

Free Will

Part I: the compatibility of free will and determinism

I. Reading

(A) Primary Readings

Read van Inwagen's paper and at least one (preferably both) out of Hume and Ayer:

- **van Inwagen, P.**, '**The incompatibility of free will and determinism**', *Philosophical studies* 27 (1975), pp. 185-99. Reprinted in Watson, G. (ed.), *Free Will*, OUP (1982).
- **Ayer, A. J.**, '**Freedom and Necessity**', in Ayer, A. J., *Philosophical Essays*, Macmillan (1954), Chapter 12. Reprinted in Watson (ed.).
- **Hume, D.**, *An Enquiry concerning human understanding*, **section 8**. ('Of liberty and necessity').

(B) Background readings

Reading through one or more of the background readings will help you find your way through the subject and understand what is going on in the primary readings and is thus highly recommended:

- Kaine, R., *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, chapter 1-3 (pp.1-31).
- Conee, E., and Sider, T., *Riddles of Existence*, OUP (2005), chapter 6.
- Watson, G., 'Introduction' in Watson, G.(ed.), *Free Will*, OUP (1982).

II. Writing

You have two tasks to complete (but don't worry – the first task will help you with the second one).

Task 1: Pick **one** of the three primary readings, and complete a reading assignment with respect to it. (See separate instructions).

Task 2: Write an essay on the following topic: 'Is free will compatible with determinism?'

Note: Your essay should be about 1000-1200 words long (that's about 3-4 typed pages in a 12 point font, 1.5 spaced). You should begin your essay with a paragraph or two which explains what claim you are going to defend, and what the structure of your essay is going to be. You should conclude your essay with a paragraph or two of summarising what you have said and what conclusions you have reached. You should try to make your essay as clear as possible both in structure and in content. In particular, if you use complicated or technical words, try to explain what you mean by them.