the workings of an automobile engine one gives to someone learning to drive is much simpler than the explanation one gives to someone learning to repair such engines. But it would be ludicrous to claim that the former explanation is to be preferred because it is more parsimonious than the latter; the different purposes shaping each explanation call for different degrees of complexity in the explanations. In short, diverse inquiries have diverse purposes; what is a rational criterion of parsimony for one purpose need not be so for another.

To claim, then, on the basis of a rule of simplicity that the sciences together are the most plausible world-hypothesis is also to claim that the purposes of the various scientific inquiries take precedence over the purposes of other types of inquiry.

This claim cannot itself be scientific. For, given a variety of kinds of inquiry with different purposes, the claim that the purpose of one of these kinds is superior to the purpose of another cannot be justified by appealing to the results of the kind of inquiry which claims superiority. These results can exclude the results of other kinds of inquiry only on the assumption of the superiority of the purpose of the kind of inquiry which produced the results used to justify the exclusion. It is circular to say that scientific theory shows that scientific inquiry is to be preferred to other kinds of inquiry.

It follows that the preference for the values of scientific inquiry must rest on grounds other than science itself. There are two possibilities to be considered.

On the one hand, the preference for the values of scientific inquiry and for the worldview it generates might be merely arbitrary. But such an arbitrary preference cannot exclude alternative arbitrary preferences.

On the other hand, there might be a rational justification for preferring the scientific worldview. On this alternative, there must be extrascientific grounds for the preference. If so, then an adequate worldview would include not only the legitimate claims of science, but also those of this extrascientific way of thinking.³³

If one judges what is parsimonious keeping in mind that one’s purpose is to decide among world-hypotheses, then one’s exclusion of the extrascientific from his world-hypothesis is not rationally parsimonious. Rather, such an exclusion is the arbitrary rejection of a datum which would falsify the hypothesis thus formed. Since, on the position we are criticizing, the scientific world-hypothesis contains all grounds for rational judgments, the fact that there

must be extrascientific grounds for evaluating world-hypotheses falsifies the claim that the sciences together provide the most plausible world-hypothesis.

This conclusion does not imply that one should exclude scientific knowledge from a plausible world-hypothesis. For example, if there is a free choice, although the choice itself is one of its own necessary conditions, still there are other necessary conditions for the free choice. Some of these conditions are physical: for there to be free choices, there must be alternatives, and these depend in part upon the structure of the physical world which science investigates. Likewise, for there to be free choices, certain psychological requirements must be fulfilled—one must be aware of alternatives and interested in them. It is one of the tasks of psychology to identify and study such conditions.

In sum. The advance of modern science does provide some ground for physical determinism. Science seems to be inherently deterministic, and the scientific worldview must be taken seriously, for any view which meets the criteria of simplicity, predictive success, and explanatory power which modern science frequently meets is to be accepted. The *PSfc* can agree that anything science establishes must be accepted. But he can deny that he must accept science as a *complete* and *exhaustive* view of reality, and he can thus refuse to accept the scientific worldview. This worldview itself is not science, but is science transformed into philosophy. To the challenge that his position is unscientific, the *PSfc* can answer with many scientists that perhaps there are realities—of which free choice is an example—which in principle cannot fall within the subject matter of any genuine scientific inquiry. A *PNfc* who rejects this response is making a claim which is metaphysical rather than scientific.

D. Do purposes exclude free choice?

Even if there were no grounds for thinking that anything else is determined, there is a ground for thinking that human acts are determined. No one acts without a motive, conscious or unconscious. Purposes are conceived of differently in diverse theories of human action; they are variously called “motives,” “interests,” “needs,” “reasons for acting,” “ideals,” “ends,” “values,” “goods,” and so on. But however conceived theoretically, purposes are universally admitted to be necessary conditions for acts. The *PNfc* can argue that necessary conditions of this sort exclude free choice, for if one has an adequate purpose for acting, he cannot act otherwise than he does. This approach to *Nfc* usually is called “psychological determinism.” We examine it in this section. In the next section we consider a closely related line of argument: that free choices are unintelligible.

One sign of the independence of psychological determinism from scientific determinism is the fact that while the latter has flourished primarily in modern times the former has been prevalent at least since Socrates. Only if one is

ignorant or confused, Plato thinks, does he fail to choose that which is truly good. In modern times, the psychology of the unconscious lends support to this view by explaining acts in terms of unconscious motives; a person who has insight is freed to pursue his conscious purposes, while one who lacks insight is blocked by his ignorance from pursuing his conscious wishes.

Whether a psychological determinist deals with unconscious motives or not, he can point in support of his theory to the regularity and predictability of human behavior. Sidgwick argues that social life would be impossible if we could not every day make many accurate predictions of what others will do—predictions based upon experience of mankind generally, of various kinds of persons, and of particular individuals. If these predictions are mistaken, we account for the error by reference to our own imperfect knowledge of the character and motives of others, not by supposing that there is free choice.³⁴ P. H. Nowell-Smith likewise argues that the evidence for the predictability of human acts precludes indeterminacy in human choice:

In calling a man “honest” or “brave” we imply that he can be relied on to act honestly or bravely, and this means that we predict such actions from him. This does not mean that we can predict human actions with the same degree of assurance as that with which we predict eclipses. Psychology and the social sciences have not yet succeeded in establishing laws as reliable as those that we have established in some of the natural sciences, and maybe they never will.³⁵

Even so, the accuracy of statistical forecasts—for example, of the number of suicides which will be committed in a certain area in a coming year—leads many people to conclude that even so personal an act must arise from definite motives.

The *PSfc* can answer the argument for *Nfc* from the predictability of human acts partly by admitting that many predictable acts are not done by free choice and partly by arguing that many acts consequent upon free choice are predictable.

The *PSfc* need not hold that all, most, or even much human behavior follows from free choices. He can point out that most behavior does not follow from choice at all; people often act for a purpose, which occurs to them, without hesitation and without choice, since no alternative comes to mind. Thus one can confidently predict that on a given day most people will have something to eat and to drink; it does not occur to many people not to do so. Persons who act with normal spontaneity act freely in some sense or senses of “freely,” but they certainly do not make free choices inasmuch as they do not consider any alternative to acting as they do. The *PSfc* can suggest with considerable plausibility, for example, that one reason suicide is predictable is that it is often, if not always, an instance of unfree behavior.

The *PSfc* also can point out that in many cases there are very few alternatives for choice, and in such cases specific behavior is predictable. In a primitive

agricultural society, members of the society plant and harvest. For the most part, they must use the tools they have, plant the crop with which they are familiar, follow methods they know to be reliable. Behavior will be entirely intelligible and highly predictable.

A *PNfc* might object that there are a number of instances in which people suppose themselves to be free, although they act from suggestion or habit. Such acts are predictable.

For example, Smith is hypnotized, and the hypnotist tells him that when he comes out of his trance he will be extremely thirsty. He is roused, feels thirsty, and pours and drinks a glass of water. But the *PSfc* can accept this as a case of spontaneous action, initiated without prior deliberation on Smith's part. Smith might claim that he is acting freely, but he is free only in the sense that his action—as he understands it—is not coerced. He did not deliberate nor did he choose.

Someone acting from habit also feels free of compulsion. Smith habitually rises at eight, washes, dresses, breakfasts, backs his car out of the garage, and drives to work. He does not feel that any of these actions is coerced, unlike the bank manager who feels coerced when he is forced to open the bank's vault at gun-point. But neither does Smith ordinarily entertain any alternative to his habitually established pattern of behavior. Hence he might mistakenly believe that he is choosing freely when he is not.

Thus, the *PSfc* can admit that in many cases people do predictable acts which they themselves would call "free," yet nevertheless deny that such predictability has anything to do with free choice, since no choices are involved in these acts.

A *PNfc* who accepts the preceding explanation, however, need not give up his argument based upon predictability. He can point out that human conduct also is predictable in cases in which the *PSfc* is likely to wish to claim it is free. These are cases in which the agent himself thinks he is acting not only freely, but by free choice.

Smith might make this claim in respect to his habitual behavior. But the *PSfc* can account for this mistaken claim.

First, Smith's existing early morning habits were not always habits, and their formation might have been the direct result of his free choices. Smith's memory of these choices might lead him to feel that his later, habitual behavior is still done by free choice.

Second, Smith believes his behavior will continue to be controlled by habit only so long as he has no reason to act otherwise; if such a reason arises, he believes he can alter his behavior. Whether he can or not, is an empirical psychological question, depending upon how deeply ingrained Smith's habits are, what the circumstances are which call for new deliberation and choice, and so forth. Smith's expectation that he will rise to such occasions might well lead

him to think himself free in his habitual behavior. But the *PSfc* can claim that Smith is mistaken to the extent that at the moment he is not actually making free choices.

A *PNfc* might concede these points but respond by pointing to cases in which Smith has the experience of choice, believes himself free, but comes to admit that he was not. The psychoanalytic literature provides many such cases. Before considering the problem they pose for the *PSfc*, however, we examine another direction in which the argument based on predictability can be pressed by any psychological determinist, whether or not he accepts the doctrine of unconscious motivation.

The point made by Sidgwick and Nowell-Smith about predictability does not primarily bear upon behavior of the sorts discussed so far. Rather, it bears upon behavior which proceeds from a person's moral character, behavior which can be called "honest," "brave," and so forth. The *PNfc* will point out that the *PSfc* is not in a position to admit that such behavior is determined. To admit this would be to maintain *Sfc* as an empty thesis, irrelevant to the moral life to which the typical *PSfc* claims free choice is essential. Yet if virtuous choices were not determined, the *PNfc* argues, they could hardly be as predictable as they are.

The *PSfc* will reply that this objection assumes that *Sfc* entails that life must be a series of unrelated choices about particular acts. But the *PSfc* can articulate an alternative view: that persons make choices not only about what they are going to do in particular situations, but also about long-range goals and very general commitments—choices which specify a life-plan or life-style. To the extent that a person's acts are consistent with such commitments, whether the commitments are morally upright or not, they shape his behavior. His future choices and actions will appear to be reaffirmations and fulfillments of his more basic choices of long-range goals and general commitments. Thus, a person's life can have considerable regularity and consistency precisely insofar as he exercises his ability to make free choices.

The *PSfc* can admit that the behavior of a person of strong and mature character—in contrast with the weak or adolescent person—is very regular, indeed, predictable, provided that one knows the life-plan according to which he makes his choices. In contrast, the weak-willed person, who is neither virtuous nor vicious, can be erratic in his behavior, to the extent that he is governed by fluctuating emotions. Likewise, the adolescent—who is such precisely because he has not yet settled his identity by determining any life-plan for himself—confuses his elders: his behavior often makes no sense to them.

The *PSfc* can contrast the adolescent's behavior and one's attitudes toward it with the behavior of small children and one's attitudes toward it. The behavior of small children is quite predictable, because one often knows what factors influence their acts. This is to be expected; one does not think small children capable of free choice. Indeed, if their behavior is erratic like that of the

adolescent, one does not think that they are “finding themselves”; rather, one worries that they might be ill.

In terms of the preceding analysis, the *PSfc* can easily answer the *PNfc*'s contention that moral choices are determined by character. The *PNfc*, assuming what he should prove, thinks of personality and character as products of nature and nurture, heredity and environment. But the *PSfc* thinks of personality and character as dispositions to understand alternatives and to entertain them as live options. These dispositions involve both unconscious and conscious motivational factors. They are generated by nature and nurture and free choice.

The *PSfc* can point out that in any case, character cannot be a principle of action in the sense of being its cause. Character is dispositional; honesty and bravery are like fragility and elasticity. A good man does honest and brave acts somewhat as a fragile object breaks or an elastic object stretches. Dispositions are never sufficient conditions of the acts which reveal them; dispositions are not actual in themselves but are revealed or expressed when other necessary conditions for a state of affairs are given. The *PSfc* can maintain that the dispositions which make up an individual's personality and character are actualized by free choice. Moreover, with Aristotle, he can maintain that these dispositions are acquired by actions, actions which the *PSfc* can regard as freely chosen. The idea that a disposition is acquired by acts which express it may seem mysterious, but the *PSfc* can reduce this mysteriousness to that of making basic commitments. The *PNfc*, of course, regards these as unintelligible precisely insofar as they are free choices. We consider this line of argument in the next section.

Thus, the *PSfc* can answer the objection based upon predictability by admitting that many predictable acts are not done by free choice, for they are not done by choice at all, and by claiming that acts which are in character are predictable only insofar as one understands the character which has been formed by basic choices, many of which are made in adolescence. Still, the *PNfc* can point to the material provided by the psychoanalytic literature. Unless one dogmatically dismisses this literature, one must admit that people often have the experience of choice, think they are free, yet are motivated by factors of which they are not even conscious.

Few psychiatrists accept *Sfc*. Most attribute human behavior to the interplay between normal drives and subconscious fears, defenses, and hostilities. John Hoppers produces many case histories from the literature of psychoanalysis which suggest that traditional notions of responsibility and guilt are inappropriate, even though the individual himself might have made a choice and supposed himself free in making it.³⁶ Not only desires and aversions, feelings of anxiety and guilt, but also deliberation and choice can be explained by unconscious factors. Ernest Jones even suggests that *Sfc/Nfc* can be explained by unconscious motives. A *PSfc* either is an overly conscientious person who

wants to feel that he can exercise self-control or is a rebel against an overly oppressive superego; a *PNfc* is a person who feels insecure with the idea that natural law might allow human freedom and not keep nature completely in control or—if religious—a person afraid to claim any human independence of divine control.³⁷

Hospers and Jones, like most who discuss the relevance of the findings of psychoanalysis to free choice, do not so much argue for *Nfc* in the context of this discussion as assume that other arguments for it are successful. In treating unconscious factors, their quarrel is with those who hold traditional notions of moral responsibility and guilt while admitting *Nfc* on some grounds other than a theory of unconscious motivation of undesirable behavior. Even Jones's explanation of why a *PSfc* holds *Sfc* need not trouble the *PSfc*, since one's position can be true and grounded in good reasons, regardless of one's motives for holding it. The explanation of the unconscious motives of the *PNfc* is, of course, equally irrelevant.

Fortunately, Freud himself proposes a concise argument for *Nfc*. After explaining how unconscious factors determine apparently arbitrarily selected names, numbers, and words, he suggests that the understanding of unconscious processes in such cases might contribute to the solution of the problem of free will:

As is known, many persons argue against the assumption of an absolute psychic determinism by referring to an intense feeling of conviction that there is a free will. This feeling of conviction exists, but is not incompatible with the belief in determinism. Like all normal feelings, it must be justified by something. But, so far as I can observe, it does not manifest itself in weighty and important decisions; on these occasions, one has much more the feeling of psychic compulsion and gladly falls back upon it. (Compare Luther's "Here I stand, I cannot do anything else.")

On the other hand, it is in trivial and indifferent decisions that one feels sure that he could just as easily have acted differently, that he acted of his own free will, and without any motives. From our analyses we therefore need not contest the right of the feeling of conviction that there is a free will. If we distinguish conscious from unconscious motivation, we are then informed by the feeling of conviction that the conscious motivation does not extend over all our motor resolutions. *Minima non curat praetor*. What is thus left free from the one side receives its motive from the other side, from the unconscious, and the determinism in the psychic realm is thus carried out uninterruptedly.³⁸

Thus Freud holds that the sense of freedom can be explained by the distinction between conscious and unconscious motives. Conscious motivation in cases such as Luther's is not accompanied by a sense of freedom; unconscious motivation accounts for acts which are not consciously controlled. The latter acts, in doing which one feels he is acting freely, are minimally important from

the point of view of the conscious self. But they are not exceptions to psychic order.

The *PSfc* can easily answer Freud. The seemingly motiveless acts which Freud regards as free are not the ones which could be free choices, since they are not choices at all. They are like the spontaneous acts previously discussed. Freud is correct in thinking that such acts might be explained—much as the seemingly arbitrary selection of names, numbers, and words is explained—by unconscious motives. The sense of freedom which accompanies such acts is not the sense of freedom described in chapter one, for the experience of choice involves an awareness of alternatives. A weighty decision such as that which Luther expressed by saying, “Here I stand; I cannot do anything else,” can be understood as a consequence of Luther’s character and commitments, which arose from previous choices.

The *PSfc* can point out that Freud ignores the phenomena which make *Sfc* most plausible. These are examples such as that of the young man who must decide between reporting for induction, leaving the country, or staying and facing a prison term; and that of the young person who must decide between a business career and graduate work leading to a life of scholarship. Such choices, which have no place in Freud’s scheme, combine the awareness of making a weighty decision with a sense that one must make up his own mind and could act otherwise than he does.

The *PSfc* also can point out that Luther’s statement expresses determination, using “determination” to mean resoluteness, not using it to mean *Nfc*. Resoluteness is compatible with free choice; the young man who must decide whether to report for induction might decide to accept a prison term rather than to do so, and announce his decision in the same terms as Luther. Of course, he might nevertheless not be as free in choosing as he thinks he is, but the point here is that a statement like Luther’s need not mean what Freud takes it to mean. It would be interesting to investigate the motives which led Luther to make this statement; perhaps he was severely tempted to betray his own convictions, and expressed himself forcefully as a way of separating himself from a course of action he clearly realized he could have chosen, but should have despised himself for choosing had he chosen it.

It also would be interesting to investigate the motives which led Freud to overlook some of the phenomena of choice. A *PSfc* might add to Jones’s explanations of *Sfc/Nfc* another which Jones overlooks: Perhaps the theory of unconscious motivation is a rationalization which permits one to conceal from consciousness his moral guilt. Moralists who accept *Sfc* often talk about a form of repression, but they call it “moral blindness” or “self-deception.” Thus, the *PSfc* can add to Freud’s account of the phenomena of consciousness in terms of unconscious conflicts an account of certain phenomena of the unconscious in terms of conscious conflicts between one’s moral standards and his free choices.

A *PNfc* might nevertheless object that the evidence in the psychoanalytic literature cannot be appreciated properly unless one studies this literature in detail. Freud's brief argument does not do justice to his own case, for he was repeatedly successful in explaining apparently free choices by unconscious determinants, and had good reason to expect continued success. A *PSfc* can point out that this argument is nothing but an example of the simple induction which we examined in section A. Freud's argument no doubt seemed strong to him, for he assumed scientific determinism. Against one who admits non-determined events, Freud says:

Is he maintaining that there are occurrences, however small, which drop out of the universal concatenation of events—occurrences which might just as well not happen as happen? If anyone makes a breach of this kind in the determinism of natural events at a single point, it means that he has thrown overboard the whole *Weltanschauung* of science.³⁹

Thus Freud himself holds determinism on grounds already considered in section C.

The *PSfc* also can admit that unconscious factors are among the determinants of some and perhaps even of all choices, yet still maintain that such choices are free. An individual may not be as free in choosing as he thinks he is, but this fact does not mean he is not free at all.

The *PNfc* will object that while the freedom signified by "free" in other senses can be subject to degree, the free choice defined in chapter one, section B, is not. Thus, if the *PSfc* admits that an individual in choosing is not as free as he thinks he is, the defense of *Sfc* becomes incompatible with the position it is intended to defend.

However, a *PSfc* can provide an analysis of "not being as free as one thinks" compatible with *Sfc* and adequate to the purpose for which this phrase is used in answering the *PNfc* who argues that choices are determined by unconscious factors. To show that the analysis is adequate for the purpose, we begin with an imaginary example similar to real examples which abound in the psychoanalytic literature.

At the end of twenty years of miserable marriage, John Smith visits a psychiatrist to see if some amelioration of his misery is possible. The psychiatrist, after some inquiry, concludes that Smith married his wife because she strongly resembled his mother, and this fact has led to a serious ambivalence on Smith's part about his role in the relationship. Smith, accepting the psychiatrist's interpretation, thinks: "I have always believed that I freely chose to marry Hildegaard, but now I know better. I was compelled to marry her because of my psychological need for a mother-figure."

But John Smith might be wrong in his belief that he was determined—that is, that he was *wholly* determined—to marry his wife. John's need for a mother-figure did not necessarily determine him to marry Hildegaard, although it

clearly limited the alternatives open to him. There might have been other women who could have satisfied his need for a mother-figure, and he might also have considered not marrying but living with his mother. John Smith, in short, has taken a cause which sharply delimited his alternatives to be a cause determinative of his choice.

Such confusion between factors limiting alternatives and factors excluding free choice is common. One comes to see, in retrospect, causes which affected his choice by rendering it impossible for him to consider alternatives which would have been open were they not excluded by unconscious factors. One becomes acutely aware of the fact that he was not able to consider these alternatives at the appropriate time, and thinks that he would have chosen otherwise had he been able to consider these alternatives. He might then conclude—mistakenly—that he was not free. A *PSfc* can say that John Smith was less free than he thought, less free in the sense of having fewer alternatives open to him than he thought. But so long as there were alternatives, however limited, he did choose freely if he had the experience of doing so.

If two similar situations are compared with each other, and if there are more alternatives in one than in the other, then the situation in which there are more alternatives seems to be the freer, whether or not the individual who is making the choice is aware of the additional alternatives. Although this freedom can be very important to a person who is aware of it, it characterizes the situation of the choice, not the choice itself. The *PSfc* will hold that this freedom which characterizes a situation is one of the other types of freedom considered in chapter one, section A, and that freedom of choice is not subject to degree.

A *PNfc* can set aside arguments based on theories of unconscious motivation and instead argue for *Nfc* by referring to the conscious purposes which the *PSfc* himself holds to be necessary conditions for choice. The ethical determinism of the Greeks assumed that conscious purposes determine all of one's choices; Plato and Aristotle never question this assumption when they attempt to explain moral evil, weakness of will, and so on. Underlying their view is an argument for *Nfc* which Thomas Aquinas formulates as follows:

If two or more things are available, of which one appears to be more desirable, it is impossible to choose any of the others. Therefore, that which appears to be best is chosen of necessity. But every act of choosing is in regard to something that seems in some way better. Therefore, every choice is made necessarily.⁴⁰

In this argument, the purpose, which the *PSfc* admits only as a necessary condition for choice, becomes a sufficient condition for choice. A person cannot choose anything except insofar as it is or seems good; it seems to follow that he could have no reason for choosing any possibility less desirable than that which he does choose. Thus, deliberation is simply a weighing of alternative possible purposes, and choice is simply the conclusion that one of these is better than the other.

The *PSfc* might claim that this argument is merely a version of the position stated by W. D. Ross: “. . . whatever act I do, it must be because there is in me, as I am now, a stronger impulse to do that act than to do any other.”⁴¹ This is not an argument for *Nfc* but a simple assertion of it in terms of impulses rather than some other type of cause. However, the *PNfc* need not reduce the argument from conscious purposes to this form. He can regard purposes teleologically. As ideals or potential reasons for acting, the *PNfc* can argue, desirable alternatives determine choice precisely because they play the role they do in the experience of choice, as the *PSfc* himself describes it. If the *PSfc* admits, as he must, that nothing is chosen except insofar as it seems good, how can he claim that one might have chosen otherwise than one did—might have chosen something which at that very moment seemed less good than what one did choose?⁴²

The *PSfc* might answer this challenge by restricting free choice to instances in which two or more alternatives seem equally good even after deliberation. But the *PNfc* can answer by pointing out that this restriction trivializes choice. A person who must choose between moral good and evil is hardly in the position of Buridan’s Ass. If *Nfc* is true, immorality can be explained by the evil person’s wrong inclinations. He chooses what he ought not, because it seems better to him, and this mistaken judgment is explicable by factors such as psychic abnormality, bad childhood environment, lack of acculturation, or even the original sin of traditional Christian theology. But if *Sfc* were true, the *PNfc* will conclude, then a free choice of what is morally evil would be inexplicable, for choice would be limited to cases in which the alternatives seem equally good.

The *PSfc* cannot respond that the choice of what is morally evil is simply arbitrary, that there is no reason for such a choice, that it is wholly irrational. This response is unavailable to the *PSfc* because it conflicts with a central element of the experience of choice as we described it in chapter one, sections E and F: Choice is between alternatives, each of which is interesting. Deliberation articulates reasons for choosing each alternative; in retrospect the alternative chosen ordinarily seems better. If in some cases it does not, this can be explained by the *PNfc* as a consequence of disappointment, for a person’s expectations at the moment of choice sometimes are not fulfilled by subsequent events. In such cases, one who has chosen what seemed best revises his appraisal and says in retrospect that he could and should have chosen otherwise. But such revision does not alter the fact that whenever one chooses, he has a purpose in view, and he chooses what he does because at the moment this particular alternative seems good.

The *PSfc* can answer the *PNfc*’s argument from conscious motivation by challenging the plausible assumption underlying this argument—the assumption that prior to the making of a choice the goods between which the choice will be made must seem definitely more or less good, if they do not seem approxi-

mately equally good. Contrary to this assumption the *PSfc* can propose another possibility: that cases in which the alternatives do seem definitely more and less good are ones in which natural dispositions and previous choices have established a definite order of priorities for one's action, and in these cases deliberation becomes clarification and free choice is unnecessary; while, by contrast, cases in which clarification of a practical situation does not eliminate the need for free choice are those in which one's natural dispositions and previous choices have established no definite order of priorities, and thus the alternatives seem good in different and incommensurable respects.⁴³ The *PSfc* thus can maintain that when one makes a free choice, he could choose either alternative, since neither seems unqualifiedly better. At the moment of choice, the possibility one does not choose does not seem less good than the possibility one chooses, nor do the two seem equally good. Rather, the possibility which is not chosen, the *PSfc* can argue, is attractive after its own fashion which differs in kind rather than in degree from the attractiveness of the possibility which is chosen.

A *PSfc* can illustrate this point by means of examples. A young person who is deliberating about whether to go to graduate school or to accept an invitation to enter a management trainee program finds both possibilities attractive. Each appeals to certain interests and desires, but the two do not appeal to all the same interests and desires. Perhaps he feels that an academic career would be more satisfying to his intellectual interests and his enjoyment of sharing them with others, but a career in business would be more satisfying to his interest in organizing and running things and his delight in winning clear-cut contests with keen competitors. Since these diverse aspects of his personality are not systematically integrated in any definite order, he cannot discover which of the alternatives is better, for the simple reason that neither of them is better. Each is good in its own way, but the desirability of the two has in common only that one could choose either. The *PSfc* can offer the same sort of analysis of many commonplace examples: a person's choice between different kinds of vacations, automobiles, ways of spending an evening, or meals in a good restaurant.

This explanation of the compatibility between the *PSfc*'s position and the requirement—of which one is aware in the experience of choice—that one have an adequate reason for whatever choice he makes, also accounts for morally evil choices. If the young man who deliberates about whether to report for induction or not regards the former alternative as immoral, he might nevertheless be attracted by it because of his interest in avoiding the penalties for not reporting. If he chooses to violate his conscience and do what he thinks is evil, he does evil. But he has an excellent reason for his choice; it is in no sense absurd. The choice of evil is not an arbitrary preference for the less good, nor is it a mistaken judgment of what is best. It is simply the endorsement of some of one's interests at the expense of others. A person must make such choices

inasmuch as his life is not completely organized; his priorities do not so completely shape his life that the moral standards he accepts make an immoral choice always seem less good than any morally upright alternative.

Finally, the *PNfc* can recall a point previously mentioned. In retrospect, it does seem that one chose the greater good. But the *PSfc* can interpret this retrospective sense of commensurability in a way compatible with his position. In retrospect, one considers both alternatives in the light of the priority established by one's choosing. In this light, one has a principle by which one alternative is definitely better than the other. This principle will remain in force unless it is altered by a subsequent free choice. Thus, according to the *PSfc*, character is formed.

In sum. The *PNfc* can point to certain facts about human action which seem to support his position. These facts include the predictability of human acts, the explicability of many such acts by depth psychology, and the requirement that one have a good reason for whatever choice he makes. The *PSfc* certainly grants that relevant facts are not to be ignored in a theoretical dispute but can claim to be able to account for the facts adduced by his opponent in a way consistent with *Sfc*. Predictable acts either are not a result of free choice or are predictable from principles established by free choice itself. Freud is not unreasonable in thinking that a method of interpretation which is successful is to be relied upon in further similar cases, but there is no evidence that the method succeeds in accounting for choices themselves, and not merely for the restriction of the alternatives for free choice. The purpose required for choosing, as revealed by the very phenomena from which the *PSfc* begins, seems to exclude *Sfc*, for on the assumption that purposes are always commensurable prior to choice, one could have no good reason for choosing other than he does. But this assumption can be denied by the *PSfc*. An account of phenomena is not to be accepted if it requires something inconsistent with the data for which it is supposed to account, but the *PSfc* can argue that possible purposes as experienced prior to choice do not appear commensurable.

E. Is free choice unintelligible?

If there can be no criteria by which particulars falling under a concept might be identified, that concept is useless. One cannot employ it to refer to anything; such a concept might be called "unintelligible" in a loose sense. Thus, if free choice is proposed by the *PSfc* as a condition for moral responsibility, the concept is useless if he does not provide criteria for identifying a choice as free or unfree. Morton White, among others, has suggested that there can be no such criteria: "But how do we find out whether a choice is not causally necessitated? I do not know and I do not think that the anti-determinist knows."⁴⁴

This objection either assumes or does not assume that there can be no free

choices. If the former, it is question-begging as an argument for *Nfc*. If the latter, the objection might amount to an argument that *Sfc* is empirically meaningless. A *PNfc* might assume some version of the verifiability criterion, and use this criterion to exclude as inadequate any criteria the *PSfc* could offer for identifying free choices. For example, the *PNfc* might say that only public, empirical tests, not introspection, can count as evidence. The *PSfc* can refuse to accept so restrictive a criterion for the evidence by which free choices will be identified. Verificationism has its own problems, as we argue in chapter five, section D. If the objector does not rule out an account in terms of the phenomena of choice, the *PSfc* can provide criteria for identifying a choice as free or not free.

Two questions must be distinguished. How does one tell if his own choice is free? And, how does one tell whether someone else is acting by free choice? We consider these questions in sequence.

We described the experience of choice in chapter one. There are cases in which deliberation becomes clarification; one's established priorities determine which of the available alternatives one accepts. Choices of this sort are not free, although one's priorities may have been established, at least in part, by earlier free choices. There are other cases in which one has what we have called a "sense of freedom." These are the cases in which people judge themselves to be choosing freely. If *Nfc* is false, such judgments are at least *prima facie* credible. Thus, for an agent the criterion for telling whether his choice is free is simply that he has the experience of choosing and is not aware of anything determining his choice.

As we explained in the previous section, people sometimes think they are free although they do not have the experience of making a choice. In reflecting, an individual can confuse the experience of choice which includes a sense of freedom with the experience of selecting what he prefers when this selection is determined by already established priorities. One can even confuse the experience of choice with the experiences of acting without reflection in accord with a dominant desire and of acting from habit. But doing what comes naturally and doing as one always does do not involve any experience of choice at all.

One cannot rule out a priori the possibility that one might have an experience of choice including the sense of freedom but also have some good reason for thinking that he was not choosing freely. In many cases such reasons can be reduced to factors not under one's control which more or less severely limit the alternatives upon which one can reflect in deliberation. In such cases, one is not as free as one supposes; we discussed this kind of case—John and Hildegaard Smith—in section D. If there are sometimes other sorts of cases in which a person has an experience of choice including a sense of freedom but has good reasons for thinking himself not to be making a free choice, the criteria for

telling whether or not he is choosing freely in such cases will be built into the criteria for regarding the reasons as good enough to overcome the prima facie credibility of the immediate judgment that he is choosing freely. It is hardly incumbent on the *PSfc* to produce examples of possible good reasons of this sort.

One's criteria for telling whether another's act is freely chosen are more complex than one's criteria for identifying his own choice as free. An observer lacks the introspective data available to the agent. One's experience of others is only partly the same as his experience of himself. By what criteria, then, can one tell whether the acts of another are done by free choice?

There are many cases in which an observer cannot tell whether another's act is done by free choice. A person who is doing what comes naturally or acting out of habit can be indistinguishable from one who is acting deliberately and by free choice. Since much of what a person knows about others is based on what they tell him, his belief that they act or do not act by free choice depends on his trusting them.

Keeping these limitations in mind, we state the general form of the inference a person uses in judging another's act free: "When I act in that way, I do so by free choice; therefore, he is probably acting by free choice." To support the inference, one must examine and judge reasons which would tend to show that the individual did not make a free choice. Frequently, if someone says he did not make a free choice, one tends to accept his report and judge, against appearances, that he did not. Of course, such a judgment must be tentative. A person's report is only a report; it can be false as the experience itself cannot.

This brief and general sketch of the ways in which the acts of others which are done by free choice can be identified needs to be filled out by inquiry into the reasons which would be good ones for concluding that someone is not acting freely although he initially seems to be and is acting freely although he claims not to be. A great deal of information about human psychology, the individual's culture, and his character might be brought to bear in a particular case on the question: Was this act done by free choice? The sketch provided here could guide the use of such information. To this extent, the *PSfc* can meet White's demand for criteria by which a particular choice can be identified as free.

Many determinists of various sorts argue that free choice is unintelligible in another sense. They hold the notion of free choice to be mysterious and incomprehensible, and conclude that *Sfc* is therefore false.⁴⁵ As Philippa Foot has shown, this argument has a number of distinct elements.⁴⁶

One of these is the claim that since a free choice would lack sufficient conditions apart from the agent's choosing itself, a free choice would be a matter of chance—a random or accidental event. As Alasdair MacIntyre puts

it: “. . . to say that any given event is uncaused is surely to say that such an event is random. What is random is no more free than what is caused.”⁴⁷ A. J. Ayer argues similarly:

Either human actions are entirely governed by causal laws or they are not. If they are, then they are necessary: given our heredity and environment we could not act otherwise than as we do; if they are not, then to the extent that they are not caused they must occur by chance: if they occur by chance they are indeed not necessary, but equally we have no control over them.⁴⁸

Ayer also argues that choices are either causally determined or accidental, and that if they are the latter, then they are chance events.⁴⁹

The *PSfc* can respond that in these arguments the words “chance,” “random,” and “accidental” are used in a peculiar way. “Chance” usually means “caused by unforeseen factors,” not “uncaused.” “Accidental” usually means “unintentional”; it is unclear how a choice could be accidental.⁵⁰ “Random” means “without regular pattern or purpose”; a *PSfc* can claim that one who freely chooses to live his life according to a certain plan will make his choices in a regular pattern.

Such analyses raise the question: What precisely is the claim of the *PNfc* who makes this sort of argument, and why is he making this claim? Does he think of chance as an epistemic or as an ontological category? If the *PNfc* regards chance as an epistemic category, the argument amounts to saying that choices are caused events whose causes are unknown. The alternatives proposed exclude *Sfc*; the argument is question-begging. If the *PNfc* regards chance as an ontological category, he must give a reason why this category could not include free choice, or why there cannot be at least three categories of events: those necessitated, those happening by chance, and free choices.

J. R. Lucas points out that such expressions as “random” and “by chance” express negative concepts. Moreover, the concepts of “explanation,” “cause,” and so on, are not used in wholly the same sense in diverse contexts. Thus, to say that an event is random because there is no physical explanation for it “says nothing about whether there is any human or rational explanation to be offered.”⁵¹

Of course, the *PSfc* does hold that free choices lack sufficient conditions apart from the person’s choosing itself, and that in this sense they are inexplicable. They cannot be inferred from other facts. But if a *PNfc* tries to use this sort of inexplicability as an argument against *Sfc*, he fails to go beyond stating his position, for inexplicability of this sort follows from the very definition of free choice.⁵²

A *PSfc* can reply in another way to the argument that choices, if uncaused, are mere chance events. He can say that they are acts of human persons. Choices are not quasi-miraculous happenings or entities which seem to appear

from nowhere, like rabbits out of a magician's empty hat. People make choices; choice is a familiar aspect of human action. The experience of choice, as the description in chapter one, sections E and F, makes clear, is not the experience of something which befalls a person, but of something a person does.

The *PNfc* will respond that when he argues that the notion of free choice is unintelligible he has a stronger sense of "unintelligibility" in mind than the ones considered thus far. He is apt to think that an act which is unintelligible in the sense that it cannot be inferred from other facts "is unintelligible in the *further* sense that we can attach no meaning to it."⁵³ J. J. C. Smart, for example, describes the position of some philosophers who claim that in free choices one acts from reasons rather than from causes and "that acting from reasons is neither caused nor a matter of chance. I find this unintelligible."⁵⁴

The *PSfc* can again point out the *PNfc's* assumption that the categories of causally determined and chance are exhaustive. Since an unproved assumption of the adequacy of these categories is question-begging in the present context, the *PNfc* must attempt to rule out the possibility of an additional category—that of free choice.⁵⁵

One explanation of the assumption that this dichotomy is satisfactory might be that a phenomenalist conception of the self is presupposed. If the self is regarded as a collection of discrete experiences bundled together only by various sorts of regularities, then any event which is not integrated into these regularities in such a way that it could be called "caused" must be regarded as a mere chance event. Of course, the *PSfc* need not accept a phenomenalist conception of the self. Thus, an argument for *Nfc* assuming such a view is question-begging.

If the *PNfc* does assume a phenomenalist conception of the self, he might propose another form of the objection that a free choice would be unintelligible. Such a *PNfc* will find it impossible to understand how a free choice could be an act of an agent, how responsibility could be ascribed to a person who acted by free choice, how the free choice could be *his*.

Moreover, even if a *PNfc* rejects the phenomenalist conception of the self, he can form an objection along these lines. He will observe that the self required by the *PSfc* is peculiar. Its choices are detached from its character and motives.⁵⁶ Hume provides a classic statement of this argument:

Actions are by their very nature temporary and perishing; and where they proceed not from some cause in the characters and disposition of the person, who perform'd them, they infix not themselves upon him, and can neither redound to his honour, if good, nor infamy, if evil. The action itself may be blameable; it may be contrary to all the rules of morality and religion: But the person is not responsible for it; and as it proceeded from nothing in him, that is durable or constant, and leaves nothing of that nature behind it, 'tis impossible he can, upon its account, become the object of punishment or vengeance.⁵⁷

R. E. Hobart provides a contemporary formulation of the same argument:

In proportion as it is undetermined, it is just as if his legs should spring up and carry him off where he did not prefer to go. Far from constituting freedom, that would mean, in the exact measure in which it took place, the loss of freedom. It would be an interference, and an utterly uncontrollable interference, with his power of acting as he prefers. In fine, then, *just so far* as the volition is undetermined, the self can neither be praised nor blamed for it, since it is not the act of the self.⁵⁸

Foot notes that such arguments do not conform to experience and ordinary language; we hold people responsible for past actions even when there is no likelihood they will do similar acts in the future.⁵⁹

The *PSfc* can point out that “being one’s own” does not have a single meaning. One’s property and one’s family are one’s own, one’s ideas are one’s own, and one’s body is one’s own, but each is one’s own in a distinctive way and “one’s own” thus has many meanings which must not be confused. The *PSfc* can point out that several of these senses of “being one’s own” do not require that what is one’s own be related to an already constituted self as an effect is related to its causally sufficient conditions. One’s property can be inherited; one’s ideas can come from out of the blue; one’s body is oneself, or in some perplexing way part of oneself. Thus, for a *PNfc* to suppose, as Hume and Hobart do, that if choices are to be one’s own they must have causally sufficient conditions within the self and the situation which preexists one’s very choosing is gratuitous and question-begging. The *PNfc* needs to *show*, not merely *assume*, that a person’s choices could not be his own if they were free—that is, if there were not causally sufficient conditions for the choice antecedent to his choosing itself. The *PNfc* can easily show that there is some sense of “one’s own” which meets the conditions his position requires, but to show this is irrelevant to the argument. He must instead show that there is no sense of “one’s own” which meets the conditions his opponent’s position requires. To show this would be precisely to show that no person chooses freely.

Moreover, a *PSfc* can provide an account of how the acts which a person does by free choice are his own. In the first place, a person’s choice is based on *his own* deliberation. Deliberation is *his own* thinking about *his own* conflicting interests. In the second place, choice is of what is in *a person’s own* power, of an act which he can perform or refrain from performing. In the third place, choice and the consequent action have many necessary conditions other than a person’s choosing itself, and many of these necessary conditions are included in *his own* body, *his own* personality, *his own* skills, *his own* tools and property, and so forth. A *PSfc* can thus admit that it is not easy—if indeed it is possible—to say how a person’s *choosing* is his own, yet deny that there is any

difficulty in understanding how the *acts* which a person does by free choice are his own.

The *PSfc* also can point out that free choice together with nature and nurture constitute a person's character. In choosing, as we explained in the previous section, a person establishes priorities which determine which possible courses of action will seem to him better and which will seem less good. A person who freely chooses a particular lifestyle and forms his character accordingly is likely to find it incredible if he is told by the *PNfc* that acting by free choice and acting in a manner which expresses his own character are somehow incompatible with one another.

In recent years, the *PSfc* who talks about the free choices which lay down the foundation of one's character is likely to speak of "decisions of principle," "basic options," and so on. In earlier times, he might have talked of "conversion" and "mortal sin." In such basic choices, whatever they are called, a person establishes a hierarchy among the various inclinations and possibilities he finds in himself and his situation. The *PSfc* can point out that in making a basic choice a person often is aware that his whole life is at stake; a situation requiring such a choice is often called an "identity crisis." Given inclinations and possibilities are disorganized; in choosing freely, a person endorses some and gives them high priority, while consigning others to a subordinate place in his life. Thus a person organizes himself, pulls himself together, and becomes a mature person. Subsequent acts done in accord with a person's self-identity, which was established in this way, clearly are acts for which he is responsible. Thus, the *PSfc* argues that moral responsibility presupposes *Sfc*, for he thinks of responsibility as it is exemplified in acts which flow from choices which lay down the foundation of a person's character and the *PSfc* believes that such choices are free.

The *PNfc* will remain unsatisfied. The *PSfc's* account of the integration of free choice into the self still leaves totally unexplained how an individual comes to make the precise choices which he does make. Obviously, the *PNfc* will argue, if choice is one of its own *causally* necessary conditions, then all other necessary conditions and reasons together—provided that they are equally necessary conditions and reasons both for choosing and not choosing as one does—cannot explain why one makes this choice rather than not making it. This point is expressed clearly by F. H. Bradley:

Turn it as we will, the *libertas arbitrii* is no more at last than *contingentia arbitrii*. Freedom means *chance*; you are free, because there is no reason which will account for your particular acts, because no one in the world, not even yourself, can say what you will, or will not, do next.⁶⁰

Hobart makes the same point: "If we ask, 'Was there anything that induced the self thus to act?' we are answered in effect, 'Not definitively. The self feels

motives but its act is not determined by them. It can choose between them.’ ”⁶¹

Provided that “feeling motives” means “being aware of interesting possibilities,” the *PSfc* cannot disavow the answer Hobart formulates for him. Apart from the tendentious language, the *PSfc* also must admit Bradley’s main point: that no reason fully accounts for a free act and no one can say what he or anyone else will choose freely to do next. However, the *PSfc* can deny that these admissions compromise his position.

The *PSfc* can point out that arguments of this sort gain much of their force from a natural and almost ineradicable tendency to think about everything on models drawn from sense experience. When one tries to think about choice, one has in mind the model of sensible changes, such as change of place. If an object is moving along a path and can go off in either of two directions at a fork in the path, then there must be causally sufficient conditions apart from its very doing so for its taking one path rather than the other when it comes to the fork. This model gains much additional force and plausibility from its analogue in reasoning; one does not assert one proposition rather than its contradictory without having some reason for preferring the one to the other.

But the *PSfc* can maintain that this model simply does not apply to free choice. His whole point is that a choice is unlike processes of natural change and processes of reasoning. This difference is a phenomenon of experience; that is why people suppose themselves to be free. The *PSfc* precisely wishes to insist that this phenomenal difference is a real one. It is no argument against him to insist that choice must conform to a model he holds to be irrelevant.

Thus, the *PSfc* admits, or better, insists, that free choice is unintelligible, if “intelligible” is taken to mean “picturable” or “reducible to a broader and more basic category.” One who holds against him that there can be nothing which does not meet the conditions of physical existence assumes a position which is itself not confirmable by any possible experience; one who holds against him that there can be nothing within experience which is not reducible to a broader and more basic category assumes a monistic metaphysics. Irreducible diversity cannot be excluded a priori from reality except by a metaphysics like that of Parmenides.

The *PSfc* also can subject arguments of the sort proposed by Bradley and Hobart to a careful analysis.

If anything is intelligible, it must be intelligible either in itself or by reference to something else. The *PSfc* maintains that free choices are intelligible, up to a point, by reference to all the causally necessary conditions other than the person’s very choosing itself. But the *PNfc* is not satisfied, for these necessary conditions—on the *PSfc*’s account of choice—are also the necessary conditions for not choosing. The *PSfc* seems compelled either to claim that the very choosing is intelligible in itself or to admit that it is simply unintelligible.

The *PNfc* will accept the idea that something might be intelligible in itself if

it is a formal truth. But whatever a choice is, it is not a formal truth. Thus, the *PSfc* seems forced to admit that free choices are unintelligible. However, the *PSfc* can resist making this admission.

The *PSfc* can claim that there is a sense in which free choices are intelligible in themselves, although they certainly are not formal truths. To understand what is involved in this claim, one must distinguish between two conceptions of explanation. One view of explanation is that in explaining anything, one relates it to something, that again to something else, and so on ad infinitum. In this view, nothing but a formal truth could be intelligible in itself. But there is another view of explanation, and whether or not it is ultimately sound, the *PSfc* can take this alternative view and claim that free choices are intelligible in the sense it makes available.

The alternative view of explanation is that in explaining anything, one relates it to something else which gives it an intelligibility it did not have in itself. In this view, what explains anything must be intelligible in a way in which what is explained is not. If this conception of explanation is correct, the explanatory process cannot go on ad infinitum. It must stop with something or many things which are intelligible yet inexplicable. Such boundaries of explanation can be called “intelligible in themselves.”

Human actions and everything which depends upon them, the *PSfc* can argue, must be explained—using “explained” in accord with the second conception of explanation—at least in part by relating them to free choices. To render a person’s life intelligible, one must know his basic commitments—his “life-plan,” “decisions of principle,” “fundamental option,” or whatever one cares to call it. And one must relate everything in the individual’s life to this central reference-point. Thus, a person’s free choices render what follows from them intelligible. But, according to the *PSfc*, free choices are boundaries of explanation. In this sense, they can be called “intelligible in themselves.” The sun is far brighter than anything we see in its light, yet the sun is like night in that nothing illuminates it.

The *PNfc* can point out that with this argument his opponent defends the intelligibility of free choice by claiming it to be a first principle. Yet in choosing, one chooses this *rather than* that. According to the *PSfc*’s own account, a moment before the choice, both alternatives are equally possible. In choosing, one possibility is realized. The *PSfc* admits many causal conditions, but denies that all of them together are sufficient to close this gap. He admits reasons in favor of both alternatives, but denies that either is definitely better than the other prior to choice. The *PNfc* insists that something must close the gap between the two possibilities and the actual choosing. Otherwise, a free choice is a fact for which there can in principle be no sufficient reason why it is so rather than otherwise.⁶²

Before considering how the *PSfc* can answer this objection, it is important to

see clearly what the objection is. It is an appeal to the principle of sufficient reason. Leibniz formulates this principle: “. . . there can be no fact real or existing, no statement true, unless there be a sufficient reason why it should be so and not otherwise. . . .”⁶³ Richard Taylor, who accepts the principle of sufficient reason, provides a contemporary formulation of it: It “is best expressed by saying that, in the case of any positive truth, there is some sufficient reason for it, something which, in this sense, makes it true—in short, that there is some sort of explanation, known or unknown, for everything.”⁶⁴ What the objection means, then, is that when one says, “I freely choose this,” there *must* be something which makes this statement true other than his freely choosing it. If not, there is something—this choice—which is so rather than otherwise and there can be no explanation why it is so rather than otherwise.

The principle of sufficient reason underlies many arguments for *Nfc* in which it is not expressly invoked. Laplace, in the paragraph immediately preceding that in which he gives his famous formulation of universal determinism, argues against free choice by expressly invoking the principle of sufficient reason:

Present events have a link with preceding ones which is based on the evident principle: that a thing cannot begin to exist without a cause to produce it. This axiom, which is called “the principle of sufficient reason,” extends even to the most unimportant (indifférentes) actions. The will, no matter how free, cannot without a determining motive give birth to actions; for if all the circumstances in two situations were exactly the same, yet it acted in one and abstained from acting in the other, its choice would be an effect without a cause. It would then be, as Leibniz says, the blind chance of the Epicureans. The contrary opinion is an illusion of the spirit, which loses sight of the fleeting reasons for the choice of the will in unimportant (indifférentes) matters and becomes convinced that it has determined itself by itself and without a motive.⁶⁵

It is worth noticing that Laplace does not formulate the principle as Leibniz and Taylor do, but as a principle of causality with respect to entities which begin to be. Taylor himself formulates what he calls “the metaphysical thesis of determinism” almost exactly as Laplace formulates the principle of sufficient reason. Taylor’s formulation is: “. . . in the case of everything that exists, there are antecedent conditions, known or unknown, given which that thing could not be other than it is.”⁶⁶ Clearly, the principle of causality which underlies many, if not all, arguments for physical determinism is a limited form of the principle of sufficient reason.

Moreover, many of those who argue for psychological determinism make clear that they have in mind the principle of sufficient reason when they insist upon the inadequacy of any motive which is not a greater good—a good definitely more appealing than the alternative which is not chosen. And in the present section, the principle of sufficient reason emerges clearly as the as-

sumption which underlies all the arguments against *Sfc* which charge the notion of free choice with mysteriousness and unintelligibility.

The *PSfc* can point out that many philosophers reject the principle of sufficient reason. For example, in the context of philosophy of religion, some critics of arguments for the existence of God have pointed out that one need not assume that there is a reason for everything, and that perhaps it is, in some sense, meaningless to make such an assumption. To the extent that arguments for the existence of God use the language of causes and explanations beyond the boundaries of sense experience, it is alleged, such language loses its usual sense. The *PSfc*, as we have shown, will reject the reduction of choice to the categories of sense experience. Thus, for the *PNfc* to insist that the *PSfc* accept the principle of sufficient reason, is question-begging.

Moreover, the *PSfc* can point out that there seems to be no sufficient epistemic reason why he should accept the principle of sufficient reason. It is not a fact. It is not a generalization from facts. It is not a logical truth. This, of course, does not show that the principle of sufficient reason is false. But it shows that it is a very peculiar sort of statement, if it is a statement at all, rather than some sort of prescription, or something else.

The *PSfc* can admit a restricted version of the principle of sufficient reason as a rule of thumb: There is a sufficient reason for everything except for those things in terms of which other things are finally explained. The *PSfc* has a good reason for making this restriction. If there are boundaries of explanation—a supposition which must be admitted by anyone who uses the principle of sufficient reason—then at these boundaries either everything would be explained in terms of some one thing or there would remain an irreducible multiplicity of explanatory principles. Anyone who rejects monistic metaphysics will prefer the latter alternative to the former, and thus will maintain that there are many ultimate principles and no sufficient reason why this fundamental multiplicity is as it is, and not otherwise.

If the *PNfc* insists upon an unrestricted version of the principle of sufficient reason, a version incompatible with free choice, he begs the question unless he *shows*, not *assumes*, that the *PSfc* must accept the principle in its unrestricted form.

Hobart argues that the *PSfc* requires that when a person makes a free choice, he should be an “absolute source”—“a source that has in turn no source; a source, he thinks, cannot in the fullest and truest sense be such if it derives what it emits.”⁶⁷ Again, Hobart rejects *Sfc* on the ground that the “moral self cannot be *causa sui*.”⁶⁸ Roderick Chisholm, who argues for *Sfc*, makes a similar statement:

If we are responsible, and if what I have been trying to say is true, then we have a prerogative which some would attribute only to God: 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 those events to happen.⁶⁹

The *PSfc* is not in as absurd a position as Hobart suggests and he need not go quite so far as Chisholm goes.

The *PSfc* does not claim that the moral self is *causa sui* as if he did not admit necessary conditions antecedent to choice. One does not make himself out of nothing; he is, is able to make free choices, and faces alternatives not of his own making. Moreover, the typical *PSfc*, unlike Sartre, maintains that there are moral standards antecedent to free choice, and that one's choices can be judged by such standards to be good or bad. What the *PSfc* does claim, as we have seen, is that in choosing a person establishes his own dispositions for choosing, sets his own priorities, forms his own character.

When Hobart demands that a person not emit anything which he does not derive, he simply rejects the *PSfc's* claim that a man—given all other necessary conditions—does make himself be an honest man or a dishonest one, a saint or a sinner, by doing what lies in him alone: making a commitment one way or the other. The typical *PSfc* is acutely aware that at the moment of a basic commitment which determines the course of a person's life he has a sense of ultimate responsibility. The *PSfc* thinks that if the sense of freedom one has at the moment of such a choice is illusory, if one is only emitting what he is receiving, then the sense of responsibility also is illusory, and a dishonest man or a sinner only differs from an honest man or a saint by a difference in luck, by what happens to befall each at this critical moment.

The *PSfc* admits that if he is correct, there is no sufficient reason at this critical moment why a person chooses this rather than that; this lack of a sufficient reason is necessary if this choice and the life it shapes is to be the person's own noble or ignoble existence, his own sealing of his own destiny. If the principle of sufficient reason is true, then according to Leibniz, at least, the principle of the identity of indiscernibles follows from it.⁷⁰ Some philosophers have rejected the latter principle simply in order to maintain that the givenness of the empirical world is not in principle reducible to a complex of properties. If the individuality of each particular entity in the world—each drop of rain, each grain of sand—is sufficient reason to reject the principle of sufficient reason, the *PSfc* will argue, then surely the existential personhood of each man and woman is sufficient reason to reject it.

But there is still another aspect to the objections of Hobart and the observations of Chisholm. If one's choice really is free, then prior to it there is not anything from which it emerges by a continuous process of development. Even if one allows that there can be a choice *of this rather than of that* with no sufficient reason, how does one account for there being at one moment something merely possible, and at the next moment something actual—at one moment a person's *being able to choose this*, and at the next, one's *actually*

choosing this. Here, it seems, the person who makes a free choice would have to bring something out of nothing, for if that choice which is about to be were somehow already present in the being and the ability of the one who chooses, then there would be no real initiative; the individual would merely unfold the identity which is latent within him.

The *PSfc* can admit that the coming into being of the free choice also is mysterious. But if one can make the choice he makes without a sufficient reason for choosing this rather than that, the emergence of this choosing into reality is not a mystery peculiar to choice. Many philosophers have held that there is emergent or creative evolution. Some of these, like John Dewey, reject *Sfc*; others, like Bergson, affirm it.

Thus, the *PSfc* can claim that the new reality which is present in the universe each time a free choice is made presents no special problem. Those who have defended the emergence of real novelty have answered critics by pointing out that there is nothing more mysterious about the emergence of new reality than there is about the presence of existing reality. There is something mysterious about both.

J. J. C. Smart criticizes various versions of the cosmological argument for the existence of God and finds them all wanting. Yet he expresses a respect for the question, "Why should anything exist at all?" Smart says that he feels he wishes to go on asking the question:

Indeed, though logic has taught me to look at such a question with the gravest suspicion, my mind often seems to reel under the immense significance it seems to have for me. That anything should exist at all does seem to me a matter for the deepest awe. But whether other people feel this sort of awe, and whether they or I ought to is another question. I think we ought to.⁷¹

Whatever one thinks of Smart's attitude toward this question, there are only two possible stands on the question itself. Either one must say that the world simply exists because it exists, and there can in principle be no reason why it exists, or one says that the world exists because it is created by an entity which exists of itself. The world either simply happens to be or it is the creature of a first being who has to be. Similarly, one who accepts as real the emergence of novelty in the existing world can regard such novelty as the constant wonder of something coming from nothing at all, or he can accept it as the constant wonder of something coming from God's "Let there be. . . ."

The *PSfc*, compelled by his opponents to face all the wonder of the reality he tries to defend, has the same two options. He can think that man has a "prerogative which some would attribute only to God": that of bringing forth from nothing in the act of choosing, in man's own "Let there be. . . ." Or he can think that although man shares the divine prerogative of choosing this or that, he does not share the divine prerogative of bringing what he wills out of nothing into the newness of being. In the latter case, the *PSfc* will accept the

difficult position which has been held by many theists: that divine providence and creative causality extend to all things, even to man's free choices. This position is paradoxical; some who have accepted God's providence and causality have argued that *Nfc* is true precisely on this ground. We shall consider this argument in section G.

In sum. The *PNfc* argues from the assumption that nothing inexplicable is to be admitted as possible, and from the definition of free choice which includes having itself as one of its own causally necessary conditions, to the conclusion that a free choice would be unintelligible, and thus that *Nfc* should be accepted. The *PSfc* admits that a free choice is not intelligible in some senses of "intelligible," but denies that it is "unintelligible." He rejects the principle of sufficient reason to the extent that it would require a factor other than a person's choosing to determine which alternative he chooses, for this requirement is simply incompatible with *Sfc*. As for the emergent novelty of the choice, the *PSfc* can regard the wonder of this in the same way as he regards the wonder of being in general: either it is to be accepted as an insoluble mystery or it is to be reduced to the mystery of the creative causality of God.

F. Is free choice useless?

All the grounds for asserting *Nfc* considered thus far seem to involve rationalistic assumptions. But a *PNfc* can assert his position on nonrationalistic grounds. He can assert *Nfc* on pragmatic grounds—using "pragmatic grounds" in a wide sense to mean any sort of operational or existential grounds—as a belief warranted by its utility or fruitfulness.

The physical determinist as described thus far has moved within the arena of speculative argumentation. In this arena, the *PSfc*, as we have shown, cannot be compelled to accept physical determinism. But a *PNfc* who adopts a pragmatic approach can argue that the scientific worldview is to be accepted inasmuch as it is more useful. It alone enables us to organize our experience, control the environment, and thus solve real problems.

W. V. O. Quine uses a pragmatic criterion to distinguish myth from science: theories which are scientific better enable men to organize and control their future experience.⁷² On such a criterion, one might assert *Nfc* without assuming any suspect principle from speculative philosophy.

A more radical operational view also is possible. One not only can appeal to an operational criterion in asserting the preferability of one thesis over another, one also can adopt an operational logic and theory of knowledge, in which meaning and truth themselves are defined in operational terms. *Nfc* also might be asserted within such a radical operational framework.

John Dewey, for example, argues against free choice and in favor of a mode of freedom consistent with *Nfc*. He argues that free choice is incompatible with

individual responsibility.⁷³ He also argues that the traditional doctrine of free choice is a vague notion, that it is a caricature of genuine contingency, and that if it obtained it would be “the mark of a person who has acquired imbecility of character through permanent weakening of his springs of action.”⁷⁴

One might take Dewey’s argument to be a version of the argument that *Sfc* is unintelligible. However, it should not be assumed that there is anything like the rationalistic assumption of the principle of sufficient reason underlying Dewey’s argument. Dewey eschews metaphysics. He calls free choice “the metaphysical doctrine of free-will,” and attacks its proponents for failing to consider the facts rather than for being unintelligible in a rationalistic sense.⁷⁵

Dewey’s treatment of responsibility makes clear in what sense he regards free choice as meaningless. His question is: How are men responsible for their acts if these acts result from nature and character?

Holding men to responsibility may make a decided difference in their *future* behavior; holding a stone or tree to responsibility is a meaningless performance; it has no consequence; it makes no difference. If we locate the ground of liability in future consequences rather than in antecedent causal conditions, we moreover find ourselves in accord with actual practice. Infants, idiots, the insane, those completely upset, are not held to liability; the reason is that it is absurd—meaningless—to do so, for it has no effect on their further actions. A child as he grows older finds responsibilities thrust upon him. This is surely not because freedom of the will has suddenly been inserted in him, but because his assumption of them is a necessary factor in his *further* growth and movement.⁷⁶

As Dewey sees it, free choice at best makes no practical difference at all; at worst it is harmful.

Dewey assumes that such considerations settle *Sfc/Nfc* in favor of *Nfc*. On Dewey’s instrumentalist theory of meaning and truth, a notion such as free choice, which either makes no difference or makes only a deleterious difference to future behavior, is meaningless.

Like Dewey, many social scientists—whether or not they subscribe to Dewey’s radically operational theory of meaning and truth—assert *Nfc* on operational principles. Edward Tylor argued in a work published in 1871 that the study of human life should adopt the model of the natural sciences. Tylor rejects free will because of its incompatibility with this project. He justifies the project of making the study of man and culture an extension of the natural sciences, not by speculative arguments about metaphysical issues such as free will, but by pointing out the practical advantages to be expected from the project.⁷⁷

B. F. Skinner is among the contemporary social scientists who take a similar view. Resistance to a science of human behavior—a science in which free choice has no place—blocks the scientific progress which is necessary for the evolution and survival of man. Therefore, behaviorism must be accepted and

Sfc rejected.⁷⁸ For Skinner, the notions of freedom and responsibility serve some purpose, but they are ill-adapted to the purpose they serve. If people realize that there are always variables determining their acts, they will discard such notions and adopt methods of reinforcement more efficient than the quite inefficient methods of traditional morality and law, which make use of the notions of freedom and responsibility.⁷⁹ Skinner's argument for *Nfc* is an operational one.

The *PSfc* can answer such operational arguments by pointing out that utility presupposes a goal in relation to which diverse means can be evaluated and found to be more or less fruitful. The *PSfc* can reject any account of goals and any particular goals which are incompatible with *Sfc*.

The *PSfc* can grant that science is useful for some goals, inasmuch as science enables men better than myth does to organize and control their future experience. But whatever rational credibility science has from its usefulness for certain purposes, science cannot show that every extrascientific statement is mythical or even that every myth is false.

The *PSfc* makes an admittedly extrascientific claim that there is something which in principle cannot be controlled: the free choice of a human person. Against this claim it is question-begging to argue that since control of experience is important for some purposes and since science is good at controlling experience, nothing which in principle cannot be controlled is to be admitted. The argument assumes that the project of control *can* succeed, and that what would block it or be a serious obstacle to it is to be denied. But the *PSfc* thinks the ability to make free choices is a reality which cannot be eliminated without eliminating human persons; to the *PSfc*, his opponent's view seems utterly unrealistic—seems more a myth expressing a wish for technological omnicompetence than an understanding of the nobility of man's limited but real freedom and power.

The *PNfc* can answer that the preceding argument takes for granted a nonoperational conception of meaning and truth. If a more radical approach is taken, one using operational criteria of meaning and truth, the *PSfc* will be prohibited from speculating about the truth of his position in terms of some conception of an antecedent "reality." The issue will be decided strictly on the grounds of utility.

However, even without attacking the radical operationalism of his opponent's approach, the *PSfc* can reject this version of the thesis that *Nfc* is true because useful. The *PSfc* can accept the criterion of fruitfulness—at least for the sake of argument—and argue that *Sfc* is more fruitful for the purposes he has in mind.

Clearly, the purposes which a view such as Skinner's is intended to serve are not the only purposes people wish to have served. Skinner's project—and even

more appealing projects such as the educational reforms promoted by Dewey—would not meet the resistance they do if everyone shared the same purposes. Those who oppose reform, revolution, and projects of control can be labeled “reactionary” and “obscurantist,” but such expressions lose their hard cutting edge if one consistently holds a radical operational conception of meaning and truth. The makers and upholders of myths have their own purposes, and in terms of these purposes their beliefs might be warranted as true or more reasonable than any alternate set of beliefs.

The *PNfc* who assumes a radical operationalism when he asserts and defends his own position seems to assume a different view when he criticizes and denies *Sfc*, for he treats this position as if it were *theoretically* false. If he did not treat it so, he would have to face the fact that some people cling to the myth that groups of human persons can make common commitments to goods which they love and can freely cooperate in faithful service to such shared goals. On a radically operational theory of meaning and truth, such people can assert *Sfc* as a thesis for which one ought to opt. William James’s argument, discussed in chapter two, section C, shows how a pragmatist who opts for *Sfc* can proceed. A radical operationalist is in no position to reject on theoretical grounds an argument like that of James.⁸⁰

The *PNfc* might argue that there is one purpose—survival—which all men share. The control of human behavior is necessary for this purpose, and so the usefulness of a view of man including *Nfc* is not merely an optional means to an optional end.⁸¹

The *PSfc* can reply that this view assumes what his opponent should prove: that *Nfc* is true. The thesis is assumed implicitly in the assumption that there is only a single goal, naturally given; if this assumption were true, deliberation would be reduced to clarification, and in any practical situation one possible alternative would be definitely better than others. The *PSfc* can deny this assumption, as we explained in the discussion of psychological determinism.

The *PSfc* can point out that many people are interested in many things other than survival: play and art, esthetic experience and theoretical knowledge, finding themselves and being true to themselves, justice and friendship, redemption from sin and the hope of heaven. Many people are prepared to die for some one or several of these purposes, no matter how many other people regard such beliefs as foolish and such hopes as vain. There are other people who care far more about personal interests than they do about the survival of mankind. The ecological problem makes all too clear how widespread is the attitude: After us—desert, rubble, garbage. People who are willing to die for what they believe in—if they were willing to live without freedom and dignity—would submit to a technology for controlling human behavior if it were necessary for the survival of mankind. People who do not care whether the world will be

habitable when they are no longer in it are unlikely to grant even conditionally the usefulness of a technology for controlling human behavior—a technology which might curb their self-indulgence.

Finally, the *PSfc* can argue that by the very nature of operational approaches, no *PNfc* who adopts such a theory of meaning and truth can establish the strong claim he wishes to make. The method is inherently relativistic: problems shift from person to person, from place to place, from time to time. Each situation is new. But *Nfc* means that no person anywhere ever has the ability to make a single free choice. If meaning and truth are defined by fruitfulness in solving problems, then no claim as universal as *Nfc* can be justified. If *Nfc* were to be maintained on operational grounds, then it would have to contribute to the solution of one big problem which is to be faced by everyone, always, and everywhere. However, there can be no universal problem if there is no universal, comprehensive, overriding human purpose, and there is no such purpose. If the *PNfc* assumes that there is, he begs the question.

Thus, no matter how useful *Nfc* might be in some contexts, the *PNfc* who holds his position on operational grounds cannot exclude the possibility that in another context *Sfc* might be true, and that in that context someone might even make a free choice. It should be noted that the *PSfc* who holds his position on nonoperational principles can admit that in some contexts it is useful to proceed on the assumption that free choice is excluded, but he will wish to claim more than that *Sfc* is operationally true. A *PSfc* who is not an operationalist can more radically attack an opponent who is one by pointing out that operationalism itself is a *general* theory—a theory of a sort excluded by its own principles.

Operational arguments for *Nfc* have been closely related to the development of the social sciences. The desire to use scientific method in the study of man and to open the way to some form of social engineering in dealing with human problems has seemed to require that belief in *Sfc* be set aside. However, the *PSfc* can articulate a view in which the legitimate claims of the social sciences are vindicated and he can project an important role for social scientists in building up the body of human knowledge and in carrying on the pursuit of human happiness.

The *PSfc* can adopt a view of the social sciences similar to that articulated by Karl Popper. Popper rejects the view that the social sciences can ground “unconditional historical predictions.” Although science inasmuch as it is theoretical must predict, the nature of historical subject matter precludes the sort of prediction which Popper calls “prophecy.” In human affairs, the conditions for scientific prediction do not obtain. No modern society is a well-isolated, stationary, and recurrent system.⁸²

In view of these limitations set by the subject matter of the social sciences, Popper proposes a view of them more modest than that proposed by those who think that the study of man can model itself closely on the study of physics,

chemistry, and biology. Yet the view of the social sciences Popper proposes leaves them with some power to predict and with some purpose to serve. The purpose of the social sciences, according to Popper, is “to trace the unintended social consequences of intentional human actions.” Thus the social sciences, like the natural sciences, lead “to the formulation of practical technological rules stating *what we cannot do*.” The social sciences thus can serve the practical purpose of promoting wise decisions by predicting remote, unintended consequences which are likely to follow if certain courses of action are adopted.⁸³

Social sciences of the sort Popper projects are compatible with *Sfc* and with the *PSfc*'s conception of free choice as a central reference-point for making sense of human life and history. A social science of this sort makes conditional predictions; it tells what will follow if one choice or another is made. Moreover, there is nothing in Popper's conception of social science which would require the discarding of anything in the social sciences which can plausibly claim to be scientific—that is, of anything about which competent social scientists working within a given discipline have reached consensus.

Of course, any coherent theory of the social sciences must exclude much of what is regarded as scientific by many social scientists, for there are many substantive issues about which there is little consensus among social scientists and there are many problems of method about which they are in sharp conflict. To an outsider, at least, the lack of consensus on many things among social scientists seems to be a function of diverse and competing ideologies—that is, of different sets of unexamined assumptions which are organized by different purposes to which different schools within each discipline of the social sciences direct their effort. A *PSfc* would expect such a situation; he can explain it as a result of different basic options, freely chosen, each shaping a different community, whose members easily speak one another's language but find it necessary to translate the rather strange and inadequate languages of others, if, indeed, the efforts of others to speak can be heard as anything but babel.

However, despite their limitations, the social sciences do include some propositions about which there is consensus; these propositions can be called “scientific” in a sense which will not be disputed by any competent social scientist in the relevant discipline. As in other sciences, the truth of such propositions will be challenged within the discipline, but their legitimacy as scientific propositions will not be denied. In other words, there are some general propositions within the domain of the social sciences which are regarded as true or as probable or at least as appropriate to entertain. A *PSfc* cannot deny such propositions without challenging the competence of those most likely to know what they are talking about.

The *PSfc* can admit such propositions and the elements of method essential to the inquiries necessarily connected to these propositions. Some such proposi-

tions can be accounted for in terms of factors which are not subject to human free choice: man's natural environment and human nature. Others can be accounted for in terms of factors of the preceding sort together with human free choices. The *PSfc* can maintain that free choice has contributed in the past to the now unalterable facts of history and to the present state of culture. He can also maintain that present cultural and social conditions are in many respects similar to individual character, for these conditions derive in part from free choices, and they are maintained at least by the continuing acquiescence of people who might freely choose to change them, if not by the continuing endorsement of people who make free choices in accord with them.

The *PSfc*'s attitude toward the social sciences need not be altogether negative and critical. He also can project a positive role for the social scientist and encourage him to adopt this role. As Popper points out, knowing one's limits is useful. But beyond this, the social sciences can articulate various options which are open to a given society. If legislators and other leaders of society are to make sound choices, someone must help them to deliberate intelligently, for the problems are extremely complex, and although there are usually many possible courses of action there are seldom many promising options.

To some extent, social scientists already play this role. During the present century social scientists have suggested courses of action—which otherwise would have been ignored or brushed aside—in the fields of race relations, population control, prison reform, ecology, economic policy, international politics, and so on. This work has had a broad transforming affect on society and has helped to shape the state of affairs in which we now find ourselves. A *PSfc* would say that this shaping has not occurred because of determining causes alone, but also because social scientists whose work has been guided by their personal, freely chosen hierarchy of values have communicated their practical judgments to other members of the society, and gained some degree of general acceptance for the personal commitments in which these practical judgments are grounded.

No doubt, many social scientists would regard the role which the *PSfc* can project for them as one inappropriate to them precisely insofar as they are scientists. But the *PSfc* can point out that there is nothing ignoble in the role he encourages social scientists to accept. Modern science in general has won universal respect because of its contributions to human well-being. If the social sciences can contribute to wise deliberation, then they will fulfill an even more important role than the natural sciences have fulfilled.

In sum. The *PNfc* is correct in pointing out that belief in *Nfc* can be useful for certain purposes. He also is correct in assuming that if one accepts a certain goal, a view of things helpful for achieving that goal is to be preferred—other things being equal—to a view of things which blocks effective pursuit of it. The *PSfc*, however, need not agree that belief in *Sfc* is useless for all purposes. The

PNfc, arguing on operational assumptions, cannot ask the *PSfc* to grant that there is a single, permanent, universal, overriding human purpose. The desire of many thoughtful people to promote rational inquiry into human life and society can be satisfied in a way consonant with *Sfc*, for *Sfc* does not preclude the possibility of predictions relevant to human affairs. Finally, the *PSfc* can project a role for social science in the process of social deliberation, for if *Sfc* is true, then a man who is about to choose needs to know the options which are available to him and the limitations within which his capacity for free choice must be exercised.

G. Does divine causality exclude free choice?

Some who have held—either on grounds of faith or of reason—that God causes everything have believed that his universal causality is incompatible with *Sfc*. For this reason they have maintained *Nfc*. We call this ground for affirming *Nfc* “theological determinism.”

John Stuart Mill still used this argument, but more recently it has been discarded from the *PNfc*'s standard repertoire. Hobbes's formulation of the argument is classic:

. . . whatsoever God hath purposed to bring to pass by man as an instrument, or foreseeeth shall come to pass, a man, if he have liberty, such as he [Bramhall] affirmeth from necessitation, might frustrate and make not to come to pass: and God should either not foreknow it and not decree it, or he should foreknow such things shall be as shall never be, and decree that which shall never come to pass.⁸⁴

In this formulation, the argument is a dilemma which the *PNfc*—whether himself a believer or not—can press upon anyone who wishes to hold both that *Sfc* is true and that God causes everything. In recent years, this alleged inconsistency has occasionally been pressed against a theistic *PSfc* by his nontheistic opponents, and has less often been used by theists themselves as an argument for *Nfc*.

The traditional theist not only claims that God causes everything, but also that God knows everything. The latter claim by itself seems incompatible with human free choice, but we think this problem is merely part of the problem of divine causality. To make clear why we think this, we begin with a version of the position that divine omniscience is incompatible with *Sfc*.

Our criticism of fatalism in section B makes clear that a typical fatalist argument gains much of its plausibility from a confusion between “true” and “knowable in principle to be true.” If one supposes that God knows everything—past, present, and future—fatalism returns with renewed force. For on this supposition, any proposition which is ever true is always known by God to be true. God knew from all eternity what each person's free choices would be,

and according to traditional theism it is impossible that God's foreknowledge be falsified.

Of course, one can argue that the necessary truth of God's knowledge ought not to be projected upon the realities he knows. A human knower knows things in advance—using “knows” in a strong sense—only if he knows that the sufficient conditions for those things will obtain. But, presumably, God's knowledge does not work in the same way. If God is believed to be extratemporal, then he is believed to have no future, and it is inconsistent to try to relate God's knowledge to what is future for us as if his knowledge and our lives were subject to the same temporal conditions.

But the incompleteness of this solution to the problem becomes clear as soon as one asks how God can know things infallibly. A traditional theistic answer has been that God knows all things insofar as he creates or could create them. This answer has been given to avoid saying that God's knowledge depends upon creatures, for this would seem to make God contingent upon and somehow in need of the things he has made.

On the view that God knows all things insofar as he creates or could create them, God's omniscience is somewhat like human practical knowledge. God knows existing things inasmuch as he causes them to be. He knows infallibly because his causality is omnipotent. His knowledge is without change and is not subject to temporal conditions, because his creative act is identical with his eternal reality.

If this position is accepted, then the difficulty of reconciling human free choice with divine knowledge merges into the difficulty of reconciling human free choice with a universal and perfectly efficacious divine causality.

Today, many who regard themselves as theists do not claim that God is omniscient or that he exercises universal causality.⁸⁵ If this claim is not made, there is no ground for theological determinism. Moreover, anyone who simply does not believe in God obviously will have no theological reason for asserting *Nfc*. Thus, the following arguments and analyses are addressed to theists who take a traditional view of divine knowledge and causality and who affirm *Nfc* on that ground, and to theists who affirm *Sfc* and make some concessions with respect to divine knowledge and causality only because they do not see how the traditional view can be reconciled with *Sfc*.

“Reconcile” has two senses. In one sense, one can reconcile divine causality with human freedom by redefining human freedom in such a way that man's choices are determined by God. *Sfc* is denied, but man is held to be free and responsible although he cannot choose otherwise than he does. In another sense, one can try to reconcile divine causality with *Sfc* by showing the logical consistency of *Sfc* with the proposition that God causes all human choices. The first sort of reconciliation is a form of compatibilism. Various theists have attempted it.⁸⁶ We do not think their attempts differ in any important way from

the forms of compatibilism we discuss in chapter four, and so we do not treat these attempts here. The second sort of reconciliation is a defense of *Sfc* against arguments for *Nfc* based upon a traditional view of divine knowledge and causality. This defense succeeds only if neither *Sfc* nor the traditional view of divine knowledge and causality is given up. We attempt such a defense of *Sfc*.

The *PSfc* can begin by pointing out that although it is difficult to see how *Sfc* can be true if God knows and causes everything—including all free choices—both propositions are firmly rooted in traditional Jewish and Christian faith.

On the one hand, God makes man in his own image. Man is wholly dependent upon God, yet God confronts man with a choice: Accept the Covenant or reject it, accept the Gospel or reject it. The paradigm for the Judeo-Christian conception of human free choice is the free choice of God in creating; the paradigmatic act of human free choice is the choice by which man accepts or rejects God as he reveals himself in the Covenant or in the Gospel.

On the other hand, the universality of God's knowledge and causality also is stressed in the Bible. The universality of God's providence is asserted, and it is said to extend to details such as the fall of a sparrow. The universality of God's causality also is asserted: In the beginning, God made heaven and earth, and all things; in the beginning was the Word, through whom all things were made.

Thus, a puzzling conjunction of divine causality and human free choice is fundamental Judeo-Christian doctrine. God knows and causes all things. Yet freedom—for most traditional theists—is common in some way to the creative act of God and to the choices of human persons made in his image, to God's self-revelation and to the human person's response of belief or unbelief.⁸⁷

The fact that both divine causality and human free choice are rooted in Judeo-Christian faith explains why many of the strongest proponents of *Sfc* have been thinkers within this religious tradition. A *PSfc* of this sort could hardly have overlooked the apparent inconsistency of his view, but he would have thought that behind the apparent inconsistency lay a mystery beyond human understanding. Where God and his causality are involved, the most rigorously critical Jews and Christians proceeded with a sense of mystery—a sense of God's majesty and of the human mind's limitations.

Henry Mansel seems to take this approach in responding to Mill's theological determinism: "This question is insoluble, because we have nothing but negative notions to apply to it. . . . In this, as in all other revelations of God's relation to man, we must be content to believe without aspiring to comprehend."⁸⁸

Mansel's statement—which would be accepted by many traditional theists—suggests that the conclusion that divine causality entails *Nfc* is not an obvious one. Probably most traditional theists would regard the conclusion as not obvious precisely because they would consider it to be incompatible with their faith. Theological determinism, consequently, is a controversial thesis

among believers; most of them regard it as a concession of one essential doctrine to preserve another. Unless a particular believer has independent grounds for holding one of the two apparently conflicting doctrines, he has no better reason to give up one than the other; assuming his faith as such is not irrational, he has an equal reason for holding all its doctrines true, and for refusing to yield one of them to a theological *PNfc*. Under these conditions, Mansel's attitude is understandable and is not as absurd as might at first appear.

The theological *PNfc* can counter a move such as Mansel makes. He can call it a mere evasion of contradiction. But to make good this charge, the *PNfc* has a difficult burden of proof: he must show that there is no sense of "cause" such that one can consistently assert that God causes all human choices and that at least some of them can be free.

Mansel's answer to Mill suggests what many believers have claimed: there is a sense of "cause" which permits one to make both assertions without inconsistency. A classic statement of this thesis is that of Thomas Aquinas. After quoting a theological authority to the effect that it is characteristic of divine providence to preserve rather than to destroy things, Aquinas states:

Therefore, God causes all things in line with their own character. Thus by God's causing, effects follow with necessity from necessary causes, yet effects follow contingently from contingent causes. Since, then, the will is a principle of acting which is not determined to a single act, but is equally capable of alternative acts, God so causes it to act that he does not determine it of necessity to one of the acts open to it, but rather leaves its action contingent and not necessary, except in respect to those ends to which it is naturally drawn.⁸⁹

The last phrase in this statement refers to acts of the will by which it naturally is interested in various goods; for Aquinas, such acts are a presupposition of free choice, since no one can choose what will in the first instance appeal to him as a possible object of choice.

The theological *PNfc* cannot simply say that Aquinas's use of "causes" is meaningless. Such language might be suspect, but in this context a simple assertion that it is meaningless would be question-begging. The theological *PNfc* must *show*, not merely *say*, that such language cannot be meaningful. Only by excluding the possibility of such a meaningful use of "causes" can the theological *PNfc* show that the belief in universal divine causality entails *Nfc*.

It is difficult to see how the theological *PNfc* can accomplish this task. We know of no attempt to accomplish it. If the *PSfc* can articulate a meaning of "cause" which will meet the requirements of the traditional theist, the theological *PNfc*'s task will be shown to be virtually impossible. We think such a meaning of "cause" can be articulated.

The *PSfc* can begin by noting that according to traditional theism, God is the creator. This means that everything but God is related to him as his creature.

The notion of creature implies total dependence on God; without God's creative act, no creature would be at all. In short, traditional religious belief is that nothing with which man is directly acquainted would exist but for God's creative act.

Believers often have set out to prove the existence of God bearing clearly in mind their belief in the creatureliness of the whole world of experience. In this context, a believer tries to formulate such an argument not only for apologetic use, but also to clarify for himself and other believers the relationship he believes to hold between creator and creatures. Thomas Aquinas's famous Five Ways, for example, were sketched by him in a work intended for use as a textbook in theology. It is fair to assume that if he had intended to present a tight proof for the existence of God, he would not have limited himself to so brief a sketch. In context, the Five Ways serve a different function: They are used as a basis for the explication of the creator-creature relationship.

Arguments similar to Thomas's can help show what it means to say that creatures wholly depend upon God, and thus clarify the *unique* character of this relationship. Ordinarily, effects are independent in some respects of any of the particular causes upon which they depend, and so ordinarily effects can be understood in many respects without reference to their causes. Ordinarily, also, causes are known in other contexts than the one in which they are understood as causes of their effects. But creatures are effects which depend upon God in every respect. They depend upon him for their very being; without him they are nothing at all. Thus the very being of creatures can be understood only by considering their relationship to God. Moreover, God is not part of the universe which we might experience and know apart from our knowledge of the relations of creatures to him. Thus the creator-creature relationship is *unique*; no other cause-effect relationship could be like it.

It follows that if choices are created entities, as the theist holds, they depend upon God's creative causality. Yet if choices are free, they must exist as what they are: free choices. To suppose that a choice's dependence upon creative causality *must* exclude that choice's being free is to assume that the relationship between creative causality and the being of creatures is like the relationship between other causes and their effects—causes and effects with which we are acquainted, where both terms of the relation are created entities involved in states of affairs which obtain within the world. However, the arguments for the existence of God make clear that the mode of causality in God's creating is unique; it utterly transcends the matrix of experience in which other senses of "cause" are grounded.⁹⁰ If creative causality were not unique, arguments which begin from the world could not point beyond it to God; all arguments which begin in the world would point to something within the world.

As we explained in section E, a *PSfc* must reject the principle of sufficient reason insofar as that principle would demand an explanation why a person

makes the choice he makes rather than not making it. It is worth noticing in the present context that the believer who accepts both divine causality and human free choice does not invoke divine causality to explain why a person makes the choice he does. If a believer invoked divine causality to explain this, he would only push the problem back a step, for a traditional theist believes as firmly in the freedom of God's choices as in the freedom of man's.

We also considered previously another aspect of the mysteriousness of choice: that it comes to be, not by a continuous process of development from what was, but as a new beginning. The believer who invokes divine causality to account for the existence of things is concerned with this aspect of the mysteriousness of the world. The doctrine of universal divine causality primarily means that the world and everything in it—emergent novelties and human free choices as well as the world's older and more enduring constituents—does not just happen to be, but is because God says: "Let it be." The believer is aware of the strangeness of his saying that God makes all things from nothing, but he feels even more keenly the strangeness of saying either that there is never any newness in being or that some things come of themselves from nothing.

Thus, the paradox of "God causes free choices" is dissolved by the uniqueness of the meaning of "cause" said of God. To hold that God causes free choices is not to claim both that God determines one to choose this alternative rather than another, and also that such choosing, determined by an omnipotent cause, somehow is free. Rather, to hold that God causes free choices is to claim that God brings into being the whole reality of *a human person's freely choosing this alternative rather than another*.

The primary mystery of divine causality is not in particular instances of it—for example, in God's causing free choices—but in the very idea of the creature as creature. How can the creature be other than the creator, yet wholly dependent upon the creator? How can a creature be what it is in any respect if what it is in every respect wholly depends upon the creative act of God?

The theological *PNfc* cannot respond by setting aside creation itself as absurd. For him to do this is to give up all theological ground for asserting *Nfc*. But remaining within the context of the theistic position, he can object to the foregoing explanation along the following lines. Free choice is only free inasmuch as it is one of its own necessary conditions. If God causes free choices, his causality is a necessary condition of this necessary condition; the choice would be different if God caused it to be so. Thus, choice cannot be free.

The *PSfc* can answer that the objection assumes that "necessary condition" has the same meaning applied to God as it does applied to one's choosing itself. This cannot be, for in the sense in which God is called a "necessary condition," the whole truth about anything other than God always includes the fact that God is a necessary condition of all the conditions usually considered sufficient to account for the thing. The problem, once again, is not peculiar to free choice.

The *PSfc* also can point out that the objection is ambiguous in saying “the choice would be different if God caused it to be so.” This might mean that the choice which God causes to be, need not be, for it is a created entity wholly dependent upon God’s creative causality, which he exercises freely. Or it might mean that God could cause this very same choice to be of the other alternative. In the first sense, the alternative to the choice’s being as it is, is not its being different; the alternative is the choice’s not being at all. In the second sense, also, the alternative to the choice’s being as it is, is not its being different, for if the choice were different—that is, if it were of the other alternative—it would not be the choice it is; God would cause the alternative choice to be.

The *PSfc* also can point out that if God is the ultimate necessary condition for free choices, this cannot mean that he intrudes upon them from without. According to traditional theistic beliefs, God can no more be considered outside things than within them, no more as imposing on things than as absorbing them. And it certainly does not make sense to imagine that God can create the whole reality of a person making the free choice which he makes, yet at the same time determine the person to choose this rather than that.

The preceding considerations mitigate the paradox of saying that God causes free choices. “Cause” here clearly is used in a unique sense. What such creative causality might be like in itself, according to the entire tradition of Jewish and Christian faith, is incomprehensible to man. Thus, to say “God causes free choices” is not to say that one comprehends how he brings such choices about. Rather, it is to claim that there are free choices, that they are not uncreated, and that God is what he must be to account for one aspect of their mysteriousness: their being as new initiatives in the world, their emergence from nothing into the newness of being, their standing, together with the entire world, as entities which might never have been.

In sum. A *PNfc* can argue from suppositions concerning divine knowledge and causality. On the approach followed here, the problem reduces to the apparent inconsistency between God’s universal creative causality and the freedom of human choices. Theological premises do not lead to the assertion of *Nfc* unless one takes seriously a traditional conception of the creator-creature relationship. But on a traditional conception of this relationship, there is a *unique* sense in which God must be said to cause whatever he causes. A *PSfc* can admit that if one is reasonable in accepting traditional faith, then all its doctrines, without qualification, are to be accepted as meaningful and as true. A *PSfc* also can think it reasonable to accept traditional faith, and consequently accept the doctrine of universal divine causality, without conceding anything to theological determinism. Theological determinism fails to show that the proposition that God causes all human choices entails *Nfc*.