

Hard-determinism is the following position:

Hard-determinism=df. (i) determinism is true, (ii) no humans are morally free, (iii) humans are never morally responsible for their actions.

In order to support clause (iii), a hard-determinism might argue as follows:

<b>Argument Against Moral Responsibility</b>		
1	Determinism is true.	P
2	If determinism is true, then every human action is pre-determined by antecedent conditions and the laws of nature.	P
<b>3</b>	<b>If every human action is pre-determined by antecedent conditions and the laws of nature, then no humans act freely.</b>	<b>P</b>
4	If no humans act freely, then humans are not morally responsible for their actions.	P
5	Therefore, humans are not morally responsible for their actions.	1–4

Assume (1) is true. The rationale behind (2) is (i) that there are a state of affairs (antecedent conditions) that occur before human actions and (ii) if determinism is true, then every human action was made physically necessary by these antecedent conditions and the laws of nature. The rationale for (3) is that if every human action is predetermined, then no human acts freely since every action is the consequence of a prior state of affairs and laws of nature and *not* the consequence of human choice. That is, while *I think (or feel like)* it was me who choose to do X, it was determined by a previous state of affairs and the laws of nature. The rationale for (4) is that in order for a human to be considered morally responsible for an action, humans must have committed that action freely. Thus, if no one acts freely, then no one is morally responsible. Finally, (5) states the conclusion which is the consequence that no one is morally responsible for their actions.

Many people think that humans are morally responsible for their actions and so we think the conclusion of the above argument is *false*. In order to show that it is false, it is necessary to show that one of the above premises (1)–(4) is false. The difficulty in doing this resides in picking one and then showing *why* it is false.

If you reject (1), then you are likely an indeterminist. We will consider this position later. If you reject (2), then you think that determinism is true but that some human actions are not predetermined because some humans existed at the beginning of time. Another option is to reject (4). If you think this, then you (i) can accept determinism, (ii) think that there is no moral freedom, but also think that there is moral responsibility. In order to show that this is the case, you need to show how moral responsibility does not require moral freedom.

*Group 1, pp.53–56: Rejecting premise (3)*

Explain premise (3), then explain what it *means* to reject premise (3). Write down (and define) the name of the position that rejects (3) on the board. Next, explain how the compatibilist supports their position by (i) articulating the distinction between an action being *constrained* (*not free*) and one that is *unconstrained* and (ii) showing why this distinction matters in whether or not we think an action is free or not. Give your own original example of how someone can act “freely” even if their action was physically necessary (use the examples in your book as a guide, see p.55). Finally, are you a compatibilist? How plausible do you think rejecting premise (3) is? Is it the best way to go for someone who thinks that there is moral responsibility?

*Group 2, pp.56–58: Two Versions of Compatibilism*

First, write the name and definition of the two versions of compatibilism on the board (skip the combo compatibilism). Next, explain these versions of compatibilism. Make sure you define any key terms that are found in these definitions and illustrate these definitions with examples (especially the Desire Condition, Decision Condition, and what it means to act “unconstrained”). Finally, assume that you are a compatibilist, which of these versions of compatibilism do you find most compelling and why?

*Group 3, pp.58–64: Accepting Premise (3), What is Incompatibilism?*

First, write the definition of incompatibilism on the board. Try your best to defend incompatibilism by (i) giving the general idea of “the consequence argument” (pp.58–59) and (ii) giving a more detailed account of the “ability” version of the consequence argument (it is below). Don’t worry about getting into the details of defending premise (4), i.e. ‘Transfer Principle for Inability’ but do try to explain premise (5). Finally, explain the objection to premise (5) which contends that the Alternative Possibilities Principle is false (use the Frankfurt example in the text to illustrate this position).

<b>The Consequence Argument for Incompatibilism</b>		
1	If determinism is true, then every action is pre-determined by antecedent conditions (laws of nature and events long ago)	P
2	We cannot change the laws of nature.	P
3	We cannot change events long ago.	
4	If our present actions are the <i>consequences</i> of laws of nature and events long ago, and we cannot change the laws of nature nor events long ago, then we are not able to do something other than what we do.	P
<b>5</b>	<b>If we are not able to do something other than what we do, then we are not morally free.</b>	<b>P</b>
6	If determinism is true, then we are not free.	1–4