

FEELING FREE IS NOT AN ARGUMENT FOR FREE WILL BEING REAL

Most of us don't care if we have free will as in having the power to go back in time to pick x instead of y. We are just happy to feel free. Religion manipulates this to tell you that because you feel free you really are free and accountable before God. Most of the time we do not need that reward and punishing kind of free will.

Feeling free is about how you feel now. A feeling does not and cannot tell if you go back in time that you may choose the opposite of what you chose in any past moment. Where the feeling counts it says nothing. Feeling free only means you feel free not that you are really free. The feeling comes from the fact that you are not aware of anything forcing you.

FREEDOM AS IN LICENSE

Paradoxically, we want to feel we can do what we want though in fact we only imagine we want that much freedom.

Why is freedom as in license not freedom at all? Because you are never really free unless you reconcile feelings and reason. How can it be such an effective illusion? Why is it putting you in bondage though you feel you are free and even freer than you could ever imagine? The answer is that feeling free is not only not the same as being free feelings easily lie. Feeling free is an illusion and illusions tend to breed illusions. Religion by telling you feeling free is proof that you have free will from God is based on a lie and to blame when feeling free becomes freedom as in wanton licence.

PARTLY FREE?

What if your decisions are partly caused by things outside of your control? That is no freedom at all. A university that would let people learn anything but not $2=2=4$ cannot say it lets its students freely learn. They will not know if what they learned really was learning. They will not know if the university was right about anything. It has proven itself more interested in being arbitrary than in being mathematical.

Free will, if real, is a mystery because it is hard to see how we can self-regulate and be programmed at the same time. In other words the mystery is how we can be sufficiently free though we are not completely free. It is a paradox or a contradiction and we will never know which. It is safe to say it is a contradiction for there is no proof that it really exists. Proof is the only thing that stops a paradox being mistaken for a contradiction or vice versa.

Free will involves the use of reason but it cannot take reason seriously if it is a contradiction or paradox and we don't know which. When you think of it that way you soon lose the feeling of freedom. It is not true that we have to feel free all the time. We don't.

Some think that the things that program us are beyond our control but in time we develop more control over them. Does that make sense? There is no way to show it. It implies a younger person has less free will than somebody of middle age. This is nonsense.

COMPLETE FREE WILL DOESN'T EXIST

Suffering usually does not come with the freedom to choose. I mean it just happens and you don't do anything to cause it. If you have free will it should be about being moral as in helping suffering so the idea that non-deliberate suffering is ever good or tolerable by God is obscene.

Unclear? Person A chooses to suffer to help others. Person B is forced to suffer but chooses to use it to help others. Person A is the best person. B in a sense is forced to use suffering for good for she or he is stuck with it anyway. The notion of God sending suffering to help us grow in character is nonsense for there is a lack of respect for free will. If God wants to blame our abuse of free will for evil then he should invite people to suffer for others and not be sending it.

Free will is really just about what step you are taking not about what you are stepping into. That actually is not much freedom. Freedom does not give you freedom from the truth, from responsibility or consequences so freedom is paradox. Is freedom an attempt to get away from all that? The answer is yes. But it disappoints for you cannot really do it.

We do not have complete control over our feelings. Suppose I know that sitting on the shore makes me happy. If I go to the shore on a sunny day and the feeling comes to me it does not follow that I caused the feeling. If I know the sun will shine on the beach and go to enjoy it, it does not follow that I caused the sun to come out. Same with my feelings. I could be

wrong to think that the beach will make me feel happy - maybe I will feel nothing or maybe I will even feel sad. If I feel happy, I cannot make myself feel even better simply by willing it.

We cannot act without our thoughts. Thoughts matter most in the same way breath matters most when you are out for a cycle. We do not have complete control over our thoughts. Try visualising a teabag for a minute. Soon other images will take over. Your system is not bothered about your alleged free will.

You cannot then be fully responsible for anything you do.

THE ARGUMENT THAT WE ARE FREE FOR WE FEEL IT

People think they have free will because they feel free. But that is self-deception. Feelings prove nothing. You can feel you can get the best job in the world but the truth is you do not have the freedom to achieve it. If I feel that Jesus is God that does not make me right.

You can be programmed by nature to feel free when you are in fact programmed. And we are programmed for we simply cannot be free. A self-programmer is still not free. A self-programming calculator cannot forecast the weather.

Even free willists know that we can feel free and not be free like when we are mad angry. Another example is when we have a lucid dream that seems very real when we are making decisions in that dream. Even free willists agree that these are not decisions or choices for most of the brain has been closed down. Dreams prove that free will is only an assumption.

Both believers in free will and those who say it is an illusion agree that we feel free. Indeed we could be unfree and still feel free. Yet believers in free will go about lying and telling people, "You feel free so you are free." They know fine well that those who say that unconscious processes and the way life and our genes program our brains make choices not us do not deny that we feel free. They see feeling free as part of the programming. And as those processes look like they make choices they do not. The leaf does not choose to fall off the tree in autumn.

Deniers of free will should be considered more rational and plausible and honest than believers. The more the believer stresses free will the bigger the liar he or she is. For example, believers in God stress free will hugely for they argue that he gave us free will and that we can use it to break his law and deserve punishment. They blame evil on us not on God.

Do you really need proof that you could be programmed to feel free and still not be free? You feel free when you are drunk though you are not. A drug is affecting your mind. The main argument for free will, the reason so many who should know better can't discard it, is that we are led to think that we seem to be told by our experience that we are free. We seem to feel that we have different options and that nothing programs us to choose one of them and not the others.

If feeling free proves you have free will, then it follows that the more you feel it the more free will you have! Free will works best when you have maximum feeling that you are free.

God is said to give us free will so that we might love him or reject him. If feeling free makes you free then if you are free, you will feel free all the time if there is a God. You don't so that proves either that there is no God or that the argument, "I am free for I feel free" is wrong. And if it is wrong, then it follows there is no reason at all to believe in free will.

Free will, if it exists, shall be in your mind and will be a faculty in it. A faculty can no more be changed than pretending you don't have an arm will make your arm disappear and cease to exist because it is a part of you. Free will then cannot depend on our feeling of freedom for we do not have that feeling always. If it should depend, then there is no free will.

If the more you feel free the more you are free then it follows that you can reduce this feeling and you won't be fully culpable for what you do. Murder in psychological terms will be minor. To believe that you can switch from free to unfree by changing your attitude or suspending the sensation of freedom is dangerous. You could turn unfree and commit murder and still be innocent. It could be abused but only if you believe in free will for you will only be doing that if you believe in it. If you do not, then you will prefer to nurture your good side for it determines your future and blesses it. Luckily, we are unfree all the time.

The feeling of freedom comes from the fact that our brains have not decided yet what to do. It is not coming from a sense of real freedom. Many philosophers hold to this (page 8, GOD A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED Keith Ward, OneWorld, Oxford, 2003).

Even if we do have free will we cannot know it. Believing something and being right does not constitute knowledge but luck.

You can feel you have chosen when you actually haven't chosen at all. So you can feel free and not be free.

The more powerful you are the more free you are - if free will is indeed a fact. You can feel powerful though you are anything but so why can't you feel free when you are not?

DO YOU NEED OTHERS TO BE FREE?

People say, "You cannot be free if others are not free for being free and enjoying it means you and others can be free together. You cannot feel free if you think you are among machines or biological computers. "

But you can be free without having free beings around you!

You might not feel happy about it but it has nothing do with your freedom.

The notion however that free will is not just about me but the people connected with me as well is an interesting take on community relations and social conscience.

WHEN DECISIONS SEEM TO JUST APPEAR!

A lot of the time the decisions we make seem to come from nothing at all. It looks like that we are observing what we are doing and thinking as opposed to really doing and thinking ourselves. It is like something else is doing things through us. The mind is tricking us.

The decisions do not magically come out of nowhere. But that is how it feels. It is a proof that we cannot rely on our feelings to determine if we are creatures with free will or not.

FEELINGS AND FREE WILL

It seems to most of us that we cannot choose our feelings. Our feelings and emotions are below the level of conscious awareness and control. Pulling strings in ourselves to help us feel a certain way at times is possible. But pulling strings means it is not guaranteed to work. And manipulating ourselves to feel a certain way simply proves we are not in control. It may feel it but we are not. This feeling is an illusion and so is feeling free. That feeling is part of the reason we feel free. People say we can choose our thoughts. Again we can try to think something and fail. We do not bring up the thought. We open ourselves up to it and it may come and it may not.

What about the view that feelings are like waves - we do not create the waves but we choose which one to surf? We can have several different feelings but we can choose one and still not feel what we want. Our feelings care little about what we choose. They often do not care at all.

If you have free will, you did whatever you did in the past using it. You were responsible then but not now. You are not responsible for the past now. You are only responsible for the present and the future. You are not responsible for what anybody else does unless you force them to do it. You feel free despite all that. You are not as free as you feel.

The feeling of being free is like a psychological compensation for not really being free. It is like a painkiller. The feeling is what sunglasses are to midday intense sun.

FEELINGS AND FACTS

Feeling that something is true means you strongly sense that it is a fact. That will make it seem more convincing to you than cold hard logic and evidence and proof. But do not forget that whether the "fact" is true or not, you have created the illusion that it is true. Feeling something true is true is embracing the truth for the wrong reason. You put yourself under the bondage of feeling. So feeling free does not mean you are free but that you are not.

OBJECTIONS TO FREE WILL BEING AN ILLUSION

Determinists, people who think the causes of our choices do not involve any real free will but fixed causes, will never live or act all the time as if they think determinism is true. What about their choice to believe that determinism is true? Surely they contradict themselves? No. In fact if determinism is right then there is no choice to recognise that or believe it! But what they think or feel has nothing to do with determinism being true or not. A computer may swear it is free and be wrong.

The book Religion is Reasonable says that the reason free will cannot be an illusion is because it would be impossible for all of us to be under the illusion all the time (page 25). But it is not a serious illusion in a sense. It is not like seeing visions

of pink elephants all the time. It is only a feeling and most of us have feelings that could mislead us. Don't we live under the illusion that many evil things are good all the time? Don't all agree that evil doing is a symptom of delusive thinking? Don't we feel and act as if we will never die? If we took our own death seriously we would be horribly depressed every time we heard somebody has died. The arguments of religion against determinism are wafer thin and serve only to show the weakness of their position.

WHY DO WE FEEL FREE AND WANT TO FEEL FREE?

We know that we do not know how we are free and how we are able to do it if we have this freedom. Therefore no matter how free we might think we feel, we could be wrong.

The feeling of freedom is necessary to prevent fear. It would be scary if we felt compelled. The feeling is a good thing for to feel that fate controls you by pulling you one direction and another is a scary thing so you have to feel as if you can do what you want. But we can have the feeling and deny free will. Denying it then is not a sickness nor is it hypocritical.

Some determinists say the simplest way to respond to people who tell us we feel free and are free is, "What do you expect when we always do what we want?" The determinists are indicating that the feeling is necessary for us to have a will but it does not make that will free or unfree.

Yes from moment to moment we do feel we do what we want.

The wants are perceived to be mechanical and unfree when you look over the several thoughts and acts of will that led to the acts. So the feeling of being is actually accompanied by the feeling that you are not free though you do what you want. It is almost an ambivalent situation. For some they can stop feeling free altogether when they consider how the thoughts and feelings and motivations work.

If you notice that if you cannot do what is evil just because it is evil it follows that no part of your evil actions intended to be other than good under the circumstances. But you were wrong so you were insane when your mind became distorted to assume evil was good. The feeling of being free do to evil is an illusion for you only look for the wrong kind of good. That is not the same as reaching out to evil intentionally.

It is as certain as $2+2=4$ that nothing can prove we have free will or even that we might have it. If religion denies that then it denies that $2+2=4$. In denying that, they implicitly dissent from free will for if reason makes no sense then free will is impossible to use for there is a connection between it and reason. Free will is following reason as you see it.

If you feel free, if you feel you have free will, the feeling will vanish or at least diminish if you start listing the things you cannot choose. You are unable to choose that your child should get a terrible disease and die horribly.

A GUESS NOT A BELIEF

Free will is a mere assumption. It is a guess not a belief. Thus belief in free will cannot entitle us to believe in rewarding and punishing. Yet that is what believers want the belief for. Belief can only entitle us to give what might be a reward or punishment depending on whether the person is free or not. But you can only guess not believe. Here is a consequence. If you reward a good person you will do it with the following sentiment, "If you are not free then this is a gift not a reward. It is only conditionally intended to be a reward. In other words - if you are free then we reward you." You might as well not even bother assuming free will exists.

An animal has no free will yet when you take your dog's bowl off the floor in order to put his food in it the dog will know that his dinner is coming and he will follow you around and watch you and beg for his food and lick his lips in anticipation. The animal intends to have the food and acts this way because he has a goal in mind – his dinner. When the animal can behave like that it is madness to say that the fact that we think and decide what we feel before we do something means we are free and have free choice. There is no difference.

I saved a child's life last week who was running across the road. Religion and free will believers claim that if I could rewind I could have done something different and maybe walked on by and let the child get run over. Is that judgemental? Yes - until somebody can rewind nobody can say that I would have done other the good deed I did. Innocent until proven guilty. Risky until proven risky.

PERSONHOOD AND BEING THE SAME PERSON

Not every philosopher and thinker thinks you are the you you were when you were born or even ten years ago. They think each person gradually turns into another person. Christians invent the idea of spiritual soul to avoid that thought. The soul

is supposed to be the same no matter what else changes so you are the same person all the time. The soul is an excuse for denying that John at 10 is the same person as John ten years later and ten years after that. It is an excuse because there is no evidence.

Personal identity and personal responsibility is the foundation of everything. But even if we have free will we have no right to reward and punish somebody who has changed a lot. Some people seem to turn into new persons faster than others.

Free will does not give believers what they mostly want. Thus the doctrine is only fit for discarding.

Many of us see that we do not feel that it was us that did the terrible deed whatever it was ten or whatever years ago. Feeling free is only important if you feel you are the same person who say went to America ten years ago. But you cannot feel that when you let yourself see how much you have changed.

HOW TO FEEL FREE AND KEEP FEELING IT

The more you use a person for your own ends the more you treat that person as a thing. The more you value what you want them for and not them. If I see my universe as a thing and the people around me as things then I see everything as non-personal and cold. I see everything and everyone else as a thing that acts on me and my life. I will lose the feeling of freedom. I will make myself a slave. I need to start appreciating things and then I will feel free.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THROWING YOURSELF OFF OR BEING PUSHED

You feel free if you jump out of a window. You do not feel free if you are pushed. You know that you have motivations and impulses you are not aware of. A conscious choice is not as conscious as it looks. So maybe you could have reacted to avoid being pushed. Maybe you could have done something but your inner self made sure the push would succeed. If you believe in psychic or supernatural power maybe you don't know how you chose that the other person would push you? Think of that and the feeling of being free will be exposed for the superficial sham it is.

FINALLY

We could be programmed though we may feel free for we could be set to feel that way and to act free though we are not really free at all. Nobody is able to explain how free will works, meaning all have to at least admit it is possible that the feeling of freedom is misleading. Also the feeling of freedom is easily taken away. Feeling free cannot prove free will which sometimes we do not feel free.

Belief in free will is based on errors. People are told to believe that they are free because they feel free or terrible things will happen. For example, God will be offended and blamed for evil. Also, you will go off the rails morally because you don't believe you are accountable for anything you do. They are blackmailed to believe.

People are conditioned to believe in free will because they think they experience themselves as free agents. The dog feels free to eat his dinner and nobody seriously suggests a dog has free will. We must know subconsciously that the doctrine is rubbish. Basing free will on feeling, is basing morality and life and religion and God on a feeling! Any reasoning built on that is not motivated by a concern for truth but is based on feeling. It is horrible to think that atheists who depend on reason are often insulted by those who make a god of their feelings like that! If your faith in free will is based on a feeling then what right have you to condemn people who harm others? It is malicious to base such a big thing on so little! You are really no better than those whom you point the finger at.

If we are misled by feeling free, that is a necessary evil for we need to feel free far more than we will ever need free will. Life would be awful if we did not feel free. A necessary evil is something that is regretfully needed. People using God to feel more free than they need to is disgraceful. Or to ground free will. There are other ways to feel more free without implying a perfect God put a lie in your constitution and at the core of your being.

It is evil to use your feeling free as an important or even worse the only reason for accepting the idea that humankind has free will. It is too big of claim for such a flimsy foundation. And its selfish and egotistical. Unconditional love is a myth for nobody really equalises the person who is saintly and heroic with the malevolent person who is knifing innocents. Free will means the good will end up being loved conditionally on the basis that they use their free will well and will be punished or hated for doing bad. A feeling is not a reason for hurting another even if they do deserve it.