

Reading Questions for September 9

These questions cover an essay by Robert Kane called “Incompatibilism.” For today we are reading sections 3 and 4 (page 289-92). The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

In Kane’s article as a whole, he does two things. First he spends some time explaining the current state of the free will debate. Next he spends some time defending his view of it. For today’s class, we are finishing up the part of his paper in which he explains the current state of the debate.

*Questions:*

1. In section 3 (pages 289-91), Kane introduces a new argument that is supposed to show that free will and determinism are incompatible. In order to introduce this argument, he first states the condition of ultimate responsibility (UR) on the bottom of page 289. What is this condition? Then, a page later, in the last paragraph on page 290, he states his argument for the conclusion that free will and determinism are incompatible. How is this new argument supposed to go? Is it plausible? Why?
2. In section 4 (pages 291-2), Kane introduces an argument that suggests that even if determinism is false, we still don’t have free will. How does this argument go? He then considers some ways people respond to this argument in a paragraph on page 282 starting with “In response to these objections ...” How do they respond? In the next paragraph, starting “These ‘extra factors’ ...” he then responds to the responders. How does his response go? What do you think – who is right here? Why?