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Whether we have free-will and whether it matters

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ABSTRACT

There is a concern that causal determinism might render free-will impossible. I compare some different perspectives, namely *Compatibilism*, *Incompatibilism*, *Libertarianism*, and *Hard Determinism*, and conclude that Hard Determinism is correct—we lack free-will. To further bolster the case, I consider the work of Libet, who has found neuropsychological evidence that our brains non-consciously cause our actions, prior to our being aware of it. Thus we are also not choosing consciously. I then consider Dennett's work on the role of the conscious self. I defend his model—of a fragmented self—which could not cause our actions. Finally I argue that many things that free-will purportedly provides, eg., justification for the penal system and reactive attitudes, can be reconstructed without free-will. I then end with some speculations about why people still want free-will.[1] (**Keywords**: *Compatibilism*, *Incompatibilism*, *Libertarianism*, *Hard Determinism, Free-will, the Self, Libet, Dennett, Reactive Attitudes, Penal system*)