

Freewill Exam Study Questions

T. Parent

Note: The questions on the exam might be somewhat different from these. But if you adequately study the questions below, you will be well-prepared for the exam.

1. What is the trilemma we face when thinking about freewill and determinism? What are the three possible solutions to the trilemma? In answering this, be sure to distinguish clearly between (generic) determinism, hard determinism, and soft determinism.
2. How is determinism defined? How does Daniel try to argue for that claim?
3. What is the issue with quantum mechanics? How does Daniel argue that quantum mechanics should not be used to reject determinism?
4. Why is Frederick worried that determinism isn't an empirical theory? How does Daniel attempt to quell this worry?
5. How does Frederick appeal to our capacity to deliberate, in his argument for freewill? What is Daniel's response to this argument?
6. Why does Frederick take seriously the idea that we can be "directly aware" of the freedom of the will, in introspection? In particular, how does he respond to Daniel accusation that intuition/introspection is unreliable?
7. What is the debate between Daniel and Frederick, on whether intuitions of freewill are intersubjectively verifiable (i.e., can be "corroborated")?
8. How does Carolyn modify Frederick's argument from introspection? What is the notion of 'freedom' which falls out of her version of the argument?
9. Frederick objects to Carolyn's notion of freedom, on the grounds that free actions must (in some important sense) be uncaused. What is Frederick's argument here?
10. How does Carolyn respond to Frederick's notion of uncaused actions? Why does she think free actions must be *caused*?
11. What is Frederick's "before birth" argument? How does Carolyn reply to that argument?
12. What is Daniel's view of moral responsibility? How does he justify the practice of praising and blaming someone, despite his belief in hard determinism?
13. Daniel makes a distinction between moral responsibility and causal responsibility. What is this distinction, and how does it help support his view?

[14. How does Daniel suggest we view morality in general? What does moral disagreement look like on Daniel's view? Why is he forced to adopt such a view of morality?]¹

15. How does Carolyn understand moral responsibility, despite her belief in determinism? How does she hold Loeb and Leopold morally responsible, even though she sometimes does allow from heredity and environment as mitigating circumstances for blame?

¹ I won't be asking any version of this question on the exam. But I included this among the study questions, just to help clarify the different topics and the order in which they appear in the book.