

HUM 301: INTRODUCTION TO HUMANITIES



Alyson Collom
American River College

HUM 301: Introduction to Humanities Textbook (Collom)

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Licensing

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1: INTRODUCTION

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1.1: Historical Bias

Learning Objectives

- Identify some examples of historical bias

Key Points

- Regardless of whether they are conscious or learned implicitly within cultural contexts, biases have been part of historical investigation since the ancient beginnings of the discipline. As such, history provides an excellent example of how biases change, evolve, and even disappear.
- Early attempts to make history an empirical, objective discipline (most notably by Voltaire) did not find many followers. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, European historians only strengthened their biases. As Europe gradually dominated the world through the self-imposed mission to colonize nearly all the other continents, Eurocentrism prevailed in history.
- Even within the Eurocentric perspective, not all Europeans were equal; Western historians largely ignored aspects of history, such as class, gender, or ethnicity. Until the rapid development of social history in the 1960s and 1970s, mainstream Western historical narratives focused on political and military history, while cultural or social history was written mostly from the perspective of the elites.
- The biased approach to history-writing transferred also to history-teaching. From the origins of national mass schooling systems in the 19th century, the teaching of history to promote national sentiment has been a high priority. History textbooks in most countries have been tools to foster nationalism and patriotism and to promote the most favorable version of national history.
- Germany attempts to be an example of how to remove nationalistic narratives from history education. The history curriculum in Germany is characterized by a transnational perspective that emphasizes the all-European heritage, minimizes the idea of national pride, and fosters the notion of civil society centered on democracy, human rights, and peace.
- Despite progress and increased focus on groups that have been traditionally excluded from mainstream historical narratives (people of color, women, the working class, the poor, the disabled, LGBTQI-identified people, etc.), bias remains a component of historical investigation.

Terms

Eurocentrism

The practice of viewing the world from a European or generally Western perspective with an implied belief in the pre-eminence of Western culture. It may also be used to describe a view centered on the history or eminence of white people. The term was coined in the 1980s, referring to the notion of European exceptionalism and other Western equivalents, such as American exceptionalism.

Bias in Historical Writing

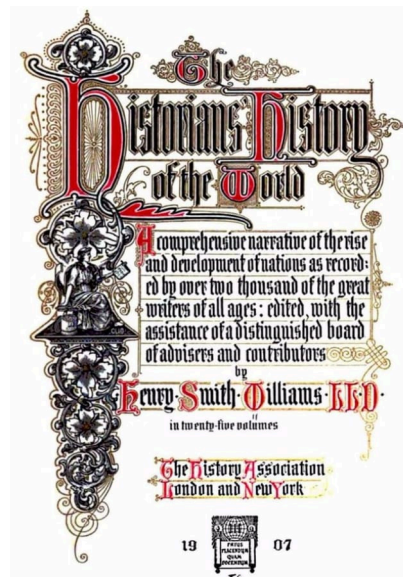
Bias is an inclination or outlook to present or hold a partial perspective, often accompanied by a refusal to consider the possible merits of alternative points of view. Regardless of whether conscious or learned implicitly within cultural contexts, biases have been part of historical investigation since the ancient beginnings of the discipline. As such, history provides an excellent example of how biases change, evolve, and even disappear.

History as a modern academic discipline based on empirical methods (in this case, studying primary sources in order to reconstruct the past based on available evidence), rose to prominence during the Age of Enlightenment. Voltaire, a French author and thinker, is credited to have developed a fresh outlook on history that broke from the tradition of narrating diplomatic and military events and emphasized customs, social history (the history of ordinary people) and achievements in the arts and sciences. His *Essay on Customs* traced the progress of world civilization in a universal context, thereby rejecting both nationalism and the traditional Christian frame of reference. Voltaire was also the first scholar to make a serious attempt to write the history of the world, eliminating theological frameworks and emphasizing economics, culture, and political history. He was the first to emphasize the debt of medieval culture to Middle Eastern civilization. Although he repeatedly warned against political bias on the part of the

historian, he did not miss many opportunities to expose the intolerance and frauds of the Catholic Church over the ages—a topic that was Voltaire’s life-long intellectual interest.

Voltaire’s early attempts to make history an empirical, objective discipline did not find many followers. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, European historians only strengthened their biases. As Europe gradually benefited from the ongoing scientific progress and dominated the world in the self-imposed mission to colonize nearly all other continents, Eurocentrism prevailed in history. The practice of viewing and presenting the world from a European or generally Western perspective, with an implied belief in the pre-eminence of Western culture, dominated among European historians who contrasted the progressively mechanized character of European culture with traditional hunting, farming and herding societies in many of the areas of the world being newly conquered and colonized. These included the Americas, Asia, Africa and, later, the Pacific and Australasia. Many European writers of this time construed the history of Europe as paradigmatic for the rest of the world. Other cultures were identified as having reached a stage that Europe itself had already passed: primitive hunter-gatherer, farming, early civilization, feudalism and modern liberal-capitalism. Only Europe was considered to have achieved the last stage. With this assumption, Europeans were also presented as racially superior, and European history as a discipline became essentially the history of the dominance of white peoples.

However, even within the Eurocentric perspective, not all Europeans were equal; Western historians largely ignored aspects of history, such as class, gender, or ethnicity. Until relatively recently (particularly the rapid development of social history in the 1960s and 1970s), mainstream Western historical narratives focused on political and military history, while cultural or social history was written mostly from the perspective of the elites. Consequently, what was in fact an experience of a selected few (usually white males of upper classes, with some occasional mentions of their female counterparts), was typically presented as the illustrative experience of the entire society. In the United States, some of the first to break this approach were African American scholars who at the turn of the 20th century wrote histories of black Americans and called for their inclusion in the mainstream historical narrative.



The title page to *The Historians' History of the World: A Comprehensive Narrative of the Rise and Development of Nations as Recorded by over two thousand of the Great Writers of all Ages*, 1907. *The Historians' History of the World* is a 25-volume encyclopedia of world history originally published in English near the beginning of the 20th century. It is quite extensive but its perspective is entirely Western Eurocentric. For example, while four volumes focus on the history of England (with Scotland and Ireland included in one of them), “Poland, the Balkans, Turkey, minor Eastern states, China, Japan” are all described in one volume. It was compiled by Henry Smith Williams, a medical doctor and author, as well as other authorities on history, and published in New York in 1902 by Encyclopædia Britannica and the Outlook Company.

Bias in the Teaching of History

The biased approach to historical writing is present in the teaching of history as well. From the origins of national mass schooling systems in the 19th century, the teaching of history to promote national sentiment has been a high priority. Until today, in most countries history textbook are tools to foster nationalism and patriotism and promote the most favorable version of national

history. In the United States, one of the most striking examples of this approach is the continuous narrative of the United States as a state established on the principles of personal liberty and democracy. Although aspects of U.S. history, such as slavery, genocide of American Indians, or disfranchisement of the large segments of the society for decades after the onset of the American statehood, are now taught in most (yet not all) American schools, they are presented as marginal in the larger narrative of liberty and democracy.

In many countries, history textbooks are sponsored by the national government and are written to put the national heritage in the most favorable light, although academic historians have often fought against the politicization of the textbooks, sometimes with success. Interestingly, the 21st-century Germany attempts to be an example of how to remove nationalistic narratives from history education. As the 20th-century history of Germany is filled with events and processes that are rarely a cause of national pride, the history curriculum in Germany (controlled by the 16 German states) is characterized by a transnational perspective that emphasizes the all-European heritage, minimizes the idea of national pride, and fosters the notion of civil society centered on democracy, human rights, and peace. Yet, even in the rather unusual German case, Eurocentrism continues to dominate.

The challenge to replace national, or even nationalist, perspectives with a more inclusive transnational or global view of human history is also still very present in college-level history curricula. In the United States after World War I, a strong movement emerged at the university level to teach courses in Western Civilization with the aim to give students a common heritage with Europe. After 1980, attention increasingly moved toward teaching world history or requiring students to take courses in non-western cultures. Yet, world history courses still struggle to move beyond the Eurocentric perspective, focusing heavily on the history of Europe and its links to the United States.

Despite all the progress and much more focus on the groups that have been traditionally excluded from mainstream historical narratives (people of color, women, the working class, the poor, the disabled, LGBTQI-identified people, etc.), bias remains a component of historical investigation, whether it is a product of nationalism, author's political views, or an agenda-driven interpretation of sources. It is only appropriate to state that the present world history book, while written in accordance with the most recent scholarly and educational practices, has been written and edited by authors trained in American universities and published in the United States. As such, it is also not free from both national (U.S.) and individual (authors') biases.

Sources

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1.2: What is History For?

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1.3: What is Philosophy For?

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1.4: What is Art For?

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1.5: Religion

RELIGIOUS BELIEF

Humans have always wondered about the meaning of life, the nature of the universe, and the forces that shape our lives. While it is impossible to know for sure how the people who lived thousands of years ago answered these kinds of questions, there are some clues. Fifty thousand years ago, human communities buried the dead with stone tools, shells, animal bones, and other objects, a practice that suggests they were preparing the deceased for an afterlife, or a world beyond this one. Thirty thousand years ago, artists entered the Chauvet cave in France and painted dramatic scenes of animals on the cave walls along with abstract symbols that suggest the images were part of a supernatural belief system, possibly one focused on ensuring safety or success in hunting (Figure 1.1.1).^[1] A few thousand years later, collections of small clay sculptures, known as Venus figurines, began appearing across Eurasia. They seem to express ideas about fertility or motherhood and may have been viewed as magical (Figure 1.1.2).^[2]



Figure 1.5.1: An image from the Chauvet cave painted about 32,000 years ago. The paintings may have been part of religious ceremonies intended to ensure success in hunting.



Figure 1.5.2: The Venus of Willendorf figurine was made between 28,000 and 25,000 BC and may have been associated with spiritual beliefs about motherhood or fertility.

DEFINING RELIGION

Because ideas about the supernatural are part of every human culture, understanding these beliefs is important to anthropologists. However, studying supernatural beliefs is challenging for several reasons. The first difficulty arises from the challenge of defining the topic itself. The word “religion,” which is commonly used in the United States to refer to participation in a distinct form of faith such as Christianity, Islam, or Judaism, is not a universally recognized idea. Many cultures have no word for “religion” at all and many societies do not make a clear distinction between beliefs or practices that are “religious,” or “spiritual” and other habits that are an ordinary part of daily life. For instance, leaving an incense offering in a household shrine dedicated to the spirits of the ancestors may be viewed as a simple part of the daily routine rather than a “religious” practice. There are societies that believe in supernatural beings, but do not call them “gods.” Some societies do not see a distinction between the natural and the supernatural observing, instead, that the spirits share the same physical world as humans. Concepts like “heaven,” “hell,” or even “prayer” do not exist in many societies. The divide between “religion” and related ideas like “spirituality” or even “magic” is also murky in some cultural contexts.

To study supernatural beliefs, anthropologists must cultivate a perspective of cultural relativism and strive to understand beliefs from an emic or insider’s perspective. Imposing the definitions or assumptions from one culture on another is likely to lead to misunderstandings. One example of this problem can be found in the early anthropological research of Sir James Frazer who attempted to compose the first comprehensive study of the world’s major magical and religious belief systems. Frazer was part of early generation of anthropologists whose work was based on reading and questionnaires mailed to missionaries and colonial officials rather than travel and participant-observation. As a result, he had only minimal information about the beliefs he wrote about and he was quick to apply his own opinions. In *The Golden Bough* (1890) he dismissed many of the spiritual beliefs he documented: “I look upon [them] not merely as false but as preposterous and absurd.”^[3] His contemporary, Sir E.B. Tylor, was less dismissive of unfamiliar belief systems, but he defined religion minimally and, for some, in overly narrow terms as “the belief in supernatural beings.” This definition excludes much of what people around the world actually believe.^[4] As researchers gained more information about other cultures, their ideas about religion became more complex. The sociologist Emile Durkheim recognized that religion was not simply a belief in “supernatural beings,” but a set of practices and social institutions that brought members of a community together. Religion, he said, was “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set aside and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them.”^[5]

Durkheim’s analysis of religion emphasized the significance of spiritual beliefs for relationships between people. Subsequent anthropological research in communities around the world has confirmed that rituals associated with beliefs in the supernatural play a significant role in structuring community life, providing rules or guidelines for behavior, and bonding members of a community to one another. Interestingly, religious “beings,” such as gods or spirits, also demonstrate social qualities. Most of the time, these beings are imagined in familiar terms as entities with personalities, desires, and “agency,” an ability to make decisions and take action. Supernatural beings, in other words, are not so different from people.^[6] In keeping with this idea, **religion** can be defined as “the means by which human society and culture is extended to include the nonhuman.”^[7] This definition is deliberately broad and can be used to encompass many different kinds of belief systems.

Definition: religion

The extension of human society and culture to include the supernatural.

Many religions involve ideas or rituals that could be described as “magical” and the relationship between religion and magic is complex. In his book *A General Theory of Magic* (1902), Marcel Mauss suggested that religion and magic were two opposite poles on a spectrum of spiritual beliefs. Magic was at one end of the spectrum; it was private, secret, and individual. Religion was at the opposite end of the spectrum; it was public and oriented toward bringing the community together.^[8] Although Mauss’ formulation presented religion and magic as part of the same general way of thinking, many contemporary anthropologists are convinced that making a distinction between religion and magic is artificial and usually not particularly useful. With this caution in mind, **magic** can be defined as practices intended to bring supernatural forces under one’s personal control. **Sorcerers** are individuals who seek to use magic for their own purposes. It is important to remember that both magic and sorcery are labels that have historically been used by outsiders, including anthropologists, to describe spiritual beliefs with which they are unfamiliar. Words from the local language are almost always preferable for representing how people think about themselves.

Definition: magic

Practices intended to bring supernatural forces under one's personal control.

Definition: sorcerer

An individual who seeks to use magic for his or her own purposes.

NOTES

1. See Jean Clottes, *Cave Art* (London: Phaidon, 2010)
2. O. Soffer, J. M. Adovasio, and D. C. Hyland "The 'Venus' Figurines: Textiles, Basketry, Gender, and Status in the Upper Paleolithic" *Current Anthropology* 41 n. 4 (2000):511-537.
3. James Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1958[1890]),vii.
4. Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London: John Murray, 1871).
5. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, tr. Joseph R. Swain (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1965[1915]), 62.
6. Jack David Eller, *Introducing Anthropology of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 9.
7. Ibid.
8. Marcel Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (London, Routledge, 1972[1902]), 24.

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2: THE SELF

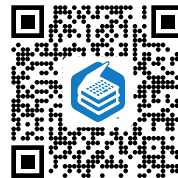
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2.1: Who Am I?

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2.2: Why Introspection Matters

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2.3: Julian Baggini- Is There a Real You?

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2.4: Honest Liars

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2.5: Art and Identity- Introduction

One of the more important themes emerging from the last century has been the individual's search for identity. For example, genealogical websites have proliferated and special television programs are devoted to the subject. Since it first aired on PBS in 2012, Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s *Finding Your Roots* has been a popular program. The British version, *The Guardian*, has been successful since 2006.

Some anthropologists suggest that the deep-rooted interest in identity or ancestry is partly shaped by evolutionary forces dating back to early humans supporting each other in extended family groups. Anthropologist Dwight Read theorizes that the Neolithic people were the first to understand the concept of the family tree and the perception of self in a family unit and in society.¹ If connected through blood, people have the tendency to be more willing to care for each other; a common interest and support system is readily realized within a clan or a group.

Early humans created two- and three-dimensional likenesses of themselves in their environment to help understand who they were in relation to the other members of their group. Contemporary humans do the same; they make records of themselves with family members, most commonly in photographs and Selfies, and on Instagram. It is the same fundamental concept and placement in an environment that collectively identifies who we are in society, for example, in social gatherings, organizations, and religious settings. This means, above all, that we must place ourselves within the world in order to obtain identity. Children search for their identity at a very young age by observing and recognizing their parents and family members. Their markings with in a simple drawing of self and family similar to those of early humans help them to vindicate and confirm who they are and how they are perceived by their family group.

Like children, artists sometimes explore their identity through self-portraits and symbolically in works of art that relate to ancestry or culture. Doing so allows them to take a look inside their core and see how they fit within their contemporary culture; this investigation of self plays an important role in how artists understand their environment and the world.

Vincent van Gogh is known as a person who spent much of his time in solitude. He painted more than thirty self-portraits between the years 1886 and 1889, placing him among the most prolific self-portraitists of all time. Indeed, some of his most respected works are his self-portraits that trace his image throughout the last years of his life, the most crucial to his career. (Figures 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3) While Van Gogh used the study of his own image to help develop his skills as an artist, these self portraits also give us insights into the artist's life and well being, how he fit in society, and his place among the groups with whom he associated.

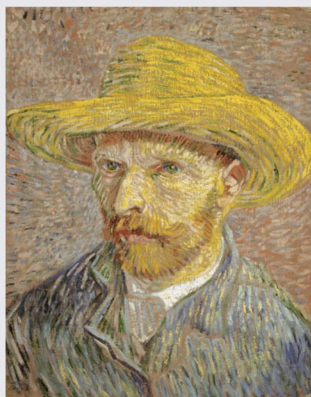


Figure 8.1 | Self-Portrait with Straw Hat

Artist: Vincent van Gogh
Author: Met Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 8.2 | Self-portrait as a painter

Artist: Vincent van Gogh
Author: Web Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 8.3 | Self-portrait with a bandaged ear

Artist: Vincent van Gogh
Author: The Courtland Institute of Art
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Like Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso painted a number of self-portraits. Throughout his career, Picasso painted various likenesses that reflected changes in himself, his style, his artistic development, as well as in his life style and beliefs—all of which may be viewed closely from the content of his paintings. (Figures 8.4 and 8.5) The first self-portrait, painted in 1901 while he was establishing himself as an artist in Paris, France, and still spending time in Barcelona, Spain, reflects the somber mode and tones of his Blue

Period (1901-1904). The second, dated to 1906, at the very end of his Rose Period (1904-1906), Picasso depicts himself as the artist who by that time was moving in artistic circles, gaining respect, and acquiring patrons.



Frida Kahlo (1907-1954, Mexico) used the iconography of her Mexican heritage to paint herself and the pain that had become an integral part of her life following a bus accident at the age of 18 in which she suffered numerous injuries. She identified as a group member of her country, with Mexican culture and ancestry, and as belonging to the female gender. Kahlo's self-portraits are dramatic, bloody, brutal, and at times overtly political. (*Self-Portrait*, Frida Kahlo: upload.wikimedia.org/Wikipedia/en/1/1e/Frida_Kahlo_%28self_portrait%29.jpg) In seeking her roots, she voiced concern for her country as it struggled for an independent cultural identity. She spoke to her country and people through her art. Kahlo's art was inspired by her public beliefs and personal sufferings; she wanted her art to speak from her consciousness.

Although self-portraits of today may be slightly different from those of earlier decades, they still depict self-exploration and identity through society and groups that communicate who we are. Cai Guo-Qiang (b. 1958, China, lives USA) exploded small charges of gunpowder to create an image of himself. (*Self-Portrait: A Subjugated Soul*, Cai Guo-Qiang: http://www.caiguoqiang.com/sites/default/files/styles/medium/public/1989_SelfPortrait_0389_001ltr-web.jpg) Different from those by Van Gogh, Picasso, and Kahlo, Cai's self-portrait does not have any likeness or resemblance to his personal features, but it too sends a message about our society and how Cai relates to it. For example, the artist associates the lack of identifying information, rendering him anonymous, with contemporary society, and the fired gunpowder with both chaos and transformation.

Despite the distance in time that separates early and modern humans, the search for their place in society and who they are remains of fascination and a mystery to all humans regardless of their time in history.

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1. Ghose, Tia (Oct. 26, 2012). Why we care about our ancestry, Live Science. <http://www.livescience.com/24313-why-ancestry.html>
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2.6: Kahlo, The Two Fridas

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/later-europe-and-americas/modernity-ap/a/kahlo-the-two-fridas-las-dos-fridas>

2.7: To This Day...For the Bullied and the Beautiful

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2.9: Are you a Body with a Mind or a Mind with a Body?

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2.11: The Mind Body Problem

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3: MORALITY

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3.1: Our Moral Endowment

<https://humanjourney.us/intercultural-understanding-and-empathy/our-moral-endowment/>

3.2: How to become a Better Person

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3.3: What is Art?

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3.4: Art and Ethics- Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the perception, susceptibility, and ethics of art. It will explore and analyze the moral responsibility of artists and their rights to represent and create without censorship.

Morality and art are connected usually in art that provokes and disturbs. Such art stirs up the artist's or viewer's personal beliefs, values, and morals due to what is depicted. Works that seem to purposely pursue or strongly communicate a message may cause controversies to flair up: controversies over the rights of artistic freedom or over how society evaluates art. That judgment of works created by artists has to do with society's value judgment in a given time in history.

The relationship between the artist and society is intertwined and sometimes at odds as it relates to art and ethics. Neither has to be sacrificed for the other, however, and neither needs to bend to the other in order to create or convey the work's message.

Art is subjective: it will be received or interpreted by different people in various ways. What may be unethical to one may be ethical to another. Because art is subjective, it is vulnerable to ethical judgment. It is most vulnerable when society does not have a historical context or understanding of art in order to appreciate a work's content or aesthetics. This lack does not make ethical judgment wrong or irrational; it shows that appreciation of art or styles changes over time and that new or different art or styles can come to be appreciated. The general negative taste of society usually changes with more exposure. Still, taste remains subjective.

Ethics has been a major consideration of the public and those in religious or political power throughout history. For many artists today, the first and major consideration is not ethics, but the platform from which to create and deliver the message through formal qualities and the medium. Consideration of ethics may be established by the artist but without hindrance of free expression. It is expected that in a work of art an artist's own beliefs, values, and ideology may contrast with societal values. It is the art that speaks and adds quality value to what is communicated. This is what makes the power of free artistic expression so important. The art is judged not by who created the work or the artist's character, but based on the merits of the work itself.

However, through this visual dialogue existing between artist and society, there must be some mutual understanding. Society needs to understand that freedom of expression in the arts encourages greatness while artists need to be mindful of and open to society's disposition. When the public values art as being a positive spiritual and physical addition to society, and the artist creates with ethical intentions, there is a connection between viewer and creator. An artist's depiction of a subject does not mean that the creator approves or disapproves of the subject being presented. The artist's purpose is to express, regardless of how the subject matter may be interpreted. Nevertheless, this freedom in interpretation does not mean that neither the artist nor society holds responsibility for their actions.

Art and ethics, in this respect, demands that artists use their intellectual faculties to create a true expressive representation or convey psychological meaning. This type of art demands a capability on the viewer's part to be moved by many sentiments from the artist. It demands the power of art to penetrate outward appearances, and seize and capture hidden thoughts and interpretations of the momentary or permanent emotions of a situation. While artists are creating, capturing visual images, and interpreting for their viewers, they are also giving them an unerring measure of the artists' own moral or ethical sensibilities.

Ethical dilemmas are not uncommon in the art world and often arise from the perception or interpretation of the artwork's content or message. Provocative themes of spirituality, sexuality, and politics can and may be interpreted in many ways and provoke debates as to their being unethical or without morality. For example, when Dada artist Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968, France) created *Fountain* in 1917, it was censored and rejected by contemporary connoisseurs of the arts and the public. (*Fountain*, Marcel Duchamp: <http://www.sfmoma.org/explore/collection/artwork/25853#ixzz3mwCWD0xZ>) A men's urinal turned on its side, Duchamp considered this work to be one of his *Readymade*, manufactured objects that were turned into or designated by him as art. Today, *Fountain* is one of Duchamp's most famous works and is widely considered an icon of twentieth-century art.

More recently, *The Holy Virgin Mary* by Chris Ofili (b. 1968, England) shocked viewers when it was included in the 1997-2000 *Sensation* exhibition in London, Berlin, and New York. (*The Holy Virgin Mary*, Chris Ofili: www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ly-virgin-mary) The image caused considerable outrage from some members of the public across the country, including then-mayor of New York City Rudolph Giuliani. With its collaged images of women's buttocks, glitter-mixed paint, and applied balls of elephant dung, many considered the painting blasphemous. Ofili stated that was not his intention; he wanted to acknowledge both the sacred and secular, even sensual, beauty of the Virgin Mary, and that the dung, in his parents' native country of Nigeria, symbolized fertility and the power of the elephant. Nevertheless, and probably unaware of the artist's meaning, people were

outraged.

Traditionally, aesthetics in art has been associated with beauty, enjoyment, and the viewer's visual, intellectual, and emotional captivation. Scandalous art may not be beautiful, but it very well could be enjoyable and hold one captive. The viewer is taken in and is attracted to something that is neither routine nor ordinary. All are considered to be meaningful experiences that are distinctive to Fine Arts. Aesthetic judgment goes hand in hand with ethics. It is part of the decision-making process people use when they view a work of art and decide if it is "good" or "bad." The process of aesthetic judgment is a conceptual model that describes how people decide on the quality of artworks created and, for them individually or societally, makes an ethical decision about a certain work of art.

As we can see, art indubitably has had the power to shock and, as a source of social provocation, art will continue to shock unsuspecting viewers. Audiences will continue to feel scandalized, disturbed, or offended by art that is socially, politically, and religiously challenging. Being considered scandalous or radical, as already observed, does not take away from experiencing or appreciation of the art, nor do such responses speak to the artist's ethics or morality. Art may, however, fail in some eyes to offer an aesthetic experience. Such a failure also depends on the complex relationship between art and the viewer, living in a given moment of time.

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3.5: Aesthetics

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3.6: Your Brain on Music

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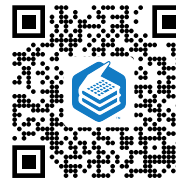


3.7: Aristotle and Virtue Theory

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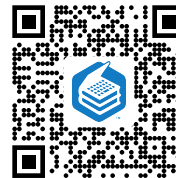


3.8: Niccolo Machiavelli

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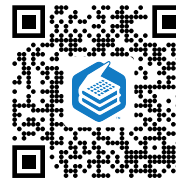


3.9: Consumerism

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3.10: Humanism

The starting point with studying the Renaissance is just learning what the word means: rebirth. But what was being reborn? The answer is the culture and ideas of classical Europe, ancient Greece and Rome. Renaissance thinkers and artists very consciously made the claim that they were reviving long-lost traditions from the classical world in areas as diverse as scholarship, poetry, architecture, and sculpture. The feeling among most Renaissance thinkers and artists was that the ancient Greeks and Romans had achieved truly incredible things, things that had not been, and possibly could never be, surpassed. Much of the Renaissance began as an attempt to mimic or copy Greek and Roman art and scholarship (corresponding to one another in classical Latin, for example), but over the decades the more outstanding Renaissance thinkers struck out on new paths of their own - still inspired by the classics, but seeking to be creators in their own right as well.

Of the various themes of Renaissance thought, perhaps the most important was **humanism**, an ancient intellectual paradigm that emphasized both the beauty and the centrality of humankind in the universe. Humanists held that humankind was inherently rational, beautiful, and noble, rather than debased, wicked, or weak. They sought to celebrate the beauty of the human body in their art, of the human mind and human achievements in their scholarship, and of human society in the elegance of their architectural design. Humanism was, among other things, an optimistic attitude toward artistic and intellectual possibility that cited the achievements of the ancient world as proof that humankind was the crowning achievement of God's creation.

Renaissance humanism was the root of some very modern notions of individuality, along with some specific phenomena such as the idea that education ought to arrive at a well-rounded individual. The goal of education in the Renaissance was to realize as much of the human potential as possible with a robust education in diverse disciplines. This was a true, meaningful change over medieval forms of learning in that education's major purpose was no longer believed to be the clarification of religious questions or better intellectual support for religious orthodoxy; the point of education was to create a more competent and well-rounded person instead.

Along with the idea of a well-rounded individual, Renaissance thinkers championed the idea of **Civic Humanism**: one's moral and ethical standing was tied to devotion to one's city. This was a Greek and Roman concept that the great Renaissance thinker Petrarch championed in particular. Here, the Medici of Florence are the ultimate example: there was a tremendous effort on the part of the rich and powerful to invest in the city in the form of building projects and art. This was tied to the prestige of the family, of course, but it was also a heartfelt dedication to one's home, analogous to the present-day concept of patriotism.

Practically speaking, there was a shift in the practical business of education from medieval scholasticism, which focused on law, medicine, and theology, to disciplines related to business and politics. Renaissance learning was born in the cities of northern Italy because of the wealth of northern Italy. Princes and other elites wanted skilled bureaucrats to staff their merchant empires; they needed literate men with a knowledge of law and mathematics, even if they themselves were not merchants. City governments began educating children (girls and boys alike, at least in certain cities like Florence) directly, along with the role played by private tutors. These schools and tutors emphasized practical education: rhetoric, math, and history. Thus, one of the major effects of the Italian Renaissance was that this new form of education, usually referred to as "humanistic education" spread from Italy to the rest of Europe by the late fifteenth century. By the sixteenth century, a broad cross-section of European elites, including nobles, merchants, and priests, were educated in the humanistic tradition.

A "Renaissance man" (note that there *were* important female thinkers as well, but the term "Renaissance man" was used exclusively for men) was a man who cultivated classical virtues, which were not quite the same as Christian ones: understanding, benevolence, compassion, fortitude, judgment, eloquence, and honor, among others. Drawing from the work of thinkers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Virgil, Renaissance thinkers came to support the idea of a virtuous life that was not the same thing as a specifically *Christian* virtuous life. And, importantly, it was possible to become a good person simply through studying the classics - all of the major figures of the Renaissance were Christians, but they insisted that one's moral status could and should be shaped by emulation of the ancient virtues, combined with Christian piety. While the Renaissance case for the debasement of medieval culture was overstated - medieval intellectual life prospered during the High Middle Ages, there was definitely a distinct kind of intellectual courage and optimism that came out of the return to classical models over medieval ones during the Renaissance.

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3.11: Are Religious People more Moral?

<https://theconversation.com/are-religious-people-more-moral-84560>

4: HAPPINESS

- 4.1: The Pursuit of Happiness
- 4.2: Why You Shouldn't want to Always Be Happy
- 4.3: The Secrets of Happiness
- 4.4: A Recipe for Eudaimonia
- 4.5: The Philosophy of Stoicism
- 4.6: Philosophy - Blaise Pascal
- 4.7: Wisdom

4.1: The Pursuit of Happiness

Learning Objectives

- Define and discuss happiness, including its determinants
- Describe the field of positive psychology and identify the kinds of problems it addresses
- Explain the meaning of positive affect and discuss its importance in health outcomes
- Describe the concept of flow and its relationship to happiness and fulfillment

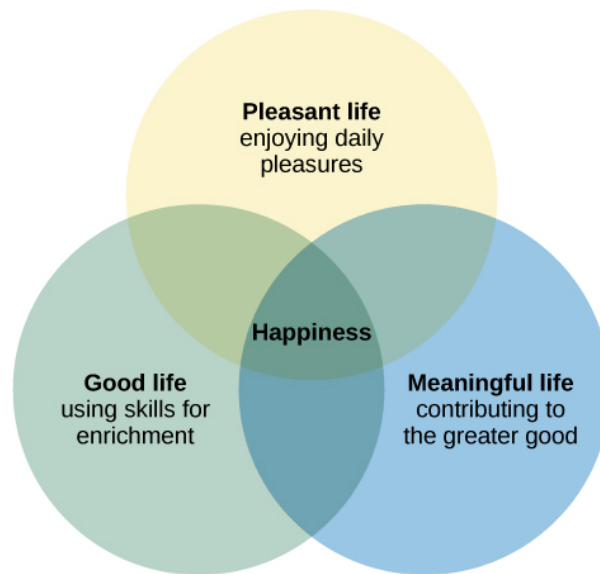
Although the study of **stress** and how it affects us physically and psychologically is fascinating, it is—admittedly—somewhat of a grim topic. Psychology is also interested in the study of a more upbeat and encouraging approach to human affairs—the quest for happiness.

Happiness

America's founders declared that its citizens have an unalienable right to pursue happiness. But what is happiness? When asked to define the term, people emphasize different aspects of this elusive state. Indeed, happiness is somewhat ambiguous and can be defined from different perspectives (Martin, 2012). Some people, especially those who are highly committed to their religious faith, view happiness in ways that emphasize virtuosity, reverence, and enlightened spirituality. Others see happiness as primarily contentment—the inner peace and joy that come from deep satisfaction with one's surroundings, relationships with others, accomplishments, and oneself. Still others view happiness mainly as pleasurable engagement with their personal environment—having a career and hobbies that are engaging, meaningful, rewarding, and exciting. These differences, of course, are merely differences in emphasis. Most people would probably agree that each of these views, in some respects, captures the essence of happiness.

Elements of Happiness

Some psychologists have suggested that happiness consists of three distinct elements: the pleasant life, the good life, and the meaningful life, as shown in figure 4.1.1 (Seligman, 2002; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). The pleasant life is realized through the attainment of day-to-day pleasures that add fun, joy, and excitement to our lives. For example, evening walks along the beach and a fulfilling sex life can enhance our daily pleasure and contribute to the pleasant life. The good life is achieved through identifying our unique skills and abilities and engaging these talents to enrich our lives; those who achieve the good life often find themselves absorbed in their work or their recreational pursuits. The meaningful life involves a deep sense of fulfillment that comes from using our talents in the service of the greater good: in ways that benefit the lives of others or that make the world a better place. In general, the happiest people tend to be those who pursue the full life—they orient their pursuits toward all three elements (Seligman et al., 2005).



Happiness is an enduring state of well-being involving satisfaction in the pleasant, good, and meaningful aspects of life.

For practical purposes, a precise definition of **happiness** might incorporate each of these elements: an enduring state of mind consisting of joy, contentment, and other positive emotions, plus the sense that one's life has meaning and value (Lyubomirsky, 2001). The definition implies that happiness is a long-term state—what is often characterized as subjective well-being—rather than merely a transient positive mood we all experience from time to time. It is this enduring happiness that has captured the interests of psychologists and other social scientists.

The study of happiness has grown dramatically in the last three decades (Diener, 2013). One of the most basic questions that happiness investigators routinely examine is this: How happy are people in general? The average person in the world tends to be relatively happy and tends to indicate experiencing more positive feelings than negative feelings (Diener, Ng, Harter, & Arora, 2010). When asked to evaluate their current lives on a scale ranging from 0 to 10 (with 0 representing “worst possible life” and 10 representing “best possible life”), people in more than 150 countries surveyed from 2010–2012 reported an average score of 5.2. People who live in North America, Australia, and New Zealand reported the highest average score at 7.1, whereas those living Sub-Saharan Africa reported the lowest average score at 4.6 (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2013). Worldwide, the five happiest countries are Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Sweden; the United States is ranked 17th happiest (See fig. 14.5.2) (Helliwell et al., 2013).



(a)



(b)

(a) Surveys of residents in over 150 countries indicate that Denmark has the happiest citizens in the world. (b) Americans ranked the United States as the 17th happiest country in which to live. (credit a: modification of work by "JamesZ_Flickr"/Flickr; credit b: modification of work by Ryan Swindell)

Several years ago, a Gallup survey of more than 1,000 U.S. adults found that 52% reported that they were “very happy.” In addition,

more than 8 in 10 indicated that they were “very satisfied” with their lives (Carroll, 2007). However, a recent poll of 2,345 U.S. adults surprisingly revealed that only one-third reported they are “very happy.” The poll also revealed that the happiness levels of certain groups, including minorities, recent college graduates, and the disabled, have trended downward in recent years (Gregoire, 2013). Although it is difficult to explain this apparent decline in happiness, it may be connected to the challenging economic conditions the United States has endured over the last several years. Of course, this presumption would imply that happiness is closely tied to one’s finances. But, is it? This question brings us to the next important issue: What factors influence happiness?

Factors Connected to Happiness

What really makes people happy? What factors contribute to sustained joy and contentment? Is it money, attractiveness, material possessions, a rewarding occupation, a satisfying relationship? Extensive research over the years has examined this question. One finding is that age is related to happiness: Life satisfaction usually increases the older people get, but there do not appear to be gender differences in happiness (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Although it is important to point out that much of this work has been correlational, many of the key findings (some of which may surprise you) are summarized below.

Family and other social relationships appear to be key factors correlated with happiness. Studies show that married people report being happier than those who are single, divorced, or widowed (Diener et al., 1999). Happy individuals also report that their marriages are fulfilling (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). In fact, some have suggested that satisfaction with marriage and family life is the strongest predictor of happiness (Myers, 2000). Happy people tend to have more friends, more high-quality social relationships, and stronger social support networks than less happy people (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Happy people also have a high frequency of contact with friends (Pinquart & Sörensen, 2000).

Can money buy happiness? In general, extensive research suggests that the answer is yes, but with several caveats. While a nation’s per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is associated with happiness levels (Helliwell et al., 2013), changes in GDP (which is a less certain index of household income) bear little relationship to changes in happiness (Diener, Tay, & Oishi, 2013). On the whole, residents of affluent countries tend to be happier than residents of poor countries; within countries, wealthy individuals are happier than poor individuals, but the association is much weaker (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2002). To the extent that it leads to increases in purchasing power, increases in income are associated with increases in happiness (Diener, Oishi, & Ryan, 2013). However, income within societies appears to correlate with happiness only up to a point. In a study of over 450,000 U.S. residents surveyed by the Gallup Organization, Kahneman and Deaton (2010) found that well-being rises with annual income, but only up to \$75,000. The average increase in reported well-being for people with incomes greater than \$75,000 was null. As implausible as these findings might seem—after all, higher incomes would enable people to indulge in Hawaiian vacations, prime seats at sporting events, expensive automobiles, and expansive new homes—higher incomes may impair people’s ability to savor and enjoy the small pleasures of life (Kahneman, 2011). Indeed, researchers in one study found that participants exposed to a subliminal reminder of wealth spent less time savoring a chocolate candy bar and exhibited less enjoyment of this experience than did participants who were not reminded of wealth (Quoidbach, Dunn, Petrides, & Mikolajczak, 2010).

What about education and employment? Happy people, compared to those who are less happy, are more likely to graduate from college and secure more meaningful and engaging jobs. Once they obtain a job, they are also more likely to succeed (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). While education shows a positive (but weak) correlation with happiness, intelligence is not appreciably related to happiness (Diener et al., 1999).

Does religiosity correlate with happiness? In general, the answer is yes (Hackney & Sanders, 2003). However, the relationship between religiosity and happiness depends on societal circumstances. Nations and states with more difficult living conditions (e.g., widespread hunger and low life expectancy) tend to be more highly religious than societies with more favorable living conditions. Among those who live in nations with difficult living conditions, religiosity is associated with greater well-being; in nations with more favorable living conditions, religious and nonreligious individuals report similar levels of well-being (Diener, Tay, & Myers, 2011).

Clearly the living conditions of one’s nation can influence factors related to happiness. What about the influence of one’s culture? To the extent that people possess characteristics that are highly valued by their culture, they tend to be happier (Diener, 2012). For example, self-esteem is a stronger predictor of life satisfaction in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures (Diener, Diener, & Diener, 1995), and extraverted people tend to be happier in extraverted cultures than in introverted cultures (Fulmer et al., 2010).

So we’ve identified many factors that exhibit some correlation to happiness. What factors don’t show a correlation? Researchers have studied both parenthood and physical attractiveness as potential contributors to happiness, but no link has been identified. Although people tend to believe that parenthood is central to a meaningful and fulfilling life, aggregate findings from a range of

countries indicate that people who do not have children are generally happier than those who do (Hansen, 2012). And although one's perceived level of attractiveness seems to predict happiness, a person's objective physical attractiveness is only weakly correlated with her happiness (Diener, Wolsic, & Fujita, 1995).

Life Events and Happiness

An important point should be considered regarding happiness. People are often poor at affective forecasting: predicting the intensity and duration of their future emotions (Wilson & Gilbert, 2003). In one study, nearly all newlywed spouses predicted their marital satisfaction would remain stable or improve over the following four years; despite this high level of initial optimism, their marital satisfaction actually declined during this period (Lavner, Karner, & Bradbury, 2013). In addition, we are often incorrect when estimating how our long-term happiness would change for the better or worse in response to certain life events. For example, it is easy for many of us to imagine how euphoric we would feel if we won the lottery, were asked on a date by an attractive celebrity, or were offered our dream job. It is also easy to understand how long-suffering fans of the Chicago Cubs baseball team, which has not won a World Series championship since 1908, think they would feel permanently elated if their team would finally win another World Series. Likewise, it is easy to predict that we would feel permanently miserable if we suffered a crippling accident or if a romantic relationship ended.

However, something similar to sensory adaptation often occurs when people experience emotional reactions to life events. In much the same way our senses adapt to changes in stimulation (e.g., our eyes adapting to bright light after walking out of the darkness of a movie theater into the bright afternoon sun), we eventually adapt to changing emotional circumstances in our lives (Brickman & Campbell, 1971; Helson, 1964). When an event that provokes positive or negative emotions occurs, at first we tend to experience its emotional impact at full intensity. We feel a burst of pleasure following such things as a marriage proposal, birth of a child, acceptance to law school, an inheritance, and the like; as you might imagine, lottery winners experience a surge of happiness after hitting the jackpot (Lutter, 2007). Likewise, we experience a surge of misery following widowhood, a divorce, or a layoff from work. In the long run, however, we eventually adjust to the emotional new normal; the emotional impact of the event tends to erode, and we eventually revert to our original baseline happiness levels. Thus, what was at first a thrilling lottery windfall or World Series championship eventually loses its luster and becomes the status quo (See figure 4.1.3). Indeed, dramatic life events have much less long-lasting impact on happiness than might be expected (Brickman, Coats, & Janoff-Bulman, 1978).



(a)

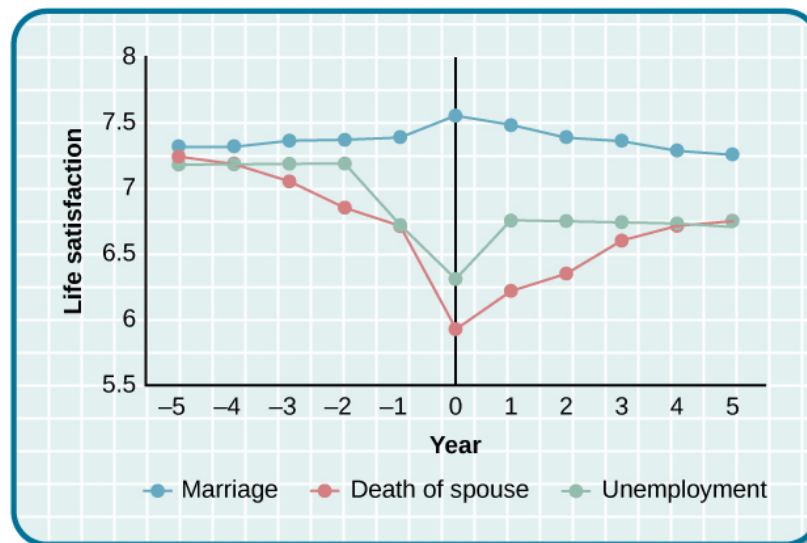


(b)

(a) Long-suffering Chicago Cub fans would no doubt feel elated if their team won a World Series championship, a feat that has not been accomplished by that franchise in over a century. (b) In ways that are similar, those who play the lottery rightfully think that choosing the correct numbers and winning millions would lead to a surge in happiness. However, the initial burst of elation following such elusive events would most likely erode with time. (credit a: modification of work by Phil Roeder; credit b: modification of work by Robert S. Donovan)

Recently, some have raised questions concerning the extent to which important life events can permanently alter people's happiness set points (Diener, Lucas, & Scollon, 2006). Evidence from a number of investigations suggests that, in some circumstances, happiness levels do not revert to their original positions. For example, although people generally tend to adapt to marriage so that it no longer makes them happier or unhappier than before, they often do not fully adapt to unemployment or severe disabilities (Diener, 2012). Figure 4.1.4, which is based on longitudinal data from a sample of over 3,000 German respondents, shows life satisfaction scores several years before, during, and after various life events, and it illustrates how people

adapt (or fail to adapt) to these events. German respondents did not get lasting emotional boosts from marriage; instead, they reported brief increases in happiness, followed by quick adaptation. In contrast, widows and those who had been laid off experienced sizeable decreases in happiness that appeared to result in long-term changes in life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2006). Further, longitudinal data from the same sample showed that happiness levels changed significantly over time for nearly a quarter of respondents, with 9% showing major changes (Fujita & Diener, 2005). Thus, long-term happiness levels can and do change for some people.



This graphs shows life satisfaction scores several years before and after three significant life events (0 represents the year the event happened) (Diener et al., 2006).

Increasing Happiness

Some recent findings about happiness provide an optimistic picture, suggesting that real changes in happiness are possible. For example, thoughtfully developed well-being interventions designed to augment people's baseline levels of happiness may increase happiness in ways that are permanent and long-lasting, not just temporary. These changes in happiness may be targeted at individual, organizational, and societal levels (Diener et al., 2006). Researchers in one study found that a series of happiness interventions involving such exercises as writing down three good things that occurred each day led to increases in happiness that lasted over six months (Seligman et al., 2005).

Measuring **happiness** and well-being at the societal level over time may assist policy makers in determining if people are generally happy or miserable, as well as when and why they might feel the way they do. Studies show that average national happiness scores (over time and across countries) relate strongly to six key variables: per capita gross domestic product (GDP, which reflects a nation's economic standard of living), social support, freedom to make important life choices, healthy life expectancy, freedom from perceived corruption in government and business, and generosity (Helliwell et al., 2013). Investigating why people are happy or unhappy might help policymakers develop programs that increase happiness and well-being within a society (Diener et al., 2006). Resolutions about contemporary political and social issues that are frequent topics of debate—such as poverty, taxation, affordable health care and housing, clean air and water, and income inequality—might be best considered with people's happiness in mind.

Positive Psychology

In 1998, **Seligman** (the same person who conducted the learned helplessness experiments mentioned earlier), who was then president of the American Psychological Association, urged psychologists to focus more on understanding how to build human strength and psychological well-being. In deliberately setting out to create a new direction and new orientation for psychology, Seligman helped establish a growing movement and field of research called positive psychology (Compton, 2005). In a very general sense, **positive psychology** can be thought of as the science of happiness; it is an area of study that seeks to identify and promote those qualities that lead to greater fulfillment in our lives. This field looks at people's strengths and what helps individuals to lead happy, contented lives, and it moves away from focusing on people's pathology, faults, and problems. According

to Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), positive psychology,

"at the subjective level is about valued subjective experiences: well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (for the future); and... happiness (in the present). At the individual level, it is about positive individual traits: the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom." (p. 5)

Some of the topics studied by positive psychologists include altruism and empathy, creativity, forgiveness and compassion, the importance of positive emotions, enhancement of immune system functioning, savoring the fleeting moments of life, and strengthening virtues as a way to increase authentic happiness (Compton, 2005). Recent efforts in the field of positive psychology have focused on extending its principles toward peace and well-being at the level of the global community. In a war-torn world in which conflict, hatred, and distrust are common, such an extended "positive peace psychology" could have important implications for understanding how to overcome oppression and work toward global peace (Cohrs, Christie, White, & Das, 2013).

DIG DEEPER: The Center for Investigating Healthy Minds

On the campus of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, the Center for Investigating Healthy Minds at the Waisman Center conducts rigorous scientific research on healthy aspects of the mind, such as kindness, forgiveness, compassion, and mindfulness. Established in 2008 and led by renowned neuroscientist Dr. Richard J. Davidson, the Center examines a wide range of ideas, including such things as a kindness curriculum in schools, neural correlates of prosocial behavior, psychological effects of Tai Chi training, digital games to foster prosocial behavior in children, and the effectiveness of yoga and breathing exercises in reducing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

According to its website, the Center was founded after Dr. Davidson was challenged by His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, "to apply the rigors of science to study positive qualities of mind" (Center for Investigating Health Minds, 2013). The Center continues to conduct scientific research with the aim of developing mental health training approaches that help people to live happier, healthier lives).

Positive Affect and Optimism

Taking a cue from positive psychology, extensive research over the last 10 – 15 years has examined the importance of positive psychological attributes in physical well-being. Qualities that help promote psychological well-being (e.g., having meaning and purpose in life, a sense of autonomy, positive emotions, and satisfaction with life) are linked with a range of favorable health outcomes (especially improved cardiovascular health) mainly through their relationships with biological functions and health behaviors (such as diet, physical activity, and sleep quality) (Boehm & Kubzansky, 2012). The quality that has received attention is **positive affect**, which refers to pleasurable engagement with the environment, such as happiness, joy, enthusiasm, alertness, and excitement (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The characteristics of positive affect, as with negative affect (discussed earlier), can be brief, long-lasting, or trait-like (Pressman & Cohen, 2005). Independent of age, gender, and income, positive affect is associated with greater social connectedness, emotional and practical support, adaptive coping efforts, and lower depression; it is also associated with longevity and favorable physiological functioning (Steptoe, O'Donnell, Marmot, & Wardle, 2008).

Positive affect also serves as a protective factor against heart disease. In a 10-year study of Nova Scotians, the rate of heart disease was 22% lower for each one-point increase on the measure of positive affect, from 1 (no positive affect expressed) to 5 (extreme positive affect) (Davidson, Mostofsky, & Whang, 2010). In terms of our health, the expression, "don't worry, be happy" is helpful advice indeed. There has also been much work suggesting that **optimism**—the general tendency to look on the bright side of things—is also a significant predictor of positive health outcomes.

Although positive affect and optimism are related in some ways, they are not the same (Pressman & Cohen, 2005). Whereas positive affect is mostly concerned with positive feeling states, optimism has been regarded as a generalized tendency to expect that good things will happen (Chang, 2001). It has also been conceptualized as a tendency to view life's stressors and difficulties as temporary and external to oneself (Peterson & Steen, 2002). Numerous studies over the years have consistently shown that optimism is linked to longevity, healthier behaviors, fewer postsurgical complications, better immune functioning among men with prostate cancer, and better treatment adherence (Rasmussen & Wallio, 2008). Further, optimistic people report fewer physical symptoms, less pain, better physical functioning, and are less likely to be rehospitalized following heart surgery (Rasmussen, Scheier, & Greenhouse, 2009).

Flow

Another factor that seems to be important in fostering a deep sense of well-being is the ability to derive flow from the things we do in life. **Flow** is described as a particular experience that is so engaging and engrossing that it becomes worth doing for its own sake (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). It is usually related to creative endeavors and leisure activities, but it can also be experienced by workers who like their jobs or students who love studying (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). Many of us instantly recognize the notion of flow. In fact, the term derived from respondents' spontaneous use of the term when asked to describe how it felt when what they were doing was going well. When people experience flow, they become involved in an activity to the point where they feel they lose themselves in the activity. They effortlessly maintain their concentration and focus, they feel as though they have complete control of their actions, and time seems to pass more quickly than usual (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Flow is considered a pleasurable experience, and it typically occurs when people are engaged in challenging activities that require skills and knowledge they know they possess. For example, people would be more likely report flow experiences in relation to their work or hobbies than in relation to eating. When asked the question, "Do you ever get involved in something so deeply that nothing else seems to matter, and you lose track of time?" about 20% of Americans and Europeans report having these flow-like experiences regularly (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997).

Although wealth and material possessions are nice to have, the notion of flow suggests that neither are prerequisites for a happy and fulfilling life. Finding an activity that you are truly enthusiastic about, something so absorbing that doing it is reward itself (whether it be playing tennis, studying Arabic, writing children's novels, or cooking lavish meals) is perhaps the real key. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1999), creating conditions that make flow experiences possible should be a top social and political priority. How might this goal be achieved? How might flow be promoted in school systems? In the workplace? What potential benefits might be accrued from such efforts?

In an ideal world, scientific research endeavors should inform us on how to bring about a better world for all people. The field of positive psychology promises to be instrumental in helping us understand what truly builds hope, optimism, happiness, healthy relationships, flow, and genuine personal fulfillment.

Summary

Happiness is conceptualized as an enduring state of mind that consists of the capacity to experience pleasure in daily life, as well as the ability to engage one's skills and talents to enrich one's life and the lives of others. Although people around the world generally report that they are happy, there are differences in average happiness levels across nations. Although people have a tendency to overestimate the extent to which their happiness set points would change for the better or for the worse following certain life events, researchers have identified a number of factors that are consistently related to happiness. In recent years, positive psychology has emerged as an area of study seeking to identify and promote qualities that lead to greater happiness and fulfillment in our lives. These components include positive affect, optimism, and flow.

Glossary

flow

state involving intense engagement in an activity; usually is experienced when participating in creative, work, and leisure endeavors

happiness

enduring state of mind consisting of joy, contentment, and other positive emotions; the sense that one's life has meaning and value

optimism

tendency toward a positive outlook and positive expectations

positive affect

state or a trait that involves pleasurable engagement with the environment, the dimensions of which include happiness, joy, enthusiasm, alertness, and excitement

positive psychology

scientific area of study seeking to identify and promote those qualities that lead to happy, fulfilled, and contented lives

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4.2: Why You Shouldn't want to Always Be Happy

<https://theconversation.com/why-you-shouldnt-want-to-always-be-happy-62086>

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4.3: The Secrets of Happiness

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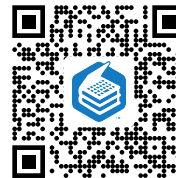


4.4: A Recipe for Eudaimonia

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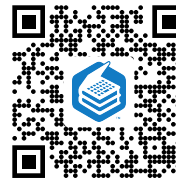


4.5: The Philosophy of Stoicism

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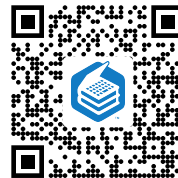


4.6: Philosophy - Blaise Pascal

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4.7: Wisdom

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5: LOVE

5.1: A Short History of Love

5.2: Love In Four Cultures

5.3: Love

5.4: How Romanticism Ruined Love

5.5: Why do we Love?

5.6: How to Love

5.7: Jesus as a Philosopher of Kindness

5.1: A Short History of Love

<https://www.theschooloflife.com/thebookoflife/a-short-history-of-love/>

5.2: Love In Four Cultures

Love In Four Cultures

Nimakot Village, Papua New Guinea

Late one morning, a large argument broke out in the central clearing of the village. A young man and woman named Matius and Rona sat looking dejected and ashamed near the center of the scuffle. The two teenagers had been discovered sneaking off together the previous night, and had been dragged into the clearing by their families. Rona's brother sat next to her, armed with his 29-inch machete, and looked menacingly at Matius. Matius averted his eyes and stared down at the ground, picking at the grass with his fingers as the chaos of the argument swirled around him. Rona's mother stormed across the lawn, demanding that the boy's family give her a large pig. Others from the girl's family nodded with approval and encouraged her to continue. I sat with a group of locals about 20 meters away from the main action. One of the local women turned to me with a tear in her eye as the argument escalated. Crying with tears of joy, like a mother watching her own daughter on her wedding day, she said, "This is just like when I got married!"

There are no formal ritual "weddings" in this part of New Guinea, but events like this often mark the moment that a man and woman announce their commitment to one another. By the end of the vigorous discussion, the "bride price" had been set. Matius would need to give the bride's family 95 items such as string bags, clothes, and machetes. At a total market value of nearly \$3,000 USD, the request was many times the amount of wealth of any typical villager. He would have to call upon his entire family for help, but even that would not be enough. The challenge of building such a tremendous amount of wealth would become an all-consuming and tremendously stressful task for the next several years of his life. At stake was his entire future – children, family, respect – even his most basic sense of manhood.

Maasai Boarding School, Kenya

When Esther was 14, she learned that her father planned to give her away in marriage to an older man. She ran away to her older sister's house, who helped her enroll in a school far away. But her father rushed the wedding plans, and her mother tracked her down and removed her from the school. Still hoping that she could escape the arranged marriage, she went to the District Officer, who told her about a rescue center sponsored by an international aid team that hopes to save young girls like Esther from early marriage and give her a chance at school.

Her father came to the rescue center to retrieve Esther, but the headmistress would not allow it, declaring Esther "a school child." Her father disowned her on the spot. He replayed the scene to anthropologist Caroline Archambault. "Esther will be your child," he told the school. "You will give her a husband and she will never set foot in my house again."

Madurai Village, Tamil Nadu, South India

For as long as Mayandi could remember, there was only one right girl for him, his cousin. As the firstborn boy in a Kallar family of the Tamil, it was not only his right, but also "the right thing to do" to marry his mother's brother's daughter. The girl was quite literally the right girl for him, and they had a word for it, "*murai*."

Mayandi understood that it might seem cruel to an outsider unfamiliar with their customs that someone should be forced to marry someone. As he told American anthropologist Isabel Clark-Decés about their customs, he joked that the "right" person is not always "all right." Young Tamil girls would often tease each other about the "right" boys they were destined to marry. Mayandi struck the pose of a young girl talking to her girlfriend and joked, "Runny Nose is here to see you!" or "Eggshell Eyes is at your door!"

But Mayandi, like many other young Tamil, came to love and desire his "right" girl very much. It would bring status and honor to the family to marry her. His in-laws would not be strangers and would always feel welcomed in his house. He imagined a wonderful life for himself, his bride-to-be, and their growing family.

But tragedy struck as they approached marriageable age. The bride-to-be's father got involved in a deadly fight that sent him off to prison, and she had to move into the city. Mayandi was desperate to still make things work out and pressed his mother to arrange the marriage, but it wasn't to be. She married another man two years later.

Mayandi was devastated. He refused to marry for the next 20 years. Finally, after much pressure from his family, he relented and married his sister's daughter. They now have two children.

Edinburgh, Scotland

Rabih is not worried about collecting money so that he can pay for a bride. He is not worried about his sister being pulled out of school and being forced to marry a man against her will, and he would never dream of marrying his cousin. Rabih has his own set of troubles as he pursues love and marriage.

Rabih is "in love," as they say in his culture. As he sits in his room daydreaming about her, his mind wanders to fantasies of their future together. He lets his mind run free and wonders whether or not she might be "the One," his "soul mate" who will "complete him." It is his highest ideal, and the thing he wants more than anything in his life.

Feelings of passionate love are not unknown throughout the world. Anthropologists have documented them in nearly every culture they have studied, and have found evidence for romantic love going back thousands of years. But there is something historically and culturally unique about the feelings of people like Rabih. In the words of philosopher Alain de Botton, who tells the story of Rabih in *The Course of Love*, finding and falling in love "has been allowed to take on the status of something close to the purpose of life," and this feeling should be the foundation upon which a marriage should be built. "True love" is everlasting, and thought to be the most important part of a good marriage. If passion fades, it was not "true love."

This is precisely what worries Rabih. He has been in love before. He has hurt and been hurt. How can he be sure that this is the one? How can he make sure that their passion for one another will continue to burn?

* * *

In this chapter, we'll explore love and marriage in four different cultures. In order to understand their radically different ideas, ideals, and practices, we will have to use our anthropological tools for seeing our own seeing, seeing big, seeing small, and seeing it all. We'll have to examine many different dimensions of culture – infrastructure, social structure, and superstructure – to see how they all come to bear on ideas and practices of love and marriage.

Culture, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, is a powerful structure, but this structure is *con*-structed. The structure is nothing but the total sum of all of our actions, habits, ideas, ideals, beliefs, values and practices, no matter how big or small. A cultural structure is a powerful force in our lives. It provides the context and meaning for our lives. But, at the same time, our collective actions make the structure.

We make the structure.

The structure makes us.

This exploration will not only help us understand how different cultural realities get "real-ized," but might also help us understand our own realities in new ways. Such an exploration might even help speed us along on our own journeys toward understanding those perplexing questions about love that Rabih is trying to answer. As Alain de Botton notes, it will ultimately be Rabih's ability to see past his cultural conventions that will allow him to live up to his cultural ideals. He suggests that Rabih will need

"...to recognize that the very things that he once considered romantic – wordless intuitions, instantaneous longings, a trust in soul mates – are what stand in the way of learning how to be with someone. He will surmise that love can endure only when one is unfaithful to its beguiling opening ambitions, and that, for his relationships to work, he will need to give up on the feelings that got him into them in the first place. He will need to learn that love is a skill rather than an enthusiasm."

A WORLD WITHOUT MONEY

Nimakot, Papua New Guinea

Matius had big plans for the day. He would be seeing one of his trading partners from a distant village, and hoped that he could ask him to support him in his quest to pay his bride price. It didn't bother Matius that his trade partner would be part of a planned attack on his village. In fact, he seemed excited by the prospect.

As word of the pending attack spread, all of the men from the village, along with a few close friends and kin from other villages, came in from their garden houses and hunting excursions, filling the village with a sense of intense anticipation. Men performed

chants and dances in the village clearing, pumping themselves up for the attack, while women peeked out through the cracks and darkened doorways of village huts, anxiously awaiting what was to come.

We built a barricade of trees, limbs, and vines along the main path, but we knew this would do little more than slow them down.

Around noon, we heard a twig snap just beyond our barrier, and the village erupted into a frenzy of action. "Woop! Woop! Woop!" we heard the attackers call out, as dozens of them crashed our barricade and came rushing down the mountain into our village. Their faces were painted red and their hands dripped with what looked like blood, but they were not armed with spears or bows. They were armed instead with sweet potatoes dripping with delicious and fatty red marita sauce. They smashed the dripping tubers into our faces, forcing us to eat, attacking us with kindness and generosity.

They left as quickly as they came, but the challenge was set. We were to follow them back to their village and see if we could handle all the food they had prepared for us. We had to navigate a series of booby traps and sneak attacks of generosity along the way, sweet potatoes and taro being thrown at us from the trees. When we finally arrived at the edge of the village, their troops gathered for one last intimidating chant. They circled in and yelled as loudly as they could for as long as they could, letting the giant collective yell drown out in a thumping rhythmic and barrel-chested "Woop! Woop! Woop!" We responded in kind with our own chant, and then charged in for the food.

As we entered the village, we found a giant pit filled with red marita juice filled to the brim with hundreds of sweet potatoes and taro. It was bigger than a kiddie pool, no less than six feet across and nearly two feet deep. The marita seeds that had been washed to create this pool littered every inch of ground throughout the entire village. It was no wonder that the attack had taken several days to prepare.

We settled in for the feast with gusto, dozens of us taking our turn at the pit. But an hour in we were starting to fade, and the waterline of our pool of food seemed barely to budge. Our hosts laughed in triumph and started boasting about how they had gathered too much food for us to handle, giving credit to those among them who cleaned it, processed it, thanking each contributor in turn, and then proudly boasting again that their generosity was too much for us. We left, defeated, but already taking stock of our own marita produce and planning a return attack in the near future.

This is a world without money, banks, or complex insurance policies. Their items of value (like marita and sweet potatoes) cannot be stored indefinitely without spoiling. So large events like this serve a similar function as our banks and insurance companies. When they have a windfall of marita they give it away, knowing that when we have a windfall of marita we will return the favor. Such events strengthen social bonds and trade relationships, which are essential to survival in tough times.

For decades, most economists built their models on rational choice theory – the assumption that all humans are selfish and seek to maximize their own material gain. But these beliefs and values may be a reflection of our own socially constructed realities revolving around money in a market economy, rather than human nature. In these New Guinea villages, they struggle instead to demonstrate their generosity and minimize their material gain. They are not trying to accumulate wealth. Instead, they are trying to nurture relationships through which wealth can flow. This does not mean they are not rational, but when applied in New Guinea, rational choice theory has to account for the different motives and values created within the cultural context of different economic systems.

Anthropologists describe the difference between these economic systems as *gift economies* and *market economies*. In both economies, the same items might be exchanged and distributed, but in one they are treated as gifts and in the other they are treated as commodities.

Take, for example, a bag of sweet potatoes. In a gift economy, the bag of sweet potatoes is given with no immediate payment expected or desired. Instead, the giver hopes to strengthen the relationship between themselves and the recipient. The giver will likely give a brief biography of the potatoes, who planted them, tended them, harvested them, and so on, so that the recipient understands their connection to several people who have all contributed to the gift. In a commodity economy, that same bag becomes a commodity. It has a price, something like \$5, and the recipient is expected to pay this price immediately. Once the price is paid, the transaction is over.

There are strong practical reasons for gift economies and market economies. Gift economies tend to thrive in small communities and where most things of value have a short shelf-life. Wealth is not easily stored, and there are no banks or currencies for them to store their wealth in either. The best way to "store" wealth is to nurture strong relationships. That way, when your own maritas are not ripe or your garden is out of food, all of those people that you have given to in the past will be there to give to you.

But beyond these practical reasons for the gift economy, are also some profound implications for the core values, ideas, and

ideals that emerge in gift economies. In gift economies, people are constantly engaged in relationship-building activities as they give and receive gifts throughout the day. The constant reminders of where the gift came from and all the hands that helped give them a profound sense of interdependence. Along with this sense of interdependence comes a value on relationships rather than things. Most "things" are quickly consumed, rot, and fall apart. It is far more beneficial to have a strong network of relationships than a big pile of slowly rotting sweet potatoes.

It is only in this context that we can begin to understand the practice of "bride price" in New Guinea, and why Matius must face this seemingly impossible task of gathering \$3,000 worth of items in exchange for his bride. From the Western perspective grounded in the logic of a market economy, this looks like he is "buying" a wife. But from the logic of a gift economy, he is building and strengthening a vast network of social relationships that will soon unite his network with the network of his bride.

The day turns out to be a great success for Matius. His trading partner has agreed to support him. His gift will join with the gifts of many others. And when Matius gives this bundle of gifts to his bride's family, they will spread those gifts throughout their network. By the logic of the gift economy, these people will give back, and a large cycle of giving will be created that unites two large networks that intersect at the new node created by the union of the bride and groom.

MARRIAGE WITHOUT LOVE

Maasai Boarding School, Kenya

A similar gift logic operates among the Maasai as well. When Esther's father arranged for her marriage at age 14, he was following a customary system in which the parents of both the bride and groom agree on the marriage terms for their children while they are still young. The bride price is paid over the course of the entire marriage. "There is probably no greater gift, as viewed by the Maasai, than having been given a daughter," notes Dr. Achimbault. "Marriage is understood and valued as an alliance of families."

Esther's father has three wives and 26 children. This practice of having many wives, known as polygyny, is common among pastoralists like the Maasai. This practice can be especially perplexing to any Westerner who believes in "true love." In a recent BBC program, a BBC reporter approached some Maasai teenage boys and asks directly, "What does love mean to you?" The boys laugh shyly and one of them rocks back and forth uncomfortably with a broad smile on his face. "That's a real challenge!" one exclaims and asks his friend to answer, who just giggles and turns away.

The reporter presses on the issue of polygyny. "When you do get married, are you going to take more than one wife or just one?" she asks. One boy answers matter-of-factly, "I will take one or two but no more than two."

She is taken aback by the nonchalance of his answer. She counters by joking with him, saying if he only takes one he can have her, but she would never be involved in a polygynous marriage. The man starts laughing. "But the work would be very hard for just one wife," the young man explains. "You would have to look after the cows, goats, water, and firewood – all on your own!"

Recent anthropological studies by Dr. Monique Borgerhoff Mulder support the man's argument and show that polygynous households among the Maasai have better access to food and healthier children.

One of the Maasai women wants to show the reporter that polygamy is actually good for them, and takes her to see the most senior wife of a polygynous family. She lives in a beautiful brick home, far superior to most of the other homes in the region. The economic incentive for polygyny seems clear, but the reporter is still skeptical about the quality of the marriage relationships. "Don't you get jealous of the other wives?" the reporter asks.

"No, no. Never."

"Do you argue?"

"No ... we're friends. We never fight. We are all the same age. We tell stories. We have fun."

Marriage practices like this are especially mystifying for people in the West. For many Westerners, love is our biggest concern and our strongest value, so when we find cultures that practice arranged marriage or polygamy, we find it strange and immediately infer that there may be a violation of basic human rights. But if we look at all humans through all time, it is *our* ideas about love that are strange.

Over 80 percent of all cultures worldwide practice polygyny (one man married to more than one woman) and a handful of others practice polyandry (one woman married to more than one man). As hinted at by the response from the Maasai teen that the work of a household would be very difficult for just one woman, the common reasons given for why these forms of marriage often come

down to practicality. There is no mention of love.

Such marriages often make sense within the culture and environment. For example, in Tibet, where arable land is scarce and passed down through males, several brothers may marry one woman in order to keep the land together. As anthropologist Melvyn Goldstein has pointed out, if the land were divided among all sons in each generation, it would only take a few generations for the land to be too small to provide enough for the families.

Despite these apparent practical benefits, the value and romanticism we place on love makes the idea of young girls like Esther being married off at a young age unpalatable to most Westerners. When Esther's father attempts to remove her from school and arrange her marriage, he seems to be upholding oppressive patriarchal values.

But Esther's father is practical and he wants what is best for his children. He has sent most of his kids to school in hopes that they can find new ways to make a living. However, school is far away and expensive. Due to the dangers and difficulties of getting to school, most girls enter school late, just as they are reaching reproductive age. This creates a risk of early pregnancy, which will get them kicked out of school and greatly limit their marriage prospects. Furthermore, the schools have high drop-out rates and even those who finish are not guaranteed a job.

Pastoralism – the traditional way of making a living – has become more difficult due to frequent droughts brought about by climate change. Land privatization poses an additional problem, since a pastoralist is now constricted to the land to which he has a legal right. In times of drought and scarcity, movement across vast land areas is essential. One strategy for increasing the land one has access to is to create alliances between lineages through strategically arranged marriages. When Esther's father tried to pull her out of school, he did so because he saw an opportunity for her to have a secure future as a pastoralist with access to good land.

After laying out these essential pieces of context, Archambault makes the case that we should be skeptical of simple "binaries" that frame one side as "modern" and empowering of females and the other as "traditional" and upholding the patriarchy. Such binaries are common among NGOs promoting their plan to improve human rights. But through the lens of anthropology, we can see our assumptions, see the big picture, and see the details that allow us to understand the cultural situation, empathize with the people involved, and ultimately make more informed policy decisions.

LOVE WITHOUT MARRIAGE

Madurai Village, Tamil Nadu, South India

Sunil's marriage prospects looked good. In an arranged marriage among the Tamil, families carefully consider the wealth, status, reputation, and earning potential of potential marriage partners. Sunil had it all, and he was on his way to earning a prestigious law degree. But then he was struck by *katal* – an overwhelming sense of intense and dumbfounded longing for another person that we might call "love" in English. They say it is a "great feeling" that can "drive you crazy" and compels you to "do things you would not ordinarily do." It is a "permanent intoxication," as one 18-year old Tamil put it.

Love like this is known all over the world. Anthropologist Helen Fisher looked at 166 cultures, and found evidence of passionate love in 147 of them. As for the rest, she suspects that the ethnographers just did not pay attention to it. The Tamil are no different. The feeling of love may not be the foundation for their arranged marriages, but that does not mean the Tamil do not feel love.

Sunil described the girl as "smart, free, funny, and popular." He met up with her every day after class, and soon he was, as he says, "addicted" to her. Addiction might be the right word. Fisher studied brain scans of people in love and found that the caudate nucleus and ventral tegmental area of the brains lit up each time they were shown an image of their lover. These are areas of the brain associated with rewards, pleasure, and focused attention. Other studies have found that falling in love floods our brain with chemicals associated with the reward circuit, fueling two apparently opposite but mutually sustaining emotions: passion and anxiety. Overall, the studies reveal a chemical profile similar to someone with obsessive-compulsive disorder.

When two people share these feelings together, they can experience a shared euphoria like almost no other experience available to humankind. But when only one person feels this obsessive-compulsive form of passionate love – or when one person stops feeling it while the other still feels it – it can unleash a devastating psychological breakdown.

Sunil's romance was rocky. They started disagreeing and using harsh words with one another. After a fight one night, Sunil worried that she would leave him. His obsession gripped him with a flood of anxiety. He tried calling her at 2 am, but she did not answer. Desperate to talk to her, he went to her college early the next morning in hopes of catching her before her first class. "She was so happy to see me in the pathetic state I was in," Sunil lamented. When she called later to break off the relationship, Sunil completely broke down. He became an alcoholic and had to drop out of law school.

After two years of pain and trouble, he finally got over her, stopped drinking, and finished law school. But by then he had already missed out on his best opportunity for a successful arranged marriage with his favorite cousin. The perfect match, someone he had thought about marrying since the time he was a teenager, had come of age while he was drinking away his sorrows and had already married someone else (a different cousin).

Sunil's story represents an interesting tension at work as Tamil society continues to change. A more urban and mobile society creates more opportunities for young people to meet strangers and to feel *katal* for them. Education and career opportunities take young people far from home and family. The culture is starting to value individualism, free choice, and autonomy – all of which come together to make love marriages seem attractive. A common theme of Indian movies and television shows is the tension between love and arranged marriages.

However, most Tamil do not elope and create love marriages. From the standpoint of the family, the reasons are clear. As anthropologist Clark-Decés points out, "The basic explanation for this is that marriage is too important to be left to chance individual attraction – in fact, a child's marriage is the most important and often the most expensive decision a South Asian family ever has to make."

Worldwide, arranged marriages are especially common when a significant transfer of wealth is at stake, such as a large inheritance, bride price, or dowry. In India, marriage usually entails very large gifts between the families, often the equivalent of three years of salary or more. When the wealth of an entire extended family is on the line, everybody in the extended family has a vested interest in the union and arranged marriages are the norm and ideal.

It is not surprising then that the parents of bride and groom would prefer an arranged marriage. However, Clark-Decés and other anthropologists note that arranged marriage remains the norm and ideal among youth as well. Young men like Sunil want to achieve success and respectability within the ideals and values of their culture. They view marriage as the union of two families, not just two people. And ultimately, "for them, an arranged marriage is a sign of parental love."

This preference for arranged marriages has a profound impact on how people grow up. As Clark-Decés points out, the social category of "bachelor" is non-existent. Tamil youth do not spend a great deal of time in their teens and twenties worrying about who to date or how to date, since that is rarely the road toward marriage. Instead, they focus primarily on attaining significant status markers that confer wealth and prestige, such as their education. Whereas college in the United States is often seen as a place to meet a potential mate, college in South India is a place where one earns a degree to elevate their status for an arranged marriage.

It is not that love is absent or impossible in arranged marriages, but it is not the primary basis upon which marriages are formed. In a recent survey, 76% of Indians said they would marry someone if they had the right qualities, even if they were not in love. Only 14% of Americans would do so. As Leena Abraham found in a study of college students in Mumbai, love marriages are "seen as an arrangement beset with enormous insecurity."

ORIGINS OF LOVE MARRIAGE

Love marriage was once uncommon in the West as well. It was not until the Industrial Revolution and the broad cultural changes that came with it that love marriage became the norm. With the Industrial Revolution, individuals were no longer tied to land held in the family name. They became more mobile and less dependent on family and community for survival. People started orienting their lives more toward the market, and they could use the state for a safety net, weakening their dependency on relationships and family.

This increased individualism had two competing effects. On the one hand, it gave people more freedom. They became accustomed to making individual choices every moment of the day. But this freedom came with a cost. As they had more and more choices about what to buy, what to do, and how to act, they were also increasingly troubled with the question of whether or not they were choosing the right thing to buy, the right thing to do, or the right way to act. They came to suffer from a sense of what Emile Durkheim called *anomie*, a condition in which society provides little guidance and leaves people feeling lost and disconnected.

Feeling empowered by the power to choose, yet feeling lost and disconnected, romantic love marriage emerged as the perfect solution. We go searching for "the One" who can make us "feel whole" and "completes us." This is the key to understanding just how different we are from those Massai teens. They live in small, close-knit communities full of tight bonds to family and friends. Large, close-knit families are still the ideal in India as well. They do not need more intimacy. They have enough of it already. We, on the other hand, often feel alone, lost, and insecure. We crave intimacy. We crave a sense of validation. And we find that through love.

Unfortunately, this sets up an impossible situation. With the breakdown of family and community, we often turn to our lovers for intimacy, friendship, and economic support. One person is expected to provide all of this and passion at the same time. "We now ask our lovers for the emotional connection and sense of belonging that my grandmother could get from a whole village," notes family therapist Sue Johnson. But the security necessary for the intimacy and friendship we crave along with the everyday trials and mundanity of running a household can kill passion.

THE PARADOXES OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Edinburgh, Scotland

"For most of recorded history, people married for logical sorts of reasons: because her parcel of land adjoined yours, his family had a flourishing grain business, her father was the magistrate in town, there was a castle to keep up, or both sets of parents subscribed to the same interpretation of a holy text ... what has replaced it – the marriage of feeling ... What matters is that two people wish desperately that it happen, are drawn to another by an overwhelming instinct, and know in their hearts that it is right."

- Allain de Botton

In his book *The Course of Love*, philosopher Allain de Botton tells the love story of Rabih and Kirsten, along with his cutting observations about love and marriage. After a whirlwind romance, Rabih proposes to her, hoping to capture the feelings he and Kirsten have for each other and preserve them forever. Unfortunately, you cannot freeze a feeling, or marry one. You have to marry a person with whom you once shared a feeling. And feelings are not necessarily forever.

In *A Natural History of Love*, anthropologist Helen Fisher identifies two kinds of love: the burning fire of romantic passionate love, and the enduring intimacy and calm of companionate love. These two loves have very different chemical profiles in the brain. Romantic love is a rush of dopamine, a drop in serotonin, and a rise in cortisol that creates an intense passion and desire. Companionate love activates the attachment circuits of the brain. It is oxytocin-rich and induces a loving calm and sense of security. Unfortunately, this sense of calm and security can actually work against our feelings of passion. Passion thrives on insecurity. The reason for our obsessive ruminations and fluttering hearts is in part the very frightening idea that we might lose this person or that they might not return our love. The more we try to freeze the feeling by "locking in" the relationship through promises, proposals, or other means of entanglement, the more we drive it away. A desire for connection requires a sense of separation. The more we fuse our lives together, the less passionate we become.

This is not a problem in many cultures where passion in marriage is not required or expected. But in the West, there is a strong sense that "true love" burns with passion forever. If passion fades, it isn't "true love."

So as Rabih and Kirsten squabble in Ikea over which drinking glasses to purchase for their apartment, there is a lot more at stake than mere aesthetics. This will be one of thousands of little squabbles that are unavoidable when merging two lives, but they will always reflect deeper concerns and misgivings each one has about the other person. Such squabbles will be the main forum where they will try to shape and shift one another, make adaptations and compromises in who they are, and assess the quality of their relationship.

These negotiations are fraught with tension because of another ideal of "true love"—that it is unconditional, and that if someone truly loves you they will unequivocally accept you for all that you are and never try to change you. Each little push or prod feels like a rejection of the self.

Behind these feelings are deep and profound cultural assumptions about love itself. We tend to focus on love as a feeling. But according to a landmark book by psychologist Erich Fromm, our focus should not be on "being loved" so much as it should be on the *act of loving* and building up one's capacity to love. This insight runs counter to the cultural ideal of "true love" which says that when we find the right person, love will come easily and without effort. As a result of our misunderstandings about love, Fromm argues, "there is hardly any activity, any enterprise, which is started with such tremendous hopes and expectations, and yet, which fails so regularly, as love."

This basic insight is easy to accept intellectually, but it is quite another thing to incorporate it into your everyday life. For Rabih and Kirsten, it is the arrival of their first child that helps them understand love as something to give rather than something to merely feel and expect to be given. The helpless and demanding baby gives them ample practice in selfless love of another without any expectation of return.

Unfortunately for Rabih and Kirsten, their ability to love their child does not translate into an act of loving for one another. In the

midst of sleepless nights, diaper changes, and domestic duties, there is little love left to give after caring for the baby. Over the coming years, Rabih and Kirsten admire each other greatly for the patience and care shown for their children, but also feel pangs of remorse and jealousy that such love and kindness had become so rare between them.

One would think that after so many years of marriage, people would stop needing a sense of validation from the other. But, de Botton notes, "we are never through with the requirement for acceptance. This isn't a curse limited to the inadequate and the weak." So long as we continue to care about the other person, we are unlikely to be able to free ourselves from concerns about how they feel about us.

Unfortunately, Rabih and Kirsten need very different things to feel a sense of validation. Rabih wants to rekindle the passionate love they once shared in sexual union. But after a long day of giving her body and self to her children, Kirsten does not want to be touched. She needs time to herself, and Rabih's "romantic" proposals feel like just another thing to put on her long "to do" list for others.

Allain de Botton's *Story of Love* recounts many twists and turns in the love story of Rabih and Kirsten. It is an honest portrayal of a true love story in which seemingly mundane arguments about who does more housework take their rightful place alongside more dramatic affairs and bouts of jealousy. Though they often feel distance between them, they go through everything – raising kids, watching their own parents grow old and die – together.

It is only after all of this – 13 years after saying their vows – that Rabih finally feels "ready for marriage." He is ready not because he is finally secure in an unequivocal faith in a perfect love with his soul mate for whom he feels an unbounding and never-ending sense of passion, but because he has given up on the idea that love should come easily. He is committed to the *art of loving*, not just a desire to *be loved*, and looks forward to all that his life, his wife, and his children might teach him along the way.

* * *

LEARN MORE

- "Ethnographic Empathy and the Social Context of Rights: 'Rescuing' Maasai Girls from Early marriage" by Caroline S. Archambault. *American Anthropologist* 113(4):632-643.
- The Right Spouse: Preferential Marriages in Tamil Nadu, by Isabelle Clark-Decés
- The Course of Love: A Novel, by Alain de Botton

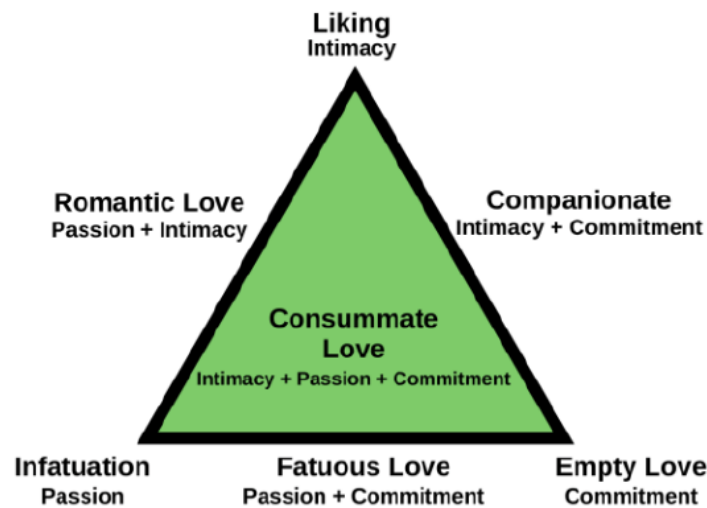
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5.3: Love

Sternberg (1988) suggests that there are three main components of love: Passion, intimacy, and commitment (Figure 7.24). Love relationships vary depending on the presence or absence of each of these components. **Passion** refers to the intense, physical attraction partners feel toward one another. **Intimacy** involves the ability to share feelings, personal thoughts and psychological closeness with the other. **Commitment** is the conscious decision to stay together. Passion can be found in the early stages of a relationship, but intimacy takes time to develop because it is based on knowledge of the partner. Once intimacy has been established, partners may resolve to stay in the relationship. Although many would agree that all three components are important to a relationship, many love relationships do not consist of all three. Let's look at other possibilities.

Sternberg's Triarchic Theory of Love



Source

Liking: In this relationship, intimacy or knowledge of the other and a sense of closeness is present. Passion and commitment, however, are not. Partners feel free to be themselves and disclose personal information. They may feel that the other person knows them well and can be honest with them and let them know if they think the person is wrong. These partners are friends. However, being told that your partner “thinks of you as a friend” can be a devastating blow if you are attracted to them and seeking a romantic involvement.

Infatuation: Perhaps, this is Sternberg's version of “love at first sight”. Infatuation consists of an immediate, intense physical attraction to someone. A person who is infatuated finds it hard to think of anything but the other person. Brief encounters are played over and over in one's head; it may be difficult to eat and there may be a rather constant state of arousal. Infatuation is rather short-lived, however, lasting perhaps only a matter of months or as long as a year or so. It tends to be based on physical attraction and an image of what one “thinks” the other is all about.

Fatuous Love: However, some people who have a strong physical attraction push for commitment early in the relationship. Passion and commitment are aspects of fatuous love. There is no intimacy and the commitment is premature. Partners rarely talk seriously or share their ideas. They focus on their intense physical attraction and yet one, or both, is also talking of making a lasting commitment. Sometimes this is out of a sense of insecurity and a desire to make sure the partner is locked into the relationship.

Empty Love: This type of love may be found later in a relationship or in a relationship that was formed to meet needs other than intimacy or passion, including financial needs, childrearing assistance, or attaining/maintaining status. Here the partners are committed to staying in the relationship for the children, because of a religious conviction, or because there are no alternatives. However, they do not share ideas or feelings with each other and have no physical attraction for one another.

Romantic Love: Intimacy and passion are components of romantic love, but there is no commitment. The partners spend much time with one another and enjoy their closeness, but have not made plans to continue. This may be true because they are not in

a position to make such commitments or because they are looking for passion and closeness and are afraid it will die out if they commit to one another and start to focus on other kinds of obligations.

Companionate Love: Intimacy and commitment are the hallmarks of companionate love. Partners love and respect one another and they are committed to staying together. However, their physical attraction may have never been strong or may have just died out over time. Nevertheless, partners are good friends and committed to one another.

Consummate Love: Intimacy, passion, and commitment are present in consummate love. This is often perceived by western cultures as “the ideal” type of love. The couple shares passion; the spark has not died, and the closeness is there. They feel like best friends, as well as lovers, and they are committed to staying together.

5.4: How Romanticism Ruined Love

<https://www.theschooloflife.com/thebookoflife/how-romanticism-ruined-love/>

5.5: Why do we Love?

YouTube Video

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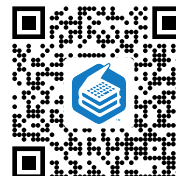
5.6: How to Love

<https://youtu.be/5jraZdnk9Mk>

YouTube Video

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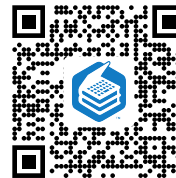


5.7: Jesus as a Philosopher of Kindness

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6: DEATH

6.1: Death and Dying

6.2: What Ancient Cultures teach us about Grief, Mourning, and Continuity of Life

6.3: Tombs

6.4: Religious Practices After Death

6.5: Perspectives on Death

6.6: Why you should read Hamlet

6.7: Hamlet's Soliloquy

6.1: Death and Dying

Learning Objectives

- Examine attitudes toward death and dying

Death and Dying



A young man sits at the grave of his great-grandmother. (Photo courtesy of Sara Goldsmith/flickr)

Every society must deal with the problems that come with an aging population. For most of human history, the standard of living has been significantly lower than it is now. Humans struggled to survive with few amenities and very limited medical technology. The risk of death due to disease or accident was high in any life stage, and life expectancy was low. Because of industrialization and more advanced medical technology people began to live longer and death became associated with old age.

For many teenagers and young adults, losing a grandparent or another older relative can be the first loss of a loved one they experience. It may be their first encounter with **grief**, a psychological, emotional, and social response to the feelings of loss that accompanies death or a similar event.

People tend to perceive death, their own and that of others, based on the values of their culture. While some may look upon death as the natural conclusion to a long, fruitful life, others may find the prospect of dying frightening to contemplate. People tend to have strong resistance to the idea of their own death, and strong emotional reactions of loss to the death of loved ones. Viewing death as a loss, as opposed to a natural or tranquil transition, is often considered normal in the United States.

Link to Learning

Sociologist Nancy Berns explains that in the United States and other western societies, people are encouraged to deal with grief or loss through closure. She contradicts this advice and explains that people do not necessarily need closure in order to “move on.” Watch this [Ted talk “Beyond Closure”](#) to learn more.

What may be surprising is how few studies were conducted on death and dying prior to the 1960s. Death and dying were fields that had received little attention until a psychologist named Elisabeth Kübler-Ross began observing people who were in the process of dying. As Kübler-Ross witnessed people's transition toward death, she found some common threads in their experiences. She

observed that the process had five distinct stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. She published her findings in a 1969 book called *On Death and Dying*. The book remains a classic on the topic today.

Kübler-Ross found that a person's first reaction to the prospect of dying is *denial*: this is characterized by the person's not wanting to believe he or she is dying, with common thoughts such as "I feel fine" or "This is not really happening to me." The second stage is *anger*, when loss of life is seen as unfair and unjust. A person then resorts to the third stage, *bargaining*: trying to negotiate with a higher power to postpone the inevitable by reforming or changing the way he or she lives. The fourth stage, psychological *depression*, allows for resignation as the situation begins to seem hopeless. In the final stage, a person adjusts to the idea of death and reaches *acceptance*. At this point, the person can face death honestly, by regarding it as a natural and inevitable part of life and can make the most of their remaining time.

The work of Kübler-Ross was eye-opening when it was introduced. It opened up new avenues of exploration for sociologists, social workers, health practitioners, and therapists to study death and to help those who were facing death. Kübler-Ross's work is generally considered a major contribution to **thanatology**: the systematic study of death and dying. Over the years, her model has come under criticism for overgeneralizing the experience of grief and creating a false expectation that a person must pass through distinct stages in their grieving process.

Link to Learning

Watch this [SciShow video "The Truth About the Five Stages of Grief"](#) to learn more about some criticisms of the Kübler-Ross model and to consider other theories about dealing with grief.

Of special interest to thanatologists is the concept of "dying with dignity." Modern medicine includes advanced medical technology that may prolong life without a parallel improvement to the quality of life one may have. In some cases, people may not want to continue living when they are in constant pain and no longer enjoying life. Should patients have the right to choose to die with dignity? Dr. Jack Kevorkian was a staunch advocate for **physician-assisted suicide**: the voluntary or physician-assisted use of lethal medication provided by a medical doctor to end one's life. This right to have a doctor help a patient die with dignity is controversial. In the United States, Oregon was the first state to pass a law allowing physician-assisted suicides. In 1997, Oregon instituted the Death with Dignity Act, which required the presence of two physicians for a legal assisted suicide. This law was successfully challenged by U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft in 2001, but the appeals process ultimately upheld the Oregon law. Subsequently, both Montana and Washington have passed similar laws.

Watch It

After Brittany Maynard was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer, she decided to move to Oregon so that she could end her life with physician-assisted suicide. She became an advocate for death with dignity and was interviewed for this video before she passed away in November 2014.

YouTube Video

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The controversy surrounding death with dignity laws is emblematic of the way our society tries to separate itself from death. Health institutions have built facilities to comfortably house those who are terminally ill. This is seen as a compassionate act, helping relieve the surviving family members of the burden of caring for the dying relative. But studies almost universally show that people prefer to die in their own homes (Lloyd, White, and Sutton 2011). Is it our social responsibility to care for elderly relatives up until their death? How do we balance the responsibility for caring for an elderly relative with our other responsibilities and obligations? As our society grows older, and as new medical technology can prolong life even further, the answers to these questions will develop and change.

The changing concept of **hospice** is an indicator of our society's changing view of death. Hospice is a type of healthcare that

treats terminally ill people when “cure-oriented treatments” are no longer an option (Hospice Foundation of America 2012b). Hospice doctors, nurses, and therapists receive special training in the care of the dying. The focus is not on getting better or curing the illness, but on passing out of this life in comfort and peace. Hospice centers exist as a place where people can go to die in comfort, and increasingly, hospice services encourage at-home care so that someone has the comfort of dying in a familiar environment, surrounded by family (Hospice Foundation of America 2012a). While many of us would probably prefer to avoid thinking of the end of our lives, it may be possible to take comfort in the idea that when we do approach death in a hospice setting, it is in a familiar, relatively controlled place.

The Body after Death

In most cultures, after the last offices have been performed and before the onset of significant decay, relations or friends arrange for ritual disposition of the body, either by destruction, or by preservation, or in a secondary use. In the U.S., this frequently means either cremation or interment in a tomb.

There are various methods of destroying human remains, depending on religious or spiritual beliefs, and upon practical necessity. Cremation is a very old and quite common custom. For some people, the act of cremation exemplifies the belief of the Christian concept of “ashes to ashes”. On the other hand, in India, cremation and disposal of the bones in the sacred river Ganges is common. Another method is sky burial, which involves placing the body of the deceased on high ground (a mountain) and leaving it for birds of prey to dispose of, as in Tibet. In some religious views, birds of prey are carriers of the soul to the heavens. Such practice may also have originated from pragmatic environmental issues, such as conditions in which the terrain (as in Tibet) is too stony or hard to dig, or in which there are few trees around to burn. As the local religion of Buddhism, in the case of Tibet, believes that the body after death is only an empty shell, there are more practical ways than burial of disposing of a body, such as leaving it for animals to consume. In some fishing or marine communities, mourners may put the body into the water, in what is known as burial at sea. Several mountain villages have a tradition of hanging the coffin in woods.

Since ancient times, in some cultures efforts have been made to slow, or largely stop the body’s decay processes before burial, as in mummification or embalming. This process may be done before, during or after a funeral ceremony. The Toraja people of Indonesia are known to mummify their deceased loved ones and keep them in their homes for weeks, months, and sometimes even years, before holding a funeral service. [Read more about the Toraja people's burial tradition.](#)

Watch this TED talk, “[The Corpses that Changed my Life](#)” by Caitlin Doughty, a mortician and activist, who strives to encourage Americans to overcome their phobia of death and to be more open and involved in dealing with their deceased loved ones.

Think It Over

Test Elisabeth Kübler-Ross’s five stages of grief. Think of someone or something you have lost. You might consider the loss of a relationship, possession, or aspect of your self-identity. For example, perhaps you dissolved a childhood friendship, sold your car, or got a bad haircut. For even a small loss, did you experience all five stages of grief? If so, how did the expression of each stage manifest? Did the process happen slowly or rapidly? Did the stages occur out of order? Did you reach acceptance? Try to recall the experience and analyze your own response to loss. Does your experience facilitate your empathizing with the elderly?

Try It

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/14764>

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/14763>

Glossary

grief:

a psychological, emotional, and social response to the feelings of loss that accompanies death or a similar event

hospice:

healthcare that treats terminally ill people by providing comfort during the dying process

physician-assisted suicide:

the voluntary use of lethal medication provided by a medical doctor to end one's life

thanatology:

the systematic study of death and dying

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6.2: What Ancient Cultures teach us about Grief, Mourning, and Continuity of Life

<https://theconversation.com/what-ancient-cultures-teach-us-about-grief-mourning-and-continuity-of-life-86199>

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6.3: Tombs

<https://www.worldhistory.org/tomb/>

Definition



Treasury of Atreus, Mycenae, Mark Cartwright (CC BY-NC-SA)

A **tomb** is an enclosed space for the repository of the remains of the dead. Traditionally tombs have been located in caves, underground, or in structures designed specifically for the purpose of containing the remains of deceased human beings and, often, their possessions, loved ones, or, as at the tomb known as 'The Great **Death Pit**' at the **city** of **Ur**, one's servants. The Natufian **Grave** in **Israel**, which dates from c. 12,000 BCE, contained the remains of a man buried with his dog. Tombs have always been considered the homes of the dead and every tomb ever constructed was built with this concept in mind. The tomb is the final resting place of a dead person whose soul, however, would live on in another realm. Personal artifacts or pets were often interred with the deceased because it was thought they would be needed in the afterlife. The construction of a tomb would also reflect the status of the person buried there and the beliefs of a certain **culture** concerning the afterlife. Ancient cultures from **Mesopotamia** to Rome maintained that the dead lived on after life and ancient stories concerning ghosts (such as the one famously told by the **Roman** writer **Pliny the Younger** in c. 100 CE) have to do with the improper **burial** of the dead. Ancient inscriptions from cultures as diverse as Mesopotamia, **China**, Greece, and the Maya all cite the importance of a respectful burial and remembrance of the dead and the dire consequences of failing to do so.

Tombs in Ancient Egypt

The most elaborate tombs in ancient times were those built by the Egyptians for their kings, the pharaohs. Early on, the Egyptians built mastabas, tombs made of dried bricks which were then used to shore up shafts and chambers dug into the earth. In every mastaba there was a large room for ceremonies honoring the spirit of the deceased and an adjoining smaller room, the serdab, where a statue of the dead person would be placed so that the spirit could witness and enjoy the ceremonies. The mastaba continued as a tomb for the common people but for royalty it was replaced by the structure known as the **pyramid**. Commencing with the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, the royal **pyramids** would reach their height in splendor in the construction of the Great Pyramid of Khufu at **Giza** (built 2551-2528 BCE). The royal pyramids were adorned with paintings depicting the life and accomplishments of the deceased king and filled with all those necessities the spirit would need in the afterlife in the **Field of Reeds**. Pharaohs were interred in the area known as The Valley of the Kings and their tombs were elaborate eternal homes which reflected their status as divine rulers.

YouTube Video

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Mesopotamian Tombs

In ancient Mesopotamia tombs resembled the mastaba generally but, as in Egypt, the tombs of royalty were more ornate. Archaeological excavations carried out in the 1920s CE by C. Leonard Wooley uncovered the Royal Tombs of Ur in which were found many exquisite works composed of **gold**, lapis lazuli and carnelian (most notably the diadem of Queen Puabi). In the one tomb, dubbed 'The Great Death Pit' by Wooley, the bodies of six guards and 68 ladies-of-the-court were found. It is thought these were the favored of the king and were chosen to accompany him to the afterlife. The Mesopotamians, whether south in the region of **Sumer** or north in **Akkad**, were so concerned with the proper burial of the dead that they often built tombs inside, or next to, their homes so they could continue to care for the deceased and prevent the problems which arose from hauntings (this same practice was observed by the Mayan culture which also maintained a deep-seated fear of ghosts). Personal possessions were always included in these tombs as well as gifts, even modest ones, which were to be offered by the deceased to the gods of the underworld upon arrival there. Kings, of course, were laid to rest with more elaborate presents for the gods as the grave goods excavated throughout Mesopotamia attest.



Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Jan Harenburg (CC BY)

Tombs of the Maya & King Pakal

The tombs of the Mayan rulers were constructed in much the same way as those of the kings of other cultures in that they were opulent in both style and structure and filled with all the necessities one might require in the afterlife. The walls of the tomb of King K'inich Janaab Pakal of **Palenque** (603-683 CE) were adorned with images of Pakal's transition from the earthly life to the realm of the gods and he was buried in an elaborately carved sarcophagus reflecting the same theme. Though some have claimed the carvings depict Pakal riding a rocket and are, therefore, proof of ancient alien interaction with the Maya, this theory is not considered tenable by the scholarly community. The carving on the sarcophagus which appears to some to be a rocket is recognized by scholars as the Tree of Life which Pakal is ascending to paradise. King Pakal, like other rulers, was given a tomb

worthy of his stature and accomplishments and is thought to have been constructed by his subjects who considered him worthy of that honor. The tomb of the first emperor of China, however, was begun before his death and was built by the conscripted labor of workers from every province in the country.

Chinese Tombs & the Mausoleum of Shi Huangti

The tomb of Shi Huangti in China contained over 8,000 terra cotta warriors, their weapons, chariots, and horses so that the emperor would have a standing army at his command in the afterlife. This tomb, which rises to a height of 141 feet (43 metres) was first discovered in 1974 CE in the city of Xi'an and has yet to be excavated because of the fear of the various traps Shi Huangti is said to have devised to protect the vast treasure he was buried with. Over 700,000 workers were conscripted to build the tomb which was supposed to symbolize the world over which Shi Huangti reigned and would continue to rule in the afterlife. Other tombs in China, not nearly so grand in size or scope, also reflect the belief that the deceased would continue to exist in some form in another realm and could continue to exert influence on the living, for good or ill, depending on how their remains had been respected and how their memory continued to be honored.

Tombs in Greece

In Greece, the tombs of the wealthy were closely linked, architecturally, to the modern mausoleum in that they were often ornately decorated stone buildings housing the reclining dead. As the Greeks believed that remembrance of the dead was necessary for the continued existence of the spirit in the afterlife, **Greek** tombs frequently pictured the deceased in ordinary settings from life (such as sitting down to dinner, enjoying the company of friends or family) in order to remind the living of who that person was in life. Greeks commemorated the anniversary of a loved one's death by visiting their tomb and conversing with them, always making sure to speak their name to show the dead they were remembered. In **Athens**, below the **Acropolis**, the graves of common citizens depict the same sort of scenes as those of the more affluent and always toward the end of remembrance. Soldiers who were killed in action were commonly buried on the field in mass graves and one single marker (usually a monument naming the **battle** and the date) served to honor the fallen. It was up to the living, however, to keep the deceased's memory alive and frequently a marker would be erected by an individual's family toward that end and would serve in place of an actual tomb at the anniversary ceremony of one's death. Tombs from the Mycenaean Period (1900-1100 BCE) are known as *tholos*, or beehive, tombs which are thought to have been derived from early **Minoan** architectural advances on **Crete**. One of the most famous of these tholos tombs is the Treasury of Atreus (also known as the Tomb of **Agamemnon**, pictured above) which was built c. 1250 BCE.



Balnuaran of Clava, Dave Conner (CC BY-NC-SA)

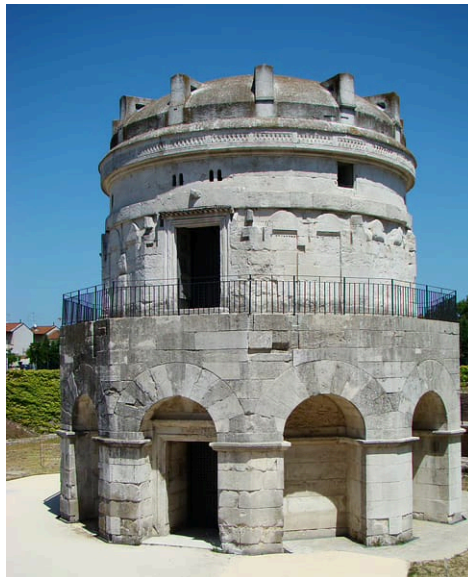
Neolithic Tombs of Scotland & Ireland

The tombs in Scotland, such as the grave passage tomb of **Maeshowe** in Orkney, show a remarkable similarity to those of ancient

Greece, particularly the tholos tomb. The Tomb of the Eagles (also on Orkney) dates to 3000 BCE and was found to contain the bones of over 300 people buried there over time. Among the skeletal remains of human beings were those of over 700 white-tailed eagles which have given the tomb its name. No personal possessions were discovered in either of these tombs but that absence has been ascribed to ancient looting of graves. The Neolithic tombs throughout Scotland were all very purposefully designed, as in other cultures, as homes of the dead in the land of the dead. At Maeshowe, for example, to enter the tomb one would need to move aside a great stone and then descend down into the chamber which represented the nether world. This same construction and ideology can be seen in the famous passage tomb of **Newgrange** in Ireland which is one of the oldest tombs in the world (pre-dating the Pyramids of Giza and the **Mycenaean Civilization** in Greece) built between 3300-2900 BCE. Newgrange, like Maeshowe, was carefully constructed to admit a single ray of light into the darkness of the inner chamber at the winter solstice and this, it is thought, was to symbolize the eternal life of the deceased. The oldest passage tombs in Ireland are in Sligo County with the largest **megalithic** cemetery at Carrowmore. Other tombs throughout Ireland (known as dolmens) are constructed much along the same lines as the Carrowmore tombs. The Brownshill **Dolmen** in County Carlow follows the custom of a burial chamber in the earth but is distinguished by a capstone perched on upright megaliths weighing 100 metric tons (thought to be the heaviest stone in **Europe**) and the tomb known as The Mound of the Hostages, in Meath, is similar to Newgrange in that it was constructed (c. 3000 BCE) so that the rising sun, on certain days, lights up the interior burial chamber to symbolize re-birth and the light of life.

Tombs of Ancient India

This concept is equally present in the tombs of India where, originally, tombs were caves or carved into rock cliffs but, eventually, evolved into mausoleums which celebrated the life of the deceased and ensured their immortality through remembrance by the living. Cremation was the most common method of dealing with the remains of the dead in India and, for this reason, tombs were not employed to the same degree as they were in other cultures. Hindu religious beliefs encouraged cremation and the spreading of one's ashes but, with the introduction of **Islam** to the country, the importance of the physical remains of the deceased was emphasized and tombs became more widespread as a means of honoring and remembering the dead. The most famous example of this, though not an ancient one, is the Taj Majal built in 1631 CE by Shah Jahan for his wife.



Mausoleum of Theodoric, Ravenna F. Tronchin (CC BY-NC-SA)

Roman Tombs & Catacombs

Tombs in ancient **Rome** followed the same course of development as in Egypt and elsewhere, beginning with burial underground or in caves and evolving into more elaborate structures to house the dead. Roman tombs also celebrated the life of the individual but, unlike those of Greece or India, often featured inscriptions rather than **sculpture** or relief whereby the deeds of the deceased could be read and recited. Romans were buried in cemeteries which were located outside of the city in order to **mark** the divide between the land of the living and that of the dead. As in Mesopotamia, the Romans feared the return of the dead and ghosts,

unless summoned through divination for a specific purpose, were considered a potent evil. Wealthy Romans were interred with great flourish in elaborate tombs while those of more modest means were laid to rest in caves outside the city or were cremated. Cremation of the dead was the most popular means of disposing of corpses and, afterwards, the ashes were held in an urn which was kept in a place of honor in the household. The rise of **Christianity**, however, and the new belief in the bodily resurrection of the dead, led to a decrease in cremations and, simply lacking room for the deceased in cemeteries, catacombs dug in the earth, with shelves for corpses in the walls, became the most common form of the tomb in ancient Rome

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Contributors and Attributions

Joshua J. Mark

A freelance writer and former part-time Professor of Philosophy at Marist College, New York, Joshua J. Mark has lived in Greece and Germany and traveled through Egypt. He has taught history, writing, literature, and philosophy at the college level.

6.4: Religious Practices After Death

Funeral rites are expressions of loss that reflect personal and cultural beliefs about the meaning of death and the afterlife. Ceremonies provide survivors a sense of closure after a loss. These rites and ceremonies send the message that the death is real and allow friends and loved ones to express their love and duty to those who die. Under circumstances in which a person has been lost and presumed dead or when family members were unable to attend a funeral, there can continue to be a lack of closure that makes it difficult to grieve and to learn to live with loss. Although many people are still in shock when they attend funerals, the ceremony still provides a marker of the beginning of a new period of one's life as a survivor. The following are some of the religious practices regarding death, however, individual religious interpretations and practices may occur (Dresser & Wasserman, 2010; Schechter, 2009).

Hindu: The Hindu belief in reincarnation accelerates the funeral ritual, and deceased Hindus are cremated as soon as possible. After being washed, the body is anointed, dressed, and then placed on a stand decorated with flowers ready for cremation. Once the body has been cremated, the ashes are collected and, if possible, dispersed in one of India's holy rivers.

Judaism: Among the Orthodox, the deceased is first washed and then wrapped in a simple white shroud. Males are also wrapped in their prayer shawls. Once shrouded the body is placed into a plain wooden coffin. The burial must occur as soon as possible after death, and a simple service consisting of prayers and a eulogy is given. After burial the family members typically gather in one home, often that of the deceased, and receive visitors. This is referred to as "sitting shiva".

Muslim: In Islam the deceased are buried as soon as possible, and it is a requirement that the community be involved in the ritual. The individual is first washed and then wrapped in a plain white shroud called a kafan. Next, funeral prayers are said followed by the burial. The shrouded dead are placed directly in the earth without a casket and deep enough not to be disturbed. They are also positioned in the earth, on their right side, facing Mecca, Saudi Arabia.



Source

Roman Catholic: Before death an ill Catholic individual is anointed by a priest, commonly referred to as the Anointing of the Sick. The priest recites a prayer and applies consecrated oil to the forehead and hands of the ill person. The individual also takes a final communion consisting of consecrated bread and wine. The funeral rites consist of three parts. First is the wake that usually occurs in a funeral parlor. The body is present and prayers and eulogies are offered by family and friends. The funeral mass is next which includes an opening prayer, bible readings, liturgy, communion, and a concluding rite. The funeral then moves to the cemetery where a blessing of the grave, scripture reading, and prayers conclude the funeral ritual.

This page titled [6.4: Religious Practices After Death](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Martha Lally & Suzanne Valentine-French.

6.5: Perspectives on Death

YouTube Video

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6.6: Why you should read Hamlet

YouTube Video

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[View this YouTube Video online](#)



6.7: Hamlet's Soliloquy

<https://www.litcharts.com/blog/shakespeare/hamletssoliloquy/>

7: NATURE

7.1: What is Nature

7.2: Environmental Sociology

7.3: Why some Doctors are Prescribing a day in the Park or a Walk on the Beach for Good Health

7.4: Fractal Patterns in Nature and Art are Aesthetically Pleasing and Stress Reducing

7.5: Neo-Confucianism and Fan Kuan's Travelers by Streams and Mountains

7.6: Natural Resources and Spirituality

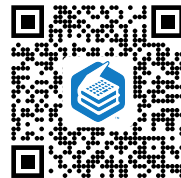
7.7: Lao Tzu

7.1: What is Nature

YouTube Video

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7.2: Environmental Sociology

The subfield of **environmental sociology** studies the way humans interact with their environments. This field is closely related to human ecology, which focuses on the relationship between people and their built and natural environment. This is an area that is garnering more attention as extreme weather patterns and policy battles over climate change dominate the news. A key factor of environmental sociology is the concept of carrying capacity, which describes the maximum amount of life that can be sustained within a given area. While this concept can refer to grazing lands or to rivers, we can also apply it to the earth as a whole.



Too little land for grazing means starving cattle. (Photo courtesy of newbeatphoto/flickr)

The Tragedy of the Commons

You might have heard the expression “the tragedy of the commons.” In 1968, an article of the same title written by Garrett Hardin described how a common pasture was ruined by overgrazing. But Hardin was not the first to notice the phenomenon. Back in the 1800s, Oxford economist William Forster Lloyd looked at the devastated public grazing commons and the unhealthy cattle subject to such limited resources, and saw, in essence, that the carrying capacity of the commons had been exceeded. However, since no one was held responsible for the land (as it was open to all), no one was willing to make sacrifices to improve it. Cattle grazers benefitted from adding more cattle to their herds, but they did not have to take on the responsibility of the lands that were being damaged by overgrazing. So there was an incentive for them to add more head of cattle, and no incentive for restraint.

Satellite photos of Africa taken in the 1970s showed this practice to dramatic effect. The images depicted a dark irregular area of more than 300 square miles. There was a large fenced area, where plenty of grass was growing. Outside the fence, the ground was bare and devastated. The reason was simple: the fenced land was privately owned by informed farmers who carefully rotated their grazing animals and allowed the fields to lie fallow periodically. Outside the fence was land used by nomads. Like the herdsmen in 1800s Oxford, the nomads increased their heads of cattle without planning for its impact on the greater good. The soil eroded, the plants died, then the cattle died, and, ultimately, some of the people died.

How does this lesson affect those of us who don’t need to graze our cattle? Well, like the cows, we all need food, water, and clean air to survive. With the increasing world population and the ever-larger megalopolises with tens of millions of people, the limit of the earth’s carrying capacity is called into question. When too many take while giving too little thought to the rest of the population, whether cattle or humans, the result is usually tragedy.

Climate Change

While you might be more familiar with the phrase “global warming,” **climate change** is the term now used to refer to long-term shifts in temperatures due to human activity and, in particular, the release of greenhouse gases into the environment. The planet as a whole is warming, but the term climate change acknowledges that the short-term variations in this process can include both higher and lower temperatures, despite the overarching trend toward warmth.

Climate change is a deeply controversial subject, despite decades of scientific research and a high degree of scientific consensus that supports its existence. For example, according to NASA scientists, 2013 tied with 2009 and 2006 as the seventh-warmest year since 1880, continuing the overall trend of increasing worldwide temperatures (NASA 2014). More recently, NASA scientists have noted that 2015 surface temperatures were the warmest ever seen since we began keeping records in 1880 (NASA, NOAA 2015).

One effect of climate change is more extreme weather. There are increasingly more record-breaking weather phenomena, from the number of Category 4 hurricanes to the amount of snowfall in a given winter. These extremes, while they make for dramatic television coverage, can cause immeasurable damage to crops, property, and even lives.

So why is there a controversy? The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) recognizes the existence of climate change. So do 192 countries that signed the [Kyoto Protocol](#), a document intended to engage countries in voluntary actions to limit the activity that leads to climate change. The United States was not one of the 192 nations committed to this initiative to reduce environmental damage, and its refusal to sign continues to be a source of contention. What's the argument about? For one thing, for companies making billions of dollars in the production of goods and services, the idea of costly regulations that would require expensive operational upgrades has been a source of great anxiety. They argue via lobbyists that such regulations would be disastrous for the economy. Some go so far as to question the science used as evidence. There is also a lot of finger-pointing among countries, especially when the issue arises of who will be permitted to pollute.

World systems analysis suggests that while, historically, core nations (like the United States and Western Europe) were the greatest source of greenhouse gases, they have now evolved into postindustrial societies. Industrialized semi-peripheral and peripheral nations are releasing increasing quantities of carbon emissions. The core nations, now post-industrial and less dependent on greenhouse-gas-causing industries, wish to enact strict protocols regarding the causes of global warming, but the semi-peripheral and peripheral nations rightly point out that they only want the same economic chance to evolve their economies. Since they were unduly affected by the progress of core nations, if the core nations now insist on “green” policies, they should pay offsets or subsidies of some kind. There are no easy answers to this conflict. It may well not be “fair” that the core nations benefited from ignorance during their industrial boom.

The international community continues to work toward a way to manage climate change. During the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, the United States agreed to fund global climate change programs. In September 2010, President Obama announced the Global Climate Change Initiative (GCCII) as part of his administration's Global Development Policy. The GCCII is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding program intended to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of peripheral and semi-peripheral countries by encouraging the use of alternative, low-carbon, energy sources with financial incentives. Programming is organized around three pillars: (1) climate change adaptation, (2) clean energy, and (3) sustainable landscapes (Troilo 2012).

Pollution

Pollution describes what happens when contaminants are introduced into an environment (water, air, land) at levels that are damaging. Environments can often sustain a limited amount of contaminants without marked change, and water, air, and soil can “heal” themselves to a certain degree. However, once contaminant levels reach a certain point, the results can be catastrophic.

Water

Look at your watch. Wait fifteen seconds. Then wait another fifteen seconds. In that time, two children have died from lack of access to clean drinking water. Access to safe water is one of the most basic human needs, and it is woefully out of reach for millions of people on the planet. Many of the major diseases that peripheral countries battle, such as diarrhea, cholera, and typhoid, are caused by contaminated water. Often, young children are unable to go to school because they must instead walk several hours a day just to collect potable water for their family. The situation is only getting more dire as the global population increases. Water is a key resource battleground in the twenty-first century.

As every child learns in school, 70 percent of earth is made of water. Despite that figure, there is a finite amount of water usable by humans and it is constantly used and reused in a sustainable water cycle. The way we use this abundant natural resource, however, renders much of it unsuitable for consumption and unable to sustain life. For instance, it takes two and a half liters of water to produce a single liter of Coca-Cola. The company and its bottlers use close to 300 billion liters of water a year, often in locales that are short of useable water (Blanchard 2007).

As a consequence of population concentrations, water close to human settlements is frequently polluted with untreated or partially treated human waste (sewage), chemicals, radioactivity, and levels of heat sufficient to create large “dead zones” incapable of supporting aquatic life. The methods of food production used by many core nations rely on liberal doses of nitrogen and pesticides, which end up back in the water supply. In some cases, water pollution affects the quality of the aquatic life consumed by water and land animals. As we move along the food chain, the pollutants travel from prey to predator. Since humans consume at all levels of the food chain, we ultimately consume the carcinogens, such as mercury, accumulated through several branches of the food web.

Soil

You might have read *The Grapes of Wrath* in English class at some point in time. Steinbeck’s tale of the Joads, driven out of their home by the Dust Bowl, is still playing out today. In China, as in Depression-era Oklahoma, over-tilling soil in an attempt to expand agriculture has resulted in the disappearance of large patches of topsoil.

Soil erosion and desertification are just two of the many forms of soil pollution. In addition, all the chemicals and pollutants that harm our water supplies can also leach into soil with similar effects. Brown zones where nothing can grow are common results of soil pollution. One demand the population boom makes on the planet is a requirement for more food to be produced. The so-called “Green Revolution” in the 1960s saw chemists and world aid organizations working together to bring modern farming methods, complete with pesticides, to developing countries. The immediate result was positive: food yields went up and burgeoning populations were fed. But as time has gone on, these areas have fallen into even more difficult straits as the damage done by modern methods leave traditional farmers with less than they had to start.

Dredging certain beaches in an attempt to save valuable beachfront property from coastal erosion has resulted in greater storm impact on shorelines, and damage to beach ecosystems (Turneffe Atoll Trust 2008). These dredging projects have damaged reefs, sea grass beds, and shorelines and can kill off large swaths of marine life. Ultimately, this damage threatens local fisheries, tourism, and other parts of the local economy.

Garbage



Where should garbage go when you’ve run out of room? This is a question that is increasingly pressing the planet. (Photo courtesy of Kevin Krejci/flickr)

Where is your last cell phone? What about the one before that? Or the huge old television set your family had before flat screens became popular? For most of us, the answer is a sheepish shrug. We don't pay attention to the demise of old items, and since electronics drop in price and increase in innovation at an incredible clip, we have been trained by their manufacturers to upgrade frequently.

Garbage creation and control are major issues for most core and industrializing nations, and it is quickly becoming one of the most critical environmental issues faced in the United States. People in the United States buy products, use them, and then throw them away. Did you dispose of your old electronics according to government safety guidelines? Chances are good you didn't even know there are guidelines. Multiply your electronics times a few million, take into account the numerous toxic chemicals they contain, and then imagine either burying those chemicals in the ground or lighting them on fire.

Those are the two primary means of waste disposal in the United States: landfill and incineration. When it comes to getting rid of dangerous toxins, neither is a good choice. Styrofoam and plastics that many of us use every day do not dissolve in a natural way. Burn them, and they release carcinogens into the air. Their improper incineration (intentional or not) adds to air pollution and increases smog. Dump them in landfills, and they do not decompose. As landfill sites fill up, we risk an increase in groundwater contamination.

What Should Apple (and Friends) Do about E-Waste?



A parking lot filled with electronic waste, known as e-waste. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Environmental Command/flickr)

Electronic waste, or e-waste, is one of the fastest growing segments of garbage. And it is far more problematic than even the mountains of broken plastic and rusty metal that plague the environment. E-waste is the name for obsolete, broken, and worn-out electronics—from computers to mobile phones to televisions. The challenge is that these products, which are multiplying at alarming rates thanks in part to planned obsolescence (the designing of products to quickly become outdated and then be replaced by the constant emergence of newer and cheaper electronics), have toxic chemicals and precious metals in them, which makes for a dangerous combination.

So where do they go? Many companies ship their e-waste to developing nations in Africa and Asia to be “recycled.” While they are, in some senses, recycled, the result is not exactly clean. In fact, it is one of the dirtiest jobs around. Overseas, without the benefit of environmental regulation, e-waste dumps become a kind of boomtown for entrepreneurs willing to sort through endless stacks of broken-down electronics for tiny bits of valuable copper, silver, and other precious metals. Unfortunately, in their hunt, these workers are exposed to deadly toxins.

Governments are beginning to take notice of the impending disaster, and the European Union, as well as the state of California, put stricter regulations in place. These regulations both limit the amount of toxins allowed in electronics and address the issue of end-of-life recycling. But not surprisingly, corporations, while insisting they are greening their process, often fight stricter regulations. Meanwhile, many environmental groups, including the activist group Greenpeace, have taken up the cause.

Greenpeace states that it is working to get companies to:

1. measure and reduce emissions with energy efficiency, renewable energy, and energy policy advocacy
2. make greener, efficient, longer lasting products that are free of hazardous substance
3. reduce environmental impacts throughout company operations, from choosing production materials and energy sources right through to establishing global take-back programs for old products (Greenpeace 2011).

Greenpeace produces annual ratings of how well companies are meeting these goals so consumers can see how brands stack up. For instance, Apple moved from ranking fourth overall to sixth overall from 2011 to 2012. The hope is that consumers will vote with their wallets, and the greener companies will be rewarded.

Further Research

Visit the [Cleanups in My Community website](#) to see where environmental hazards have been identified in your backyard, and what is being done about them.

What is your carbon footprint? Find out using the [carbon footprint calculator](#).

Find out more about greening the electronics process by looking at [Greenpeace's guide](#).

Air

China's fast-growing economy and burgeoning industry have translated into notoriously poor air quality. Smog hangs heavily over the major cities, sometimes grounding aircraft that cannot navigate through it. Pedestrians and cyclists wear air-filter masks to protect themselves. In Beijing, citizens are skeptical that the government-issued daily pollution ratings are trustworthy. Increasingly, they are taking their own pollution measurements in the hopes that accurate information will galvanize others to action. Given that some days they can barely see down the street, they hope action comes soon (Papenfuss 2011).

Humanity, with its growing numbers, use of fossil fuels, and increasingly urbanized society, is putting too much stress on the earth's atmosphere. The amount of air pollution varies from locale to locale, and you may be more personally affected than you realize. How often do you check air quality reports before leaving your house? Depending on where you live, this question can sound utterly strange or like an everyday matter. Along with oxygen, most of the time we are also breathing in soot, hydrocarbons, carbon, nitrogen, and sulfur oxides.

Much of the pollution in the air comes from human activity. How many college students move their cars across campus at least once a day? Who checks the environmental report card on how many pollutants each company throws into the air before purchasing a cell phone? Many of us are guilty of taking our environment for granted without concern for how everyday decisions add up to a long-term global problem. How many minor adjustments can you think of, like walking instead of driving, that would reduce your overall carbon footprint?

Remember the "tragedy of the commons." Each of us is affected by air pollution. But like the herder who adds one more head of cattle to realize the benefits of owning more cows but who does not have to pay the price of the overgrazed land, we take the benefit of driving or buying the latest cell phones without worrying about the end result. Air pollution accumulates in the body, much like the effects of smoking cigarettes accumulate over time, leading to more chronic illnesses. And in addition to directly affecting human health, air pollution affects crop quality as well as heating and cooling costs. In other words, we all pay a lot more than the price at the pump when we fill up our tank with gas.

Toxic and Radioactive Waste

Radioactivity is a form of air pollution. While nuclear energy promises a safe and abundant power source, increasingly it is looked upon as a danger to the environment and to those who inhabit it. We accumulate nuclear waste, which we must then keep track of long term and ultimately figure out how to store the toxic waste material without damaging the environment or putting future generations at risk.

The 2011 earthquake in Japan illustrates the dangers of even safe, government-monitored nuclear energy. When disaster occurs, how can we safely evacuate the large numbers of affected people? Indeed, how can we even be sure how far the evacuation radius should extend? Radiation can also enter the food chain, causing damage from the bottom (phytoplankton and microscopic soil

organisms) all the way to the top. Once again, the price paid for cheap power is much greater than what we see on the electric bill.



An aerial view of the Gulf Coast, taken in May 2010, illustrates the damage done by the BP Deep Water Horizon spill. (Photo courtesy of Jeff Warren/flickr)

The enormous oil disaster that hit the Louisiana Gulf Coast in 2010 is just one of a high number of environmental crises that have led to toxic residue. They include the pollution of the Love Canal neighborhood of the 1970s to the Exxon *Valdez* oil tanker crash of 1989, the Chernobyl disaster of 1986, and Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant incident following the earthquake in 2011. Often, the stories are not newsmakers, but simply an unpleasant part of life for the people who live near toxic sites such as Centralia, Pennsylvania and Hinkley, California. In many cases, people in these neighborhoods can be part of a **cancer cluster** without realizing the cause.



Oil on the gulf shore beaches caused great destruction, killing marine and land animals and crippling local business. (Photo courtesy of AV8ter/flickr)

The Fire Burns On: Centralia, Pennsylvania

There used to be a place called Centralia, Pennsylvania. The town incorporated in the 1860s and once had several thousand residents, largely coal workers. But the story of its demise begins a century later in 1962. That year, a trash-burning fire was lit in the pit of the old abandoned coal mine outside of town. The fire moved down the mineshaft and ignited a vein of coal. It is still burning. For more than twenty years, people tried to extinguish the underground fire, but no matter what they did, it returned. There was little government action, and people had to abandon their homes as toxic gases engulfed the area and sinkholes developed. The situation drew national attention when the ground collapsed under twelve-year-old Todd Domboski in 1981. Todd was in his yard when a sinkhole four feet wide and 150 feet deep opened beneath him. He clung to exposed tree roots and saved his life; if he had fallen a few feet farther, the heat or carbon monoxide would have killed him instantly. In 1983, engineers studying the fire concluded that it could burn for another century or more and could spread over nearly 4,000 acres. At this point, the government offered to buy out the town's residents and wanted them to relocate to nearby towns. A few determined Centralians refused to leave, even though the government bought their homes, and they are the only ones who remain. In one field, signs warn people to enter at their own risk, because the ground is hot and unstable. And the fire burns on (DeKok 1986).

Think It Over

1. After reading this section, will you change the way you treat your household waste? Explain.
2. How do you think the issue of e-waste should be dealt with? Should the responsibility fall to the companies that make the products or the consumer who buys them? Would your buying habits be different if you had to pay to recycle old electronics?
3. Can you think of a modern example of the tragedy of the commons, where public use without accountability has created a negative outcome?

Practice

Exercise 7.2.1

The “tragedy of the commons” is a reference to what?

- a. Global warming
- b. African landowners
- c. The common grazing lands in Oxford
- d. The misuse of private space

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 7.2.2

What are ways that human activity impacts the water supply?

- a. Creating sewage
- b. Spreading chemicals
- c. Increasing radioactivity
- d. All of the above

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 7.2.3

Which is an example of environmental racism?

- a. The fact that a disproportionate percentage of people of color live in environmentally hazardous areas
- b. Greenpeace protests

- c. The prevalence of asbestos in formerly “whites only” schools
- d. Prejudice similar to racism against people with different environmental views than one’s own

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 7.2.4

What is *not* a negative outcome of shoreline dredging?

- a. Damaged coral reefs
- b. Death of marine life
- c. Ruined sea grass beds
- d. Reduction of human population

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 7.2.5

What are the two primary methods of waste disposal?

- a. Landfill and incineration
- b. Incineration and compost
- c. Decomposition and incineration
- d. Marine dumping and landfills

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 7.2.6

Where does a large percentage of e-waste wind up?

- a. Incinerators
- b. Recycled in peripheral nations
- c. Repurposed into new electronics
- d. Dumped into ocean repositories

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 7.2.7

What types of municipal projects often result in environmental racism?

- a. Toxic dumps or other objectionable projects
- b. The location of schools, libraries, and other cultural institutions
- c. Hospitals and other health and safety sites
- d. Public transportation options

Answer available at the end of this section.

Glossary

cancer cluster:

a geographic area with high levels of cancer within its population

climate change:

long-term shifts in temperature and climate due to human activity

environmental racism:

the burdening of economically and socially disadvantaged communities with a disproportionate share of environmental hazards

environmental sociology:

the sociological subfield that addresses the relationship between humans and the environment

e-waste:

the disposal of broken, obsolete, and worn-out electronics

NIMBY:

“Not In My Back Yard,” the tendency of people to protest poor environmental practices when those practices will affect them directly

pollution:

the introduction of contaminants into an environment at levels that are damaging

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Answers

Exercise 7.2.1

c

Exercise 7.2.2

d

Exercise 7.2.3

a

Exercise 7.2.4

d

Exercise 7.2.5

a

Exercise 7.2.6

b

Exercise 7.2.7

a

7.3: Why some Doctors are Prescribing a day in the Park or a Walk on the Beach for Good Health

<https://theconversation.com/why-some-doctors-are-prescribing-a-day-in-the-park-or-a-walk-on-the-beach-for-good-health-115537>

7.4: Fractal Patterns in Nature and Art are Aesthetically Pleasing and Stress Reducing

<https://theconversation.com/fractal-patterns-in-nature-and-art-are-aesthetically-pleasing-and-stress-reducing-73255>

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7.5: Neo-Confucianism and Fan Kuan's Travelers by Streams and Mountains and Mountains



Fan Kuan, Travelers by Streams and Mountains, hanging scroll, ink on silk, c. 1000, 206.3 x 103.3 cm. (National Palace Museum, Taipei)

Daoist mountain man, hermit, rustic, wine-lover—Fan Kuan has the reputation of having been truly unconventional. We know very little about this great artist, yet he painted the most majestic landscape painting of the early Song period. Everything about *Travelers by Streams and Mountains*, which is possibly the only surviving work by Fan Kuan, is an orderly statement reflecting the artist's worldview.

Landscape As a Subject in Its Own Right

Fan Kuan's masterpiece is an outstanding example of Chinese landscape painting. Long before Western artists considered landscape anything more than a setting for figures, Chinese painters had elevated landscape as a subject in its own right. Bounded by mountain ranges and bisected by two great rivers—the Yellow and the Yangzi—China's natural landscape has played an important role in the shaping of the Chinese mind and character. From very early times, the Chinese viewed mountains as sacred and imagined them as the abode of immortals. The term for landscape painting (shanshui hua) in Chinese is translated as "mountain water painting."

After a Period of Upheaval

During the tumultuous Five Dynasties period in the early 10th century (an era of political upheaval from 907–960 C.E., between the fall of the Tang Dynasty and the founding of the Song Dynasty, when five dynasties quickly succeeded one another in the north, and more than twelve independent states were established, mainly in the south), recluse scholars who fled to the mountains saw the tall pine tree as representative of the virtuous man. In the early Northern Song dynasty that followed, from the mid-10th to the mid-11th century, gnarled pine trees and other symbolic elements were transformed into a grand and imposing landscape style.



Fan Kuan, Travelers Among Mountains and Streams (detail)

Fan Kuan painted a bold and straightforward example of Chinese landscape painting. After the long period of political disunity (the Five Dynasties period), Fan Kuan lived as a recluse and was one of many poets and artists of the time who were disenchanted with human affairs. He turned away from the world to seek spiritual enlightenment. Through his painting *Travelers by Streams and Mountains*, Fan Kuan expressed a cosmic vision of man's harmonious existence in a vast but orderly universe. The Neo-Confucian search for absolute truth in nature as well as self-cultivation reached its climax in the 11th century and is demonstrated in this work. Fan Kuan's landscape epitomizes the early Northern Song monumental style of landscape painting. Nearly seven feet in height, the hanging scroll composition presents universal creation in its totality, and does so with the most economic of means.



Fan Kuan, Travelers Among Mountains and Streams (detail)

Immense boulders occupy the foreground and are presented to the viewer at eye level. Just beyond them one sees crisp, detailed brushwork describing rocky outcroppings, covered with trees. Looking closely, one sees two men driving a group of donkeys loaded with firewood and a temple partially hidden in the forest. In the background a central peak rises from a mist-filled chasm and is flanked by two smaller peaks. This solid screen of gritty rock takes up nearly two-thirds of the picture. The sheer height of the central peak is accentuated by a waterfall plummeting from a crevice near the summit and disappearing into the narrow valley.



Fan Kuan, Travelers Among Mountains and Streams (detail)

The mountain form accurately captures the geological traits of southern Shaanxi and northwestern Henan provinces—thick vegetation grows only at the top of the bare steep-sided cliffs in thick layers of fine-grained soil known as loess. The mountains are triangular with deep crevices. In the painting they are conceived frontally and additively. To model the mountains, Fan Kuan used incisive thickening-and-thinning contour strokes, texture dots and ink wash. Strong, sharp brushstrokes depict the knotted trunks of the large trees. Notice the detailed brushwork that delineates the foliage and the fir trees silhouetted along the upper edge of the ledge in the middle distance.



To convey the sheer size of the landscape depicted in *Travelers by Streams and Mountains*, Fan Kuan relied on suggestion rather than description. The gaps between the three distances act as breaks between changing views. Note the boulders in the foreground, the tree-covered rock outcropping in the middle, and the soaring peaks in the background. The additive images do not physically connect; they are comprehended separately. The viewer is invited to imagine himself roaming freely, yet one must mentally jump from one distance to the next.

The unsurpassed grandeur and monumentality of Fan Kuan's composition is expressed through the skillful use of scale. Fan Kuan's landscape shows how the use of scale can dramatically heighten the sense of vastness and space. Diminutive figures are made visually even smaller in comparison to the enormous trees and soaring peaks. They are overwhelmed by their surroundings. Fan Kuan's signature is hidden among the leaves of one of the trees in the lower right corner.

Neo-Confucianism

The development of Monumental landscape painting coincided with that of Neo-Confucianism—a reinterpretation of Chinese moral philosophy. It was Buddhism that first introduced, from India, a system of metaphysics and a coherent worldview more advanced than anything known in China. With Buddhist thought, scholars in the 5th and 6th centuries engaged in philosophical discussions of truth and reality, being and non-being, substantiality and nonsubstantiality. Beginning in the late Tang and early Northern Song (960-1127), Neo-Confucian thinkers rebuilt Confucian ethics using Buddhist and Daoist metaphysics. Chinese philosophers found it useful to think in terms of complimentary opposites, interacting polarities— inner and outer, substance and function, knowledge and action. In their metaphysics they naturally employed the ancient *yin* and *yang* (*Yin*: feminine, dark, receptive, yielding, negative, and weak. *Yang*: masculine, bright, assertive, creative, positive, and strong.) The interaction of these complementary poles was viewed as integral to the processes that generate natural order.

Central to understanding Neo-Confucian thought is the conceptual pair of *li* and *qi*. *Li* is usually translated as principles. It can be understood as principles that underlie all phenomena. *Li* constitutes the underlying pattern of reality. Nothing can exist if there is no *li* for it. This applies to human conduct and to the physical world. *Qi* can be characterized as the vital force and substance of which man and the universe are made. *Qi* can also be conceived of as energy, but energy which occupies space. In its most refined form it occurs as mysterious ether, but condensed it becomes solid metal or rock.

Not As the Human Eye Sees

The Neo-Confucian theory of observing things in the light of their own principles (*li*) clearly resonates in the immense splendor of Fan Kuan's masterpiece. Northern Song landscape painters did not paint as the human eye sees. By seeing things not through the human eye, but in the light of their own principles (*li*), Fan Kuan was able to organize and present different aspects of a landscape within a single composition—he does this with a constantly shifting viewpoint. In his masterful balance of *li* and *qi*, Fan Kuan created a microcosmic image of a moral and orderly universe.

Fan Kuan looked to nature and carefully studied the world around him. He expressed his own response to nature. As Fan Kuan sought to describe the external truth of the universe visually, he discovered at the same time an internal psychological truth. The bold directness of Fan's painting style was thought to be a reflection of his open character and generous disposition. His grand image of the beauty and majesty of nature reflects Fan Kuan's humble awe and pride.

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7.6: Natural Resources and Spirituality

<https://healingearth.ijep.net/natura...d-spirituality>

7.7: Lao Tzu

YouTube Video

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8: FREEDOM

8.1: Freedom of the Will

8.1.1: The Turing Test

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8.1: FREEDOM OF THE WILL

Free will is the ability to choose between different possible courses of action. It is closely linked to the concepts of responsibility, praise, guilt, sin, and other judgments which apply only to actions that are freely chosen. It is also connected with the concepts of advice, persuasion, deliberation, and prohibition. Traditionally, only actions that are freely willed are seen as deserving credit or blame. There are numerous different concerns about threats to the possibility of free will, varying by how exactly it is conceived, which is a matter of some debate.

Some conceive free will to be the capacity to make choices in which the outcome has not been determined by past events. Determinism suggests that only one course of events is possible, which is inconsistent with the existence of such free will. This problem has been identified in ancient Greek philosophy, and remains a major focus of philosophical debate. This view that conceives free will to be incompatible with determinism is called *incompatibilism*, and encompasses both metaphysical libertarianism, the claim that determinism is false and thus free will is at least possible, and hard determinism, the claim that determinism is true and thus free will is not possible. It also encompasses hard incompatibilism, which holds not only determinism but also its negation to be incompatible with free will, and thus free will to be impossible whatever the case may be regarding determinism.

In contrast, *compatibilists* hold that free will is compatible with determinism. Some compatibilists even hold that determinism is *necessary* for free will, arguing that choice involves preference for one course of action over another, requiring a sense of *how* choices will turn out. Compatibilists thus consider the debate between libertarians and hard determinists over free will vs determinism a false dilemma. Different compatibilists offer very different definitions of what "free will" even means, and consequently find different types of constraints to be relevant to the issue. Classical compatibilists considered free will nothing more than freedom of action, considering one free of will simply if, *had* one counterfactually wanted to do otherwise, one *could* have done otherwise without physical impediment. Contemporary compatibilists instead identify free will as a psychological capacity, such as to direct one's behavior in a way responsive to reason. And there are still further different conceptions of free will, each with their own concerns, sharing only the common feature of not finding the possibility of determinism a threat to the possibility of free will.

In Western philosophy

The underlying questions are whether we have control over our actions, and if so, what sort of control, and to what extent. These questions predate the early Greek stoics (for example, Chrysippus), and some modern philosophers lament the lack of progress over all these millennia.

On one hand, humans have a strong sense of freedom, which leads us to believe that we have free will. On the other hand, an intuitive feeling of free will could be mistaken.

It is difficult to reconcile the intuitive evidence that conscious decisions are causally effective with the scientific view that the physical world can be explained to operate perfectly by physical law. The conflict between intuitively felt freedom and natural law arises when either causal closure or physical determinism (nomological determinism) is asserted. With causal closure, no physical event has a cause outside the physical domain, and with physical determinism, the future is determined entirely by preceding events (cause and effect).

The puzzle of reconciling 'free will' with a deterministic universe is known as the *problem of free will* or sometimes referred to as the *dilemma of determinism*. This dilemma leads to a moral dilemma as well: How are we to assign responsibility for our actions if they are caused entirely by past events?

Compatibilists maintain that mental reality is not of itself causally effective. Classical compatibilists have addressed the dilemma of free will by arguing that free will holds as long as we are not externally constrained or coerced. Modern compatibilists make a distinction between freedom of will and freedom of *action*, that is, separating freedom of choice from the freedom to enact it. Given that humans all experience a sense of free will, some modern compatibilists think it is necessary to accommodate this intuition. Compatibilists often associate freedom of will with the ability to make rational decisions.

A different approach to the dilemma is that of incompatibilists, namely, that if the world is deterministic then, our feeling that we are free to choose an action is simply an illusion. Metaphysical libertarianism is the form of incompatibilism which posits that determinism is false and free will is possible (at least some people have free will). This view is associated with non-materialist constructions, including both traditional dualism, as well as models supporting more minimal criteria; such as the ability to

consciously veto an action or competing desire. Yet even with physical indeterminism, arguments have been made against libertarianism in that it is difficult to assign *Origination* (responsibility for "free" indeterministic choices).

Free will here is predominately treated with respect to physical determinism in the strict sense of nomological determinism, although other forms of determinism are also relevant to free will. For example, logical and theological determinism challenge metaphysical libertarianism with ideas of destiny and fate, and biological, cultural and psychological determinism feed the development of compatibilist models. Separate classes of compatibilism and incompatibilism may even be formed to represent these.

Below are the classic arguments bearing upon the dilemma and its underpinnings.

Incompatibilism

Incompatibilism is the position that free will and determinism are logically incompatible, and that the major question regarding whether or not people have free will is thus whether or not their actions are determined. "Hard determinists", such as d'Holbach, are those incompatibilists who accept determinism and reject free will. In contrast, "metaphysical libertarians", such as Thomas Reid, Peter van Inwagen, and Robert Kane, are those incompatibilists who accept free will and deny determinism, holding the view that some form of indeterminism is true. Another view is that of hard incompatibilists, which state that free will is incompatible with both determinism and indeterminism.

Traditional arguments for incompatibilism are based on an "intuition pump": if a person is like other mechanical things that are determined in their behavior such as a wind-up toy, a billiard ball, a puppet, or a robot, then people must not have free will. This argument has been rejected by compatibilists such as Daniel Dennett on the grounds that, even if humans have something in common with these things, it remains possible and plausible that we are different from such objects in important ways.

Another argument for incompatibilism is that of the "causal chain". Incompatibilism is key to the idealist theory of free will. Most incompatibilists reject the idea that freedom of action consists simply in "voluntary" behavior. They insist, rather, that free will means that man must be the "ultimate" or "originating" cause of his actions. He must be *causa sui*, in the traditional phrase. Being responsible for one's choices is the first cause of those choices, where first cause means that there is no antecedent cause of that cause. The argument, then, is that if man has free will, then man is the ultimate cause of his actions. If determinism is true, then all of man's choices are caused by events and facts outside his control. So, if everything man does is caused by events and facts outside his control, then he cannot be the ultimate cause of his actions. Therefore, he cannot have free will. This argument has also been challenged by various compatibilist philosophers.

8.1.1: The Turing Test

8.1.2: Determinism

8.1.3: The Illusion of Free Will

8.1.4: Compatibilism

8.1.5: The Prisoner's Dilemma

8.1.6: The Trial of Leopold and Loeb

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8.1.1: The Turing Test

“Alan Turing”²⁹

Alan Mathison Turing OBE FRS (/ˈtʃʊərɪŋ/; 23 June 1912 – 7 June 1954) was an English computer scientist, mathematician, logician, cryptanalyst and theoretical biologist. He was highly influential in the development of theoretical computer science, providing a formalisation of the concepts of algorithm and computation with the Turing machine, which can be considered a model of a general purpose computer. Turing is widely considered to be the father of theoretical computer science and artificial intelligence.

During the Second World War, Turing worked for the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) at Bletchley Park, Britain's codebreaking centre. For a time he led Hut 8, the section responsible for German naval cryptanalysis. He devised a number of techniques for speeding the breaking of German ciphers, including improvements to the pre-war Polish bombe method, an electromechanical machine that could find settings for the Enigma machine. Turing played a pivotal role in cracking intercepted coded messages that enabled the Allies to defeat the Nazis in many crucial engagements, including the Battle of the Atlantic; it has been estimated that this work shortened the war in Europe by more than two years and saved over fourteen million lives.

After the war, he worked at the National Physical Laboratory, where he designed the ACE, among the first designs for a stored-program computer. In 1948 Turing joined Max Newman's Computing Machine Laboratory at the Victoria University of Manchester, where he helped develop the Manchester computers and became interested in mathematical biology. He wrote a paper on the chemical basis of morphogenesis, and predicted oscillating chemical reactions such as the Belousov–Zhabotinsky reaction, first observed in the 1960s.

Turing was prosecuted in 1952 for homosexual acts, when by the Labouchere Amendment, "gross indecency" was still criminal in the UK. He accepted chemical castration treatment, with DES, as an alternative to prison. Turing died in 1954, 16 days before his 42nd birthday, from cyanide poisoning. An inquest determined his death as suicide, but it has been noted that the known evidence is also consistent with accidental poisoning. In 2009, following an Internet campaign, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown made an official public apology on behalf of the British government for "the appalling way he was treated." Queen Elizabeth II granted him a posthumous pardon in 2013.

“The Turing Test”

Turing's work “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”³⁰ was groundbreaking in his looking toward the future of how we can understand and deal with increasingly capable machines. The quotes from Turing below that are combined with my commentary are from this article.

The first section of Turing's article is labeled “The Imitation Game.” The recent biopic about Turing (2014, Directed by Morten Tyldum) uses this as its title, making use both of Turing's own most popular contribution to Philosophy and the fact that Turing had a lot of difficulties fitting socially, so that he had to “imitate” being a normal person. It's worth a watch if you have the time. In this first section of the article, Turing outlines what his project is going to be, and he makes it very clear what he wants to argue for, and what he does not want to argue for,

“I propose to consider the question, "Can machines think?" This should begin with definitions of the meaning of the terms "machine" and "think." The definitions might be framed so as to reflect so far as possible the normal use of the words, but this attitude is dangerous. If the meaning of the words "machine" and "think" are to be found by examining how they are commonly used it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the meaning and the answer to the question, "Can machines think?" is to be sought in a statistical survey such as a Gallup poll. But this is absurd. Instead of attempting such a definition I shall replace the question by another, which is closely related to it and is expressed in relatively unambiguous words.

The new form of the problem can be described in terms of a game which we call the 'imitation game.' It is played with three people, a man (A), a woman (B), and an interrogator (C) who may be of either sex. The interrogator stays in a room apart front the other two. The object of the game for the interrogator is to determine which of the other two is the man and which is the woman. He knows them by labels X and Y, and at the end of the game he says either "X is A and Y is B" or "X is B and Y is A."

The form that the test will take is rather easy to understand given today's technologies, but Turing had to go to great lengths to basically just describe the judge communicating with the two through electronic form, like a chat room, instant messaging, or texting. Communicating this way ensures that only the content of what is said is considered when making a decision. He then says,

"We now ask the question, "What will happen when a machine takes the part of A in this game?" Will the interrogator decide wrongly as often when the game is played like this as he does when the game is played between a man and a woman? These questions replace our original, "Can machines think?""

So what he wants to do is rather simple: a judge (you, for example) chats with 2 beings through a computer. One is a computer and the other is a person. They both try to convince you that they are the person, and if you can't decide which is which or guess wrong – and this happens repeatedly to both yourself and others – then Turing believes we ought to conclude that the computer is intelligent like we are since it has properly imitated us (hence calling it the "imitation game").

Turing then goes on to explain the advantages of approaching machine intelligence this way as opposed to trying to define thinking and showing that a machine can do it,

"The new problem has the advantage of drawing a fairly sharp line between the physical and the intellectual capacities of a man. No engineer or chemist claims to be able to produce a material which is indistinguishable from the human skin. It is possible that at some time this might be done, but even supposing this invention available we should feel there was little point in trying to make a "thinking machine" more human by dressing it up in such artificial flesh. The form in which we have set the problem reflects this fact in the condition which prevents the interrogator from seeing or touching the other competitors, or hearing -their voices...

We do not wish to penalise the machine for its inability to shine in beauty competitions, nor to penalise a man for losing in a race against an aeroplane. The conditions of our game make these disabilities irrelevant. The "witnesses" can brag, if they consider it advisable, as much as they please about their charms, strength or heroism, but the interrogator cannot demand practical demonstrations....

It might be urged that when playing the "imitation game" the best strategy for the machine may possibly be something other than imitation of the behaviour of a man. This may be, but I think it is unlikely that there is any great effect of this kind. In any case there is no intention to investigate here the theory of the game, and it will be assumed that the best strategy is to try to provide answers that would naturally be given by a man."

Why approach artificial intelligence in this way? It's rather simple: how do we know other people are intelligent? Do we define "thinking" and then say "I know that you are thinking and thus can be intelligent"? Or do we just assume others are intelligent if we interact with them and they show they are intelligent? Turing just wants to extend this courtesy that we extend to other people to machines as well.

After presenting his reasons for believing the test to be a good one, Turing goes on to deal with many counter arguments to his own. This is a solid philosophical move and is his attempt to deal with all of the most reasonable and common objections to what he has proposed. He dealt with a number of technological issues which we can now take for granted: there are few who doubt that artificial intelligence will happen some time, and now it appears to just be a matter of when and how. Computers advance in power every year, so some real form of artificial intelligence beyond Siri-like helpers is on the distant horizon. He does deal with other, more timeless objections as well, and those follow below.

The Mathematical Objection

Despite the advances in technology, it is still possible that computers will never be capable of computing everything necessary to mimic or have human intelligence. He summarizes these objections as follows,

"The result in question refers to a type of machine which is essentially a digital computer with an infinite capacity. It states that there are certain things that such a machine cannot do. If it is rigged up to give answers to questions as in the imitation game, there will be some questions to which it will either give a wrong answer, or fail to give an answer at all however much time is allowed for a reply. There may, of course, be many such questions, and questions which cannot be answered by one machine may be satisfactorily answered by another. We are of course supposing for the present that the questions are of the kind to which an answer "Yes" or "No" is appropriate, rather than questions such as "What do you think of Picasso?" The questions that we know the machines must fail on are of this type...This is the mathematical result: it is argued that it proves a disability of machines to which the human intellect is not subject."

His response to this is rather simple: So what? How do you know that people aren't limited? And even if a computer has limitations, does it really matter? His response is below and it finishes with his most important point for the purposes of the usefulness of the Imitation Game,

"The short answer to this argument is that although it is established that there are limitations to the Powers If any particular machine, it has only been stated, without any sort of proof, that no such limitations apply to the human intellect. But I do not think this view can be dismissed quite so lightly. Whenever one of these machines is asked the appropriate critical question, and gives a definite answer, we know that this answer must be wrong, and this gives us a certain feeling of superiority. Is this feeling illusory? It is no doubt quite genuine, but I do not think too much importance should be attached to it. We too often give wrong answers to questions ourselves to be justified in being very pleased at such evidence of fallibility on the part of the machines. Further, our superiority can only be felt on such an occasion in relation to the one machine over which we have scored our petty triumph. There would be no question of triumphing simultaneously over all machines. In short, then, there might be men cleverer than any given machine, but then again there might be other machines cleverer again, and so on.

Those who hold to the mathematical argument would, I think, mostly be willing to accept the imitation game as a basis for discussion..."

So, even if there is something to this argument, the Imitation Game itself can still function as a test for intelligence.

The Argument from Consciousness

This argument is one of the more interesting and strongest ones that still stands today against the possibility of a true Artificial Intelligence akin to our own, human intelligence. Turing explains this argument as follows,

"This argument is very, well expressed in Professor Jefferson's Lister Oration for 1949, from which I quote. "Not until a machine can write a sonnet or compose a concerto because of thoughts and emotions felt, and not by the chance fall of symbols, could we agree that machine equals brain—that is, not only write it but know that it had written it. No mechanism could feel (and not merely artificially signal, an easy contrivance) pleasure at its successes, grief when its valves fuse, be warmed by flattery, be made miserable by its mistakes, be charmed by sex, be angry or depressed when it cannot get what it wants.""

This objection calls into the question validity of the Imitation Game test and essentially says, "Even if it passes the test, it's not intelligent because it lacks consciousness or the ability to do something new and emotional." Turing responds by asking whether or not we really know that others are thinking (or even ourselves). He has a point here since what constitutes "consciousness" and "thinking" is still mostly a mystery. We know how brains work during those processes, but we can't exactly define them yet, hence why Turing likes his test as the method of determining intelligence.

Turing goes on to say that the real force of the argument is that it calls into question a machine's ability to *understand* anything like a human does. John Searle's "Chinese Room" argument that follows below is a stronger presentation of this argument, and Turing gives his own response to these objections by saying that a machine could certainly behave as if it has understanding, and whether or not that understanding would be "genuine" is a separate issue; the test of the Imitation Game for intelligence can still work, especially since it's how we know that other people understand things.

Arguments from Various Disabilities

Turing summarizes this objection as follows,

"These arguments take the form, "I grant you that you can make machines do all the things you have mentioned but you will never be able to make one to do X." Numerous features X are suggested in this connexion I offer a selection:

Be kind, resourceful, beautiful, friendly, have initiative, have a sense of humour, tell right from wrong, make mistakes, fall in love, enjoy strawberries and cream, make some one fall in love with it, learn from experience, use words properly, be the subject of its own thought, have as much diversity of behaviour as a man, do something really new."

Turing's response is surprisingly simple: So what if they can't do these things since they could still be intelligent without having to do these things, and more importantly, couldn't we just make the machine do these things? Can't we make a computer make mistakes, learn, behave in a certain way, have taste buds, self-program, etc.? And if it's not funny, is not human then? While I would like to call those without a sense of humor inhuman, I won't. They're just boring, and computers *can* certainly be boring.

Finally, Turing drives home his main point yet again: none of this calls into question the appropriateness of his test in determining when a machine has achieved intelligence.

Lady Lovelace's Objection

This is perhaps one of the more cited objections to computer intelligence, and predates Turing by over a hundred years. He portrays it, and his response, as follows,

"Our most detailed information of Babbage's Analytical Engine comes from a memoir by Lady Lovelace (1842). In it she states, "The Analytical Engine has no pretensions to *originate* anything. It can do *whatever we know how to order it to perform*" (her italics). This statement is quoted by Hartree (1949) who adds: "This does not imply that it may not be possible to construct electronic equipment which will 'think for itself,' or in which, in biological terms, one could set up a conditioned reflex, which would serve as a basis for 'learning.' Whether this is possible in principle or not is a stimulating and exciting question, suggested by some of these recent developments But it did not seem that the machines constructed or projected at the time had this property."

I am in thorough agreement with Hartree over this. It will be noticed that he does not assert that the machines in question had not got the property, but rather that the evidence available to Lady Lovelace did not encourage her to believe that they had it. It is quite possible that the machines in question had in a sense got this property. For suppose that some discrete-state machine has the property. The Analytical Engine was a universal digital computer, so that, if its storage capacity and speed were adequate, it could by suitable programming be made to mimic the machine in question. Probably this argument did not occur to the Countess or to Babbage. In any case there was no obligation on them to claim all that could be claimed...

A variant of Lady Lovelace's objection states that a machine can "never do anything really new." This may be parried for a moment with the saw, "There is nothing new under the sun." Who can be certain that "original work" that he has done was not simply the growth of the seed planted in him by teaching, or the effect of following well-known general principles."

Again, to come back to Turing's main point, this doesn't seem to create a genuine problem for his test. Whether or not a machine – or anyone – can do anything new is a separate question than whether something is intelligent.

Argument from Continuity in the Nervous System

This objection to Turing is a more technical one, and he explains it like this,

"The nervous system is certainly not a discrete-state machine. A small error in the information about the size of a nervous impulse impinging on a neuron, may make a large difference to the size of the outgoing impulse. It may be argued that, this being so, one cannot expect to be able to mimic the behaviour of the nervous system with a discrete-state system."

This is an early version of the distinction between what is now known as "hard AI" versus "soft AI". Hard AI is the type of intelligence that Turing has been talking about: a computer, as we understand them, runs a program that is intelligent. This objection he is discussing basically says that there is no way this can work since a computer is, in some sense, binary (just using 1's and 0's to do everything) and the human brain and mind work in an entirely different way. This problem is still being discussed, since we just don't know whether or not our brains do function like a very complex personal computer or not.

Because there is still something to this objection, there are those that are going for what is known as "soft AI" where, instead of creating a traditional program on a traditional computer, the goal is to create an artificial mechanical brain that completely replicates our own brain in every way. Rather than having a program be intelligent, the idea is that the resultant thing would be intelligent since it would be, piece for piece, an exact (but artificial) replica of the human brain. Many people think this is the only way to get a real AI and people are laying the foundation to try to create an "artificial" brain that can think for itself and mimic the human mind. Time will give us the answer to whether or not this works.

³¹ "The Chinese Room"

The Chinese room argument holds that a program cannot give a computer a "mind", "understanding" or "consciousness", regardless of how intelligently or human-like the program may make the computer behave. The argument was first presented by philosopher John Searle in his paper, "Minds, Brains, and Programs", published in *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* in 1980. It has been widely discussed in the years since. The centerpiece of the argument is a thought experiment known as the Chinese room.

The argument is directed against the philosophical positions of functionalism and computationalism, which hold that the mind may be viewed as an information-processing system operating on formal symbols. Specifically, the argument refutes a position Searle calls Strong AI:

The appropriately programmed computer with the right inputs and outputs would thereby have a mind in exactly the same sense

human beings have minds.

Although it was originally presented in reaction to the statements of artificial intelligence (AI) researchers, it is not an argument against the goals of AI research, because it does not limit the amount of intelligence a machine can display. The argument applies only to digital computers running programs and does not apply to machines in general.

The Chinese Room Thought Experiment

Searle's thought experiment begins with this hypothetical premise: suppose that artificial intelligence research has succeeded in constructing a computer that behaves as if it understands Chinese. It takes Chinese characters as input and, by following the instructions of a computer program, produces other Chinese characters, which it presents as output. Suppose, says Searle, that this computer performs its task so convincingly that it comfortably passes the Turing test: it convinces a human Chinese speaker that the program is itself a live Chinese speaker. To all of the questions that the person asks, it makes appropriate responses, such that any Chinese speaker would be convinced that they are talking to another Chinese-speaking human being.

The question Searle wants to answer is this: does the machine *literally* "understand" Chinese? Or is it merely *simulating* the ability to understand Chinese? Searle calls the first position "strong AI" and the latter "weak AI".

Searle then supposes that he is in a closed room and has a book with an English version of the computer program, along with sufficient paper, pencils, erasers, and filing cabinets. Searle could receive Chinese characters through a slot in the door, process them according to the program's instructions, and produce Chinese characters as output. If the computer had passed the Turing test this way, it follows, says Searle, that he would do so as well, simply by running the program manually.

Searle asserts that there is no essential difference between the roles of the computer and himself in the experiment. Each simply follows a program, step-by-step, producing a behavior which is then interpreted as demonstrating intelligent conversation. However, Searle would not be able to understand the conversation. ("I don't speak a word of Chinese," he points out.) Therefore, he argues, it follows that the computer would not be able to understand the conversation either.

Searle argues that, without "understanding" (or "intentionality"), we cannot describe what the machine is doing as "thinking" and, since it does not think, it does not have a "mind" in anything like the normal sense of the word. Therefore, he concludes that "strong AI" is false.

The Turing Test

The Chinese room implements a version of the Turing test. Alan Turing introduced the test in 1950 to help answer the question "can machines think?" In the standard version, a human judge engages in a natural language conversation with a human and a machine designed to generate performance indistinguishable from that of a human being. All participants are separated from one another. If the judge cannot reliably tell the machine from the human, the machine is said to have passed the test.

Turing then considered each possible objection to the proposal "machines can think", and found that there are simple, obvious answers if the question is de-mystified in this way. He did not, however, intend for the test to measure for the presence of "consciousness" or "understanding". He did not believe this was relevant to the issues that he was addressing. He wrote:

I do not wish to give the impression that I think there is no mystery about consciousness. There is, for instance, something of a paradox connected with any attempt to localise it. But I do not think these mysteries necessarily need to be solved before we can answer the question with which we are concerned in this paper.

To Searle, as a philosopher investigating in the nature of mind and consciousness, these are the relevant mysteries. The Chinese room is designed to show that the Turing test is insufficient to detect the presence of consciousness, even if the room can behave or function as a conscious mind would.

"What it's like to be a Bat"³²

The Philosopher Thomas Nagel devised a thought experiment which I believe can act as an interesting response to Searle's Chinese Room argument. Searle does have a very strong and interesting point about understanding, but he doesn't show that there is *no* understanding taking place – just that it won't be the same type of understanding we (normal, conscious humans) believe that we have. Nagel asks us to try to understand what it would be like to be a bat, and concludes that we could not possibly begin to grasp how bats experience the world, but that doesn't mean there's not something happening, it's just that it's in a form we cannot comprehend. If you take what he says and apply it to the Chinese Room, then couldn't a computer have its own type of

non-human understanding that we can't comprehend? I have included a summary of his arguments below, and it is very technical, but hopefully it makes sense.

"What is it like to be a bat?" is a paper by American philosopher Thomas Nagel, first published in *The Philosophical Review* in October 1974, and later in Nagel's *Mortal Questions* (1979). In it, Nagel argues that materialist theories of mind omit the essential component of consciousness, namely that there is something that it is (or feels) like to be a particular, conscious thing. He argued that an organism had conscious mental states, "if and only if there is something that it is like to be that organism—something it is like *for* the organism." Daniel Dennett called Nagel's example "The most widely cited and influential thought experiment about consciousness."

The thesis attempts to refute reductionism (the philosophical position that a complex system is nothing more than the sum of its parts). For example, a physicalist reductionist's approach to the mind-body problem holds that the mental process humans experience as consciousness can be fully described via physical processes in the brain and body.

Nagel begins by arguing that the conscious experience is widespread, present in many animals (particularly mammals), and that for an organism to have a conscious experience it must be special, in the sense that its qualia or "subjective character of experience" are unique. Nagel stated, "An organism has conscious mental states if and only if there is something that it is like to be that organism - something that it is like for the organism to be itself."

The paper argues that the subjective nature of consciousness undermines any attempt to explain consciousness via objective, reductionist means. A subjective character of experience cannot be explained by a system of functional or intentional states. Consciousness cannot be explained without the subjective character of experience, and the subjective character of experience cannot be explained by a reductionist being; it is a mental phenomenon that cannot be reduced to materialism. Thus for consciousness to be explained from a reductionist stance, the idea of the subjective character of experience would have to be discarded, which is absurd. Neither can a physicalist view, because in such a world each phenomenal experience had by a conscious being would have to have a physical property attributed to it, which is impossible to prove due to the subjectivity of conscious experience. Nagel argues that each and every subjective experience is connected with a "single point of view," making it unfeasible to consider any conscious experience as "objective".

Nagel uses the metaphor of bats to clarify the distinction between subjective and objective concepts. Bats are mammals, so they are assumed to have conscious experience. Nagel used bats for his argument because of their highly evolved and active use of a biological sensory apparatus that is significantly different from that of many other organisms. Bats use echolocation to navigate and perceive objects. This method of perception is similar to the human sense of vision. Both sonar and vision are regarded as perceptual experiences. While it is possible to imagine what it would be like to fly, navigate by sonar, hang upside down and eat bugs like a bat, that is not the same as a bat's perspective. Nagel claims that even if humans were able to metamorphose gradually into bats, their brains would not have been wired as a bat's from birth; therefore, they would only be able to experience the life and behaviors of a bat, rather than the mindset.

Such is the difference between subjective and objective points of view. According to Nagel, "our own mental activity is the only unquestionable fact of our experience", meaning that each individual only knows what it is like to be them (Subjectivism). Objectivity, requires an unbiased, non-subjective state of perception. For Nagel, the objective perspective is not feasible, because humans are limited to subjective experience.

Nagel concludes with the contention that it would be wrong to assume that physicalism is incorrect, since that position is also imperfectly understood. Physicalism claims that states and events are physical, but those physical states and events are only imperfectly characterized. Nevertheless, he holds that physicalism cannot be understood without characterizing objective and subjective experience. That is a necessary precondition for understanding the mind-body problem.

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8.1.2: Determinism

“Physical Determinism”³³

Physical determinism generally refers to the assertion of a deterministic physical universe (greater physical system). This holds that a complete description of the physical state of the world at any given time and a complete statement of the physical laws of nature together entail every truth as to what physical events happen after that time. In a scientific context, the term 'event' is somewhat technical, depending upon which theory one is considering, and basically is the occurrence of some 'state' peculiar to that theory, for example, a quantum state or a thermodynamic state. Physical determinism includes (but is not restricted to) nomological determinism, which holds that all future events are governed by the past or present according to all-encompassing deterministic laws.

The concept of physical determinism has also been used to denote the predictability of a physical system, although this usage is uncommon. Physical determinism can also be viewed as an observed phenomenon of our experience, or a thesis only relevant to mathematical models of physics and other physical sciences. Physical determinism has also been used as a specific deterministic hypothesis about human behavior. Although somewhat unrelated to its standard context, physical determinism has also been used in social engineering theory.

History

The notion of physical determinism takes its classical form in the ideas of Laplace, who posited (in agreement with the physics of his time) that an omniscient observer (called sometimes Laplace's demon) knowing with infinite precision the positions and velocities of every particle in the universe could predict the future entirely. Although such an omniscient observer is a hypothetical construct, and infinite precision exceeds the capacities of human measurement, the illustration is presented as a statement of what in principle would be possible if physical determinism were true, and so reduction to practice is not an issue.

Physical determinism is currently under heavy debate in modern science. For example, physical indeterminism has been proposed to accommodate various interpretations of quantum mechanics. Suggestions have also been made to reformulate the conception of determinism with respect to its application to physical law.

Causal completeness

Physical determinism is related to the question of causal completeness of physics, which is synonymous with the weaker form of causal closure. This is the idea that every real event has a scientific explanation, that science need not search for explanations beyond itself. If causal completeness does not apply to everything in the universe, then the door is open to events that are not subject to physical law. For example, a relatively common view of mental events is that they are an epiphenomenon produced as a by-product of neurological activity, and without causal impact. In this case, only a failure of deterministic physical law would allow room for their causal significance.

Other formulations

A more modern formulation of physical determinism skirts the issue of causal completeness. It is based upon connections between 'events' supplied by a theory:

"a theory is deterministic if, and only if, given its state variables for some initial period, the theory logically determines a unique set of values for those variables for any other period."

— Ernest Nagel, *Alternative descriptions of physical state* p. 292

This quote replaces the idea of 'cause-and-effect' with that of 'logical implication' according to one or another theory that connects events. In addition, an 'event' is related by the theory itself to formalized states described using the parameters defined by that theory. Thus, the details of interpretation are placed where they belong, fitted to the context in which the chosen theory applies. Using the definition of physical determinism above, the limitations of a theory to some particular domain of experience

also limits the associated definition of 'physical determinism' to that same domain.

“Determinism”³⁴

Determinism is the philosophical position that for every event there exist conditions that could cause no other event. "There are many determinisms, depending on what pre-conditions are considered to be determinative of an event or action." Deterministic theories throughout the history of philosophy have sprung from diverse and sometimes overlapping motives and considerations. Some forms of determinism can be empirically tested with ideas from physics and the philosophy of physics. The opposite of determinism is some kind of indeterminism (otherwise called nondeterminism). Determinism is often contrasted with free will.

Determinism often is taken to mean causal determinism, which in physics is known as cause-and-effect. It is the concept that events within a given paradigm are bound by causality in such a way that any state (of an object or event) is completely determined by prior states. This meaning can be distinguished from other varieties of determinism mentioned below.

Other debates often concern the scope of determined systems, with some maintaining that the entire universe is a single determinate system and others identifying other more limited determinate systems (or multiverse). Numerous historical debates involve many philosophical positions and varieties of determinism. They include debates concerning determinism and free will, technically denoted as compatibilistic (allowing the two to coexist) and incompatibilistic (denying their coexistence is a possibility).

Determinism should not be confused with self-determination of human actions by reasons, motives, and desires. Determinism rarely requires that perfect prediction be practically possible.

Varieties

Below are some of the more common viewpoints meant by, or confused with "determinism".

- **Causal determinism** is "the idea that every event is necessitated by antecedent events and conditions together with the laws of nature". However, causal determinism is a broad enough term to consider that "one's deliberations, choices, and actions will often be necessary links in the causal chain that brings something about. In other words, even though our deliberations, choices, and actions are themselves determined like everything else, it is still the case, according to causal determinism, that the occurrence or existence of yet other things depends upon our deliberating, choosing and acting in a certain way". Causal determinism proposes that there is an unbroken chain of prior occurrences stretching back to the origin of the universe. The relation between events may not be specified, nor the origin of that universe. Causal determinists believe that there is nothing in the universe that is uncaused or self-caused. Historical determinism (a sort of path dependence) can also be synonymous with causal determinism. Causal determinism has also been considered more generally as the idea that everything that happens or exists is caused by antecedent conditions. In the case of nomological determinism, these conditions are considered events also, implying that the future is determined completely by preceding events—a combination of prior states of the universe and the laws of nature. Yet they can also be considered metaphysical of origin (such as in the case of theological determinism).
- **Nomological determinism** is the most common form of causal determinism. It is the notion that the past and the present dictate the future entirely and necessarily by rigid natural laws, that every occurrence results inevitably from prior events. Quantum mechanics and various interpretations thereof pose a serious challenge to this view. Nomological determinism is sometimes illustrated by the thought experiment of Laplace's demon. Nomological determinism is sometimes called 'scientific' determinism, although that is a misnomer. Physical determinism is generally used synonymously with nomological determinism (its opposite being physical indeterminism).
- **Necessitarianism** is closely related to the causal determinism described above. It is a metaphysical principle that denies all mere possibility; there is exactly one way for the world to be. Leucippus claimed there were no uncaused events, and that everything occurs for a reason and by necessity.
- **Predeterminism** is the idea that all events are determined in advance. The concept of predeterminism is often argued by invoking causal determinism, implying that there is an unbroken chain of prior occurrences stretching back to the origin of the universe. In the case of predeterminism, this chain of events has been pre-established, and human actions cannot interfere with the outcomes of this pre-established chain. Predeterminism can be used to mean such pre-established causal determinism, in which case it is categorised as a specific type of determinism. It can also be used interchangeably with causal determinism—in the context of its capacity to determine future events. Despite this, predeterminism is often considered as independent of causal determinism. The term predeterminism is also frequently used in the context of biology

and hereditary, in which case it represents a form of biological determinism.

- **Fatalism** is normally distinguished from "determinism" and it is a form of teleological determinism. Fatalism is the idea that everything is fated to happen, so that humans have no control over their future. Fate has arbitrary power, and need not follow any causal or otherwise deterministic laws. Types of Fatalism include hard theological determinism and the idea of predestination, where there is a God who determines all that humans will do. This may be accomplished either by knowing their actions in advance, via some form of omniscience or by decreeing their actions in advance.
- **Theological determinism** is a form of determinism which states that all events that happen are pre-ordained, or predestined to happen, by a monotheistic deity, or that they are destined to occur given its omniscience. Two forms of theological determinism exist, here referenced as strong and weak theological determinism. The first one, strong theological determinism, is based on the concept of a creator deity dictating all events in history: "everything that happens has been predestined to happen by an omniscient, omnipotent divinity". The second form, weak theological determinism, is based on the concept of divine foreknowledge—"because God's omniscience is perfect, what God knows about the future will inevitably happen, which means, consequently, that the future is already fixed". There exist slight variations on the above categorisation. Some claim that theological determinism requires predestination of all events and outcomes by the divinity (i.e. they do not classify the weaker version as 'theological determinism' unless libertarian free will is assumed to be denied as a consequence), or that the weaker version does not constitute 'theological determinism' at all. With respect to free will, "theological determinism is the thesis that God exists and has infallible knowledge of all true propositions including propositions about our future actions", more minimal criteria designed to encapsulate all forms of theological determinism. Theological determinism can also be seen as a form of causal determinism, in which the antecedent conditions are the nature and will of God.
- **Logical determinism** or **Determinateness** is the notion that all propositions, whether about the past, present, or future, are either true or false. Note that one can support Causal Determinism without necessarily supporting Logical Determinism and vice versa (depending on one's views on the nature of time, but also randomness). The problem of free will is especially salient now with Logical Determinism: how can choices be free, given that propositions about the future already have a truth value in the present (i.e. it is already determined as either true or false)? This is referred to as the problem of future contingents.
- Often synonymous with Logical Determinism are the ideas behind **Spatio-temporal Determinism** or **Eternalism**: the view of special relativity. J. J. C. Smart, a proponent of this view, uses the term "tenselessness" to describe the simultaneous existence of past, present, and future. In physics, the "block universe" of Hermann Minkowski and Albert Einstein assumes that time is a fourth dimension (like the three spatial dimensions). In other words, all the other parts of time are real, like the city blocks up and down a street, although the order in which they appear depends on the driver (see Rietdijk–Putnam argument).
- **Adequate determinism** is the idea that quantum indeterminacy can be ignored for most macroscopic events. This is because of quantum decoherence. Random quantum events "average out" in the limit of large numbers of particles (where the laws of quantum mechanics asymptotically approach the laws of classical mechanics). Stephen Hawking explains a similar idea: he says that the microscopic world of quantum mechanics is one of determined probabilities. That is, quantum effects rarely alter the predictions of classical mechanics, which are quite accurate (albeit still not perfectly certain) at larger scales. Something as large as an animal cell, then, would be "adequately determined" (even in light of quantum indeterminacy).
- The **Many-worlds interpretation** accepts the linear casual sets of sequential events with adequate consistency yet also suggests constant forking of casual chains creating "multiple universes" to account for multiple outcomes from single events. Meaning the casual set of events leading to the present are all valid yet appear as a singular linear time stream within a much broader unseen conic probability field of other outcomes that "split off" from the locally observed timeline. Under this model causal sets are still "consistent" yet not exclusive to singular iterated outcomes. The interpretation side steps the exclusive retrospective casual chain problem of "could not have done otherwise" by suggesting "the other outcome does exist" in a set of parallel universe time streams that split off when the action occurred. This theory is sometimes described with the example of agent based choices but more involved models argue that recursive causal splitting occurs with all particle wave functions at play. This model is highly contested with multiple objections from the scientific community.

Philosophical connections

With nature/nurture controversy

Although some of the above forms of determinism concern human behaviors and cognition, others frame themselves as an answer to the debate on nature and nurture. They will suggest that one factor will entirely determine behavior. As scientific understanding has grown, however, the strongest versions of these theories have been widely rejected as a single-cause fallacy.

In other words, the modern deterministic theories attempt to explain how the interaction of both nature and nurture is entirely predictable. The concept of heritability has been helpful in making this distinction.

Biological determinism, sometimes called genetic determinism, is the idea that each of human behaviors, beliefs, and desires are fixed by human genetic nature.

Behaviorism involves the idea that all behavior can be traced to specific causes—either environmental or reflexive. John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner developed this nurture-focused determinism.

Cultural determinism or social determinism is the nurture-focused theory that the culture in which we are raised determines who we are.

Environmental determinism, also known as climatic or geographical determinism, proposes that the physical environment, rather than social conditions, determines culture. Supporters of environmental determinism often also support Behavioral determinism. Key proponents of this notion have included Ellen Churchill Semple, Ellsworth Huntington, Thomas Griffith Taylor and possibly Jared Diamond, although his status as an environmental determinist is debated.

With particular factors

Other 'deterministic' theories actually seek only to highlight the importance of a particular factor in predicting the future. These theories often use the factor as a sort of guide or constraint on the future. They need not suppose that complete knowledge of that one factor would allow us to make perfect predictions.

Psychological determinism can mean that humans must act according to reason, but it can also be synonymous with some sort of Psychological egoism. The latter is the view that humans will always act according to their perceived best interest.

Linguistic determinism claims that our language determines (at least limits) the things we can think and say and thus know. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis argues that individuals experience the world based on the grammatical structures they habitually use.

Economic determinism is the theory which attributes primacy to the economic structure over politics in the development of human history. It is associated with the dialectical materialism of Karl Marx.

Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that presumes that a society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values.

With free will

Philosophers have debated both the truth of determinism, and the truth of free will. Compatibilism refers to the view that free will is, in some sense, compatible with determinism. The three incompatibilist positions, on the other hand, deny this possibility. The hard incompatibilists hold that both determinism and free will do not exist, the libertarians that determinism does not hold, and free will might exist, and the hard determinists that determinism does hold and free will does not exist.

The standard argument against free will, according to philosopher J. J. C. Smart focuses on the implications of determinism for 'free will'. However, he suggests free will is denied whether determinism is true or not. On one hand, if determinism is true, all our actions are predicted and we are assumed not to be free; on the other hand, if determinism is false, our actions are presumed to be random and as such we do not seem free because we had no part in controlling what happened.

In his book, *The Moral Landscape*, author and neuroscientist Sam Harris also argues against free will. He offers one thought experiment where a mad scientist represents determinism. In Harris' example, the mad scientist uses a machine to control all the desires, and thus all the behavior, of a particular human. Harris believes that it is no longer as tempting, in this case, to say the victim has "free will". Harris says nothing changes if the machine controls desires at random - the victim still seems to lack free will.

Harris then argues that we are also the victims of such unpredictable desires (but due to the unconscious machinations of our brain, rather than those of a mad scientist). Based on this introspection, he writes "This discloses the real mystery of free will: if our experience is compatible with its utter absence, how can we say that we see any evidence for it in the first place?" adding that "Whether they are predictable or not, we do not cause our causes." That is, he believes there is compelling evidence of absence of free will.

Some research (founded by the John Templeton Foundation) suggested that reducing a person's belief in free will is dangerous, making them less helpful and more aggressive. This could occur because the individual's sense of self-efficacy suffers.

With the soul

Some determinists argue that materialism does not present a complete understanding of the universe, because while it can describe determinate interactions among material things, it ignores the minds or souls of conscious beings.

A number of positions can be delineated:

1. Immaterial souls are all that exist (Idealism).
2. Immaterial souls exist and exert a non-deterministic causal influence on bodies. (Traditional free-will, interactionist dualism).
3. Immaterial souls exist, but are part of deterministic framework.
4. Immaterial souls exist, but exert no causal influence, free or determined (epiphenomenalism, occasionalism)
5. Immaterial souls do not exist — there is no mind-body dichotomy, and there is a Materialistic explanation for intuitions to the contrary.

With ethics and morality

Another topic of debate is the implication that Determinism has on morality. Hard determinism (a belief in determinism, and not free will) is particularly criticized for seeming to make traditional moral judgments impossible. Some philosophers, however, find this an acceptable conclusion.

Philosopher and incompatibilist Peter van Inwagen introduces this thesis as such:

Argument that Free Will is Required for Moral Judgments

1. The moral judgment that you shouldn't have done X implies that you should have done something else instead
2. That you should have done something else instead implies that there was something else for you to do
3. That there was something else for you to do implies that you could have done something else
4. That you could have done something else implies that you have free will
5. If you don't have free will to have done other than X we cannot make the moral judgment that you shouldn't have done X.

However, a compatibilist might have an issue with Inwagen's process because one can not change the past like his arguments center around. A compatibilist who centers around plans for the future might posit:

1. The moral judgment that you should not have done X implies that you can do something else instead
2. That you can do something else instead implies that there is something else for you to do
3. That there is something else for you to do implies that you can do something else
4. That you can do something else implies that you have free will for planning future recourse
5. If you have free will to do other than X we can make the moral judgment that you should do other than X, and punishing you as a responsible party for having done X that you know you should not have done can help you remember to not do X in the future.

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8.1.3: The Illusion of Free Will

35

The Illusion of Free Will

80. Theologians repeatedly tell us, that man is free, while all their principles conspire to destroy his liberty. By endeavouring to justify the Divinity, they in reality accuse him of the blackest injustice. They suppose, that without grace, man is necessitated to do evil. They affirm, that God will punish him, because God has not given him grace to do good!

Little reflection will suffice to convince us, that man is necessitated in all his actions, that his free will is a chimera, even in the system of theologians. Does it depend upon man to be born of such or such parents? Does it depend upon man to imbibe or not to imbibe the opinions of his parents or instructors? If I had been born of idolatrous or Mahometan parents, would it have depended upon me to become a Christian? Yet, divines gravely assure us, that a just God will damn without pity all those, to whom he has not given grace to know the Christian religion!

Man's birth is wholly independent of his choice. He is not asked whether he is willing, or not, to come into the world. Nature does not consult him upon the country and parents she gives him. His acquired ideas, his opinions, his notions true or false, are necessary fruits of the education which he has received, and of which he has not been the director. His passions and desires are necessary consequences of the temperament given him by nature. During his whole life, his volitions and actions are determined by his connections, habits, occupations, pleasures, and conversations; by the thoughts, that are involuntarily presented to his mind; in a word, by a multitude of events and accidents, which it is out of his power to foresee or prevent. Incapable of looking into futurity, he knows not what he will do. From the instant of his birth to that of his death, he is never free. You will say, that he wills, deliberates, chooses, determines; and you will hence conclude, that his actions are free. It is true, that man wills, but he is not master of his will or his desires; he can desire and will only what he judges advantageous to himself; he can neither love pain, nor detest pleasure. It will be said, that he sometimes prefers pain to pleasure; but then he prefers a momentary pain with a view of procuring a greater and more durable pleasure. In this case, the prospect of a greater good necessarily determines him to forego a less considerable good.

The lover does not give his mistress the features which captivate him; he is not then master of loving, or not loving the object of his tenderness; he is not master of his imagination or temperament. Whence it evidently follows, that man is not master of his volitions and desires. "But man," you will say, "can resist his desires; therefore he is free." Man resists his desires, when the motives, which divert him from an object, are stronger than those, which incline him towards it; but then his resistance is necessary. A man, whose fear of dishonour or punishment is greater than his love of money, necessarily resists the desire of stealing.

"Are we not free, when we deliberate?" But, are we masters of knowing or not knowing, of being in doubt or certainty? Deliberation is a necessary effect of our uncertainty respecting the consequences of our actions. When we are sure, or think we are sure, of these consequences, we necessarily decide, and we then act necessarily according to our true or false judgment. Our judgments, true or false, are not free; they are necessarily determined by the ideas, we have received, or which our minds have formed.

Man is not free in his choice; he is evidently necessitated to choose what he judges most useful and agreeable. Neither is he free, when he suspends his choice; he is forced to suspend it until he knows, or thinks he knows, the qualities of the objects presented to him, or, until he has weighed the consequences of his actions. "Man," you will say, "often decides in favour of actions, which he knows must be detrimental to himself; man sometimes kills himself; therefore he is free." I deny it. Is man master of reasoning well or ill? Do not his reason and wisdom depend upon the opinions he has formed, or upon the conformation of his machine? As neither one nor the other depends upon his will, they are no proof of liberty. "If I lay a wager, that I shall do, or not do a thing, am I not free? Does it not depend upon me to do it or not?" No, I answer; the desire of winning the wager will necessarily determine you to do, or not to do the thing in question. "But, supposing I consent to lose the wager?" Then the desire of proving to me, that you are free, will have become a stronger motive than the desire of winning the wager; and this motive will have necessarily determined you to do, or not to do, the thing in question.

"But," you will say, "I feel free." This is an illusion, that may be compared to that of the fly in the fable, who, lighting upon the pole of a heavy carriage, applauded himself for directing its course. Man, who thinks himself free, is a fly, who imagines he has power to move the universe, while he is himself unknowingly carried along by it.

The inward persuasion that we are free to do, or not to do a thing, is but a mere illusion. If we trace the true principle of our actions, we shall find, that they are always necessary consequences of our volitions and desires, which are never in our power. You think yourself free, because you do what you will; but are you free to will, or not to will; to desire, or not to desire? Are not your volitions and desires necessarily excited by objects or qualities totally independent of you?

81. "If the actions of men are necessary, if men are not free, by what right does society punish criminals? Is it not very unjust to chastise beings, who could not act otherwise than they have done?" If the wicked act necessarily according to the impulses of their evil nature, society, in punishing them, acts necessarily by the desire of self-preservation. Certain objects necessarily produce in us the sensation of pain; our nature then forces us against them, and avert them from us. A tiger, pressed by hunger, springs upon the man, whom he wishes to devour; but this man is not master of his fear, and necessarily seeks means to destroy the tiger.

82. "If every thing be necessary, the errors, opinions, and ideas of men are fatal; and, if so, how or why should we attempt to reform them?" The errors of men are necessary consequences of ignorance. Their ignorance, prejudice, and credulity are necessary consequences of their inexperience, negligence, and want of reflection, in the same manner as delirium or lethargy are necessary effects of certain diseases. Truth, experience, reflection, and reason, are remedies calculated to cure ignorance, fanaticism and follies. But, you will ask, why does not truth produce this effect upon many disordered minds? It is because some diseases resist all remedies; because it is impossible to cure obstinate patients, who refuse the remedies presented to them; because the interest of some men, and the folly of others, necessarily oppose the admission of truth.

A cause produces its effect only when its action is not interrupted by stronger causes, which then weakens or render useless, the action of the former. It is impossible that the best arguments should be adopted by men, who are interested in error, prejudiced in its favour, and who decline all reflection; but truth must necessarily undeceive honest minds, who seek her sincerely. Truth is a cause; it necessarily produces its effects, when its impulse is not intercepted by causes, which suspend its effects.

83. "To deprive man of his free will," it is said, "makes him a mere machine, an automaton. Without liberty, he will no longer have either merit or virtue." What is merit in man? It is a manner of acting, which renders him estimable in the eyes of his fellow-beings. What is virtue? It is a disposition, which inclines us to do good to others. What can there be contemptible in machines, or automatons, capable of producing effects so desirable? Marcus Aurelius was useful to the vast Roman Empire. By what right would a machine despise a machine, whose springs facilitate its action? Good men are springs, which second society in its tendency to happiness; the wicked are ill-formed springs, which disturb the order, progress, and harmony of society. If, for its own utility, society cherishes and rewards the good, it also harasses and destroys the wicked, as useless or hurtful.

84. The world is a necessary agent. All the beings, that compose it, are united to each other, and cannot act otherwise than they do, so long as they are moved by the same causes, and endued with the same properties. When they lose properties, they will necessarily act in a different way. God himself, admitting his existence, cannot be considered a free agent. If there existed a God, his manner of acting would necessarily be determined by the properties inherent in his nature; nothing would be capable of arresting or altering his will. This being granted, neither our actions, prayers, nor sacrifices could suspend, or change his invariable conduct and immutable designs; whence we are forced to infer, that all religion would be useless.

85. Were not divines in perpetual contradiction with themselves, they would see, that, according to their hypothesis, man cannot be reputed free an instant. Do they not suppose man continually dependent on his God? Are we free, when we cannot exist and be preserved without God, and when we cease to exist at the pleasure of his supreme will? If God has made man out of nothing; if his preservation is a continued creation; if God cannot, an instant, lose sight of his creature; if whatever happens to him, is an effect of the divine will; if man can do nothing of himself; if all the events, which he experiences, are effects of the divine decrees; if he does no good without grace from on high, how can they maintain, that a man enjoys a moment's liberty? If God did not preserve him in the moment of sin, how could man sin? If God then preserves him, God forces him to exist, that he may sin.

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8.1.4: Compatibilism

Compatibilism³⁶

Frankfurt Cases - The Principle of Alternate Possibilities

Alternative Possibilities are one of the key requirements for the freedom component of free will, critically needed for libertarian free will.

Alternative Possibilities have been part of the problem of free will at least from the time of Thomas Hobbes, who denied anyone ever "could have done otherwise".

In 1961, Harry Frankfurt famously defined what he called "The Principle of Alternate Possibilities" or PAP.

"a person is morally responsible for what he has done only if he could have done otherwise."

Frankfurt developed sophisticated arguments (thought experiments) to disprove this principle using what is known as a Frankfurt controller, but might be called Frankfurt's Demon.

The Frankfurt is a hypothetical agent who can control the minds of others, either a "nefarious neuroscientist or a demon inside one's mind that can intervene in our decisions. Considering the absurd nature of his counterfactual intervener, the recent philosophical literature is surprisingly full of articles with "Frankfurt-style cases" supporting Frankfurt, and logical counterexamples to his attack on the principle of alternate possibilities. This work is based on a logical fallacy

Frankfurt's basic claim is as follows:

"The principle of alternate possibilities is false. A person may well be morally responsible for what he has done even though he could not have done otherwise. The principle's plausibility is an illusion, which can be made to vanish by bringing the relevant moral phenomena into sharper focus."

Libertarians like Robert Kane, David Widerker, and Carl Ginet have mounted attacks on Frankfurt-type examples, in defense of free will.

The basic idea is that in an indeterministic world Frankfurt's demon cannot know in advance what an agent will do. As Widerker put it, there is no "prior sign" of the agent's de-liberate choice. This is the *epistemic* Kane-Widerker Objection to Frankfurt-style cases.

In information theoretic and *ontological* terms, the information about the choice does not yet exist in the universe. So in order to block an agent's decision, the intervening demon would have to act in advance.

That would eliminate the agent's control and destroy the presumed "responsibility" of the agent for the choice, despite no available alternative possibilities. This is the *ontological* Information Objection.

According to Daniel Dennett's Default Responsibility Principle, the Frankfurt controller is now responsible, not the agent.

Here is a discussion of the problem, from Kane's *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, 2005, (p.87)

5. The Indeterminist World Objection

While the "flicker of freedom" strategy will not suffice to refute Frankfurt, it does lead to a third objection that is more powerful. This third objection is one that has been developed by several philosophers, including myself, David Widerker, Carl Ginet, and Keith Wyma.⁵ We might call it the Indeterministic World Objection. I discuss this objection in my book *Free Will and Values*. Following is a summary of this discussion:

Suppose Jones's choice is undetermined up to the moment when it occurs, as many incompatibilists and libertarians require of

a free choice. Then a Frankfurt controller, such as Black, would face a problem in attempting to control Jones's choice. For if it is undetermined up to the moment when he chooses whether Jones will choose A or B, then the controller Black cannot know before Jones actually chooses what Jones is going to do. Black may wait until Jones actually chooses in order to see what Jones is going to do. But then it will be too late for Black to intervene. Jones will be responsible for the choice in that case, since Black stayed out of it. But Jones will also have had alternative possibilities, since Jones's choice of A or B was undetermined and therefore it could have gone either way. Suppose, by contrast, Black wants to ensure that Jones will make the choice Black wants (choice A). Then Black cannot stay out of it until Jones chooses. He must instead act in advance to bring it about that Jones chooses A. In that case, Jones will indeed have no alternative possibilities, but neither will Jones be responsible for the outcome. Black will be responsible since Black will have intervened in order to bring it about that Jones would choose as Black wanted.

In other words, if free choices are undetermined, as incompatibilists require, a Frankfurt controller like Black cannot control them without actually intervening and making the agent choose as the controller wants. If the controller stays out of it, the agent will be responsible but will also have had alternative possibilities because the choice was undetermined. If the controller does intervene, by contrast, the agent will not have alternative possibilities but will also not be responsible (the controller will be). So responsibility and alternative possibilities go together after all, and PAP would remain true—moral responsibility requires alternative possibilities—when free choices are not determined.⁶

If this objection is correct, it would show that Frankfurt-type examples will not work in an indeterministic world in which some choices or actions are undetermined. In such a world, as David Widerker has put it, there will not always be a reliable prior sign telling the controller in advance what agents are going to do.⁷ Only in a world in which all of our free actions are determined can the controller always be certain in advance how the agent is going to act. This means that, if you are a compatibilist, who believes free will could exist in a determined world, you might be convinced by Frankfurt-type examples that moral responsibility does not require alternative possibilities. But if you are an incompatibilist or libertarian, who believes that some of our morally responsible acts must be undetermined you need not be convinced by Frankfurt-type examples that moral responsibility does not require alternative possibilities.

5. See Robert Kane, *Free Will and Values* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press 1985) p. 51; David Widerker "Libertarianism and Frankfurt's Attack on the Principle of Alternative Possibilities," *Philosophical Review*, 104 1995: 247-61; Carl Ginet "In Defense of the Principle of Alternative Possibilities: Why I Don't Find Frankfurt's Argument Convincing," *Philosophical Perspectives* 10, 1996: 403-17; Keith Wyma, "Moral Responsibility and the Leeway for Action," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 34 (1997): 57-70.

6. Kane, 1985, p. 51.

7. Widerker, 1995, 248ff.

Alternative Possibilities Are NOT Probabilities

One of the major errors in thinking about alternative possibilities is to assume that they are the direct cause of action. This leads many philosophers to make the oversimplified assumption that if there are two possibilities, for example, that they are equally probable, or perhaps one has thirty percent chance of leading to action, the other seventy percent.

Alternative possibilities are simply that - possibilities. They only lead to action following an act of determination by the will that the action is in accord with the agent's character and values. And the will is adequately determined.

Most philosophers who use the standard argument against free will in their work assume that chance alternative possibilities will show up as random behavior. Here is an example from leading libertarian incompatibilist Peter van Inwagen. He imagines a God who can "replay" exactly the same circumstances to demonstrate the random willings.

Now let us suppose that God a thousand times caused the universe to revert to exactly the state it was in at t_1 (and let us suppose that we are somehow suitably placed, metaphysically speaking, to observe the whole sequence of "replays"). What would have happened? What should we expect to observe? Well, again, we can't say what would have happened, but we can say what would probably have happened: sometimes Alice would have lied and sometimes she would have told the truth. As the number of "replays" increases, we observers shall — almost certainly — observe the ratio of the outcome "truth" to the outcome "lie" settling down to, converging on, some value. We may, for example, observe that, after a fairly large number of replays, Alice lies in thirty percent of the replays and tells the truth in seventy percent of them—and that the figures 'thirty percent' and 'seventy percent' become more and more accurate as the number of replays increases. But let us imagine the simplest case: we observe that Alice tells the truth in about half the replays and lies in about half the replays. If, after one hundred replays, Alice has told the truth fifty-three times and has lied forty-eight times, we'd begin strongly to suspect that the figures after a thousand replays would look something like this: Alice has told the truth four hundred and ninety-three times and has lied five hundred and eight times. Let us suppose that these are indeed the figures after a thousand [1001] replays. Is it not true that as we watch the number of replays

increase we shall become convinced that what will happen in the next replay is a matter of chance.
("Free Will Remains a Mystery," in *Philosophical Perspectives*, vol. 14, 2000, p.14)

In our two-stage model of free will, if Alice is a generally honest person, her character will ensure that she rarely lies even if lying frequently "comes to mind" as one of her alternative possibilities.

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8.1.5: The Prisoner's Dilemma

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The Prisoner's Dilemma

The prisoner's dilemma is a standard example of a game analyzed in **game theory** that shows why two completely "rational" individuals might not cooperate, even if it appears that it is in their best interests to do so. It was originally framed by Merrill Flood and Melvin Dresher working at RAND in 1950. Albert W. Tucker formalized the game with prison sentence rewards and named it, "prisoner's dilemma" (Poundstone, 1992), presenting it as follows:

Two members of a criminal gang are arrested and imprisoned. Each prisoner is in solitary confinement with no means of communicating with the other. The prosecutors lack sufficient evidence to convict the pair on the principal charge. They hope to get both sentenced to a year in prison on a lesser charge. Simultaneously, the prosecutors offer each prisoner a bargain. Each prisoner is given the opportunity either to: betray the other by testifying that the other committed the crime, or to cooperate with the other by remaining silent. The offer is:

- If A and B each betray the other, each of them serves 2 years in prison
- If A betrays B but B remains silent, A will be set free and B will serve 3 years in prison (and vice versa)
- If A and B both remain silent, both of them will only serve 1 year in prison (on the lesser charge)

It is implied that the prisoners will have no opportunity to reward or punish their partner other than the prison sentences they get, and that their decision will not affect their reputation in the future. Because betraying a partner offers a greater reward than cooperating with them, all purely rational self-interested prisoners would betray the other, and so the only possible outcome for two purely rational prisoners is for them to betray each other. The interesting part of this result is that pursuing individual reward logically leads both of the prisoners to betray, when they would get a better reward if they both kept silent. In reality, humans display a systemic bias towards cooperative behavior in this and similar games, much more so than predicted by simple models of "rational" self-interested action. A model based on a different kind of rationality, where people forecast how the game would be played if they formed coalitions and then maximized their forecasts, has been shown to make better predictions of the rate of cooperation in this and similar games, given only the payoffs of the game.

An extended "iterated" version of the game also exists, where the classic game is played repeatedly between the same prisoners, and consequently, both prisoners continuously have an opportunity to penalize the other for previous decisions. If the number of times the game will be played is known to the players, then (by backward induction) two classically rational players will betray each other repeatedly, for the same reasons as the single-shot variant. In an infinite or unknown length game there is no fixed optimum strategy, and Prisoner's Dilemma tournaments have been held to compete and test algorithms.

The prisoner's dilemma game can be used as a model for many real world situations involving cooperative behaviour. In casual usage, the label "prisoner's dilemma" may be applied to situations not strictly matching the formal criteria of the classic or iterative games: for instance, those in which two entities could gain important benefits from cooperating or suffer from the failure to do so, but find it merely difficult or expensive, not necessarily impossible, to coordinate their activities to achieve cooperation.

Strategy for the prisoner's dilemma

Both cannot communicate, they are separated in two individual rooms. The normal game is shown below:

- Prisoner A stays silent (cooperates) & Prisoner B stays silent (cooperates): Each serves 1 year
- Prisoner A stays silent (cooperates) & Prisoner B betrays (defects): Prisoner A gets 3 years & Prisoner B goes free
- Prisoner A betrays (defects) & Prisoner B stays silent (cooperates): Prisoner A goes free & Prisoner B gets 3 years
- Prisoner A betrays (defects) & Prisoner B betrays (defects): Each serves 2 years

It is assumed that both understand the nature of the game, and that despite being members of the same gang, they have no loyalty to each other and will have no opportunity for retribution or reward outside the game. Regardless of what the other decides, each prisoner gets a higher reward by betraying the other ("defecting"). The reasoning involves an argument by dilemma: B will either cooperate or defect. If B cooperates, A should defect, because going free is better than serving 1 year. If B defects, A should also defect, because serving 2 years is better than serving 3. So either way, A should defect. Parallel reasoning will show that B should defect.

Because defection always results in a better payoff than cooperation, regardless of the other player's choice, it is a dominant strategy. Mutual defection is the only strong Nash equilibrium in the game (i.e. the only outcome from which each player could only do worse by unilaterally changing strategy). The dilemma then is that mutual cooperation yields a better outcome than mutual defection but it is not the rational outcome because from a self-interested perspective, the choice to cooperate, at the individual level, is irrational.

Real-life examples

The prisoner setting may seem contrived, but there are in fact many examples in human interaction as well as interactions in nature that have the same payoff matrix. The prisoner's dilemma is therefore of interest to the social sciences such as economics, politics, and sociology, as well as to the biological sciences such as ethology and evolutionary biology. Many natural processes have been abstracted into models in which living beings are engaged in endless games of prisoner's dilemma. This wide applicability of the PD gives the game its substantial importance.

In environmental studies

In environmental studies, the PD is evident in crises such as global climate-change. It is argued all countries will benefit from a stable climate, but any single country is often hesitant to curb CO₂ emissions. The immediate benefit to an individual country to maintain current behavior is perceived to be greater than the purported eventual benefit to all countries if behavior was changed, therefore explaining the impasse concerning climate-change in 2007.

An important difference between climate-change politics and the prisoner's dilemma is uncertainty; the extent and pace at which pollution can change climate is not known. The dilemma faced by government is therefore different from the prisoner's dilemma in that the payoffs of cooperation are unknown. This difference suggests that states will cooperate much less than in a real iterated prisoner's dilemma, so that the probability of avoiding a possible climate catastrophe is much smaller than that suggested by a game-theoretical analysis of the situation using a real iterated prisoner's dilemma.

Osang and Nandy provide a theoretical explanation with proofs for a regulation-driven win-win situation along the lines of Michael Porter's hypothesis, in which government regulation of competing firms is substantial.

In animals

Cooperative behavior of many animals can be understood as an example of the prisoner's dilemma. Often animals engage in long term partnerships, which can be more specifically modeled as iterated prisoner's dilemma. For example, guppies inspect predators cooperatively in groups, and they are thought to punish non-cooperative inspectors.

Vampire bats are social animals that engage in reciprocal food exchange. Applying the payoffs from the prisoner's dilemma can help explain this behavior:

- C/C: "Reward: I get blood on my unlucky nights, which saves me from starving. I have to give blood on my lucky nights, which doesn't cost me too much."
- D/C: "Temptation: You save my life on my poor night. But then I get the added benefit of not having to pay the slight cost of feeding you on my good night."
- C/D: "Sucker's Payoff: I pay the cost of saving your life on my good night. But on my bad night you don't feed me and I run a real risk of starving to death."
- D/D: "Punishment: I don't have to pay the slight costs of feeding you on my good nights. But I run a real risk of starving on my poor nights."

In psychology

In addiction research / behavioral economics, George Ainslie points out that addiction can be cast as an intertemporal PD problem between the present and future selves of the addict. In this case, *defecting* means *relapsing*, and it is easy to see that not defecting both today and in the future is by far the best outcome. The case where one abstains today but relapses in the future is the worst outcome — in some sense the discipline and self-sacrifice involved in abstaining today have been "wasted" because the future relapse means that the addict is right back where he started and will have to start over (which is quite demoralizing,

and makes starting over more difficult). Relapsing today and tomorrow is a slightly "better" outcome, because while the addict is still addicted, they haven't put the effort in to trying to stop. The final case, where one engages in the addictive behavior today while abstaining "tomorrow" will be familiar to anyone who has struggled with an addiction. The problem here is that (as in other PDs) there is an obvious benefit to defecting "today", but tomorrow one will face the same PD, and the same obvious benefit will be present then, ultimately leading to an endless string of defections.

John Gottman in his research described in "the science of trust" defines good relationships as those where partners know not to enter the (D,D) cell or at least not to get dynamically stuck there in a loop.

In economics

Advertising is sometimes cited as a real-example of the prisoner's dilemma. When cigarette advertising was legal in the United States, competing cigarette manufacturers had to decide how much money to spend on advertising. The effectiveness of Firm A's advertising was partially determined by the advertising conducted by Firm B. Likewise, the profit derived from advertising for Firm B is affected by the advertising conducted by Firm A. If both Firm A and Firm B chose to advertise during a given period, then the advertising cancels out, receipts remain constant, and expenses increase due to the cost of advertising. Both firms would benefit from a reduction in advertising. However, should Firm B choose not to advertise, Firm A could benefit greatly by advertising. Nevertheless, the optimal amount of advertising by one firm depends on how much advertising the other undertakes. As the best strategy is dependent on what the other firm chooses there is no dominant strategy, which makes it slightly different from a prisoner's dilemma. The outcome is similar, though, in that both firms would be better off were they to advertise less than in the equilibrium. Sometimes cooperative behaviors do emerge in business situations. For instance, cigarette manufacturers endorsed the making of laws banning cigarette advertising, understanding that this would reduce costs and increase profits across the industry.^[1] This analysis is likely to be pertinent in many other business situations involving advertising.^[2]

Without enforceable agreements, members of a cartel are also involved in a (multi-player) prisoner's dilemma. 'Cooperating' typically means keeping prices at a pre-agreed minimum level. 'Defecting' means selling under this minimum level, instantly taking business (and profits) from other cartel members. Anti-trust authorities want potential cartel members to mutually defect, ensuring the lowest possible prices for consumers.

In sport

Doping in sport has been cited as an example of a prisoner's dilemma.

Two competing athletes have the option to use an illegal and/or dangerous drug to boost their performance. If neither athlete takes the drug, then neither gains an advantage. If only one does, then that athlete gains a significant advantage over their competitor, reduced by the legal and/or medical dangers of having taken the drug. If both athletes take the drug, however, the benefits cancel out and only the dangers remain, putting them both in a worse position than if neither had used doping.

Multiplayer dilemmas

Many real-life dilemmas involve multiple players. Although metaphorical, Hardin's tragedy of the commons may be viewed as an example of a multi-player generalization of the PD: Each villager makes a choice for personal gain or restraint. The collective reward for unanimous (or even frequent) defection is very low payoffs (representing the destruction of the "commons"). A commons dilemma most people can relate to is washing the dishes in a shared house. By not washing dishes an individual can gain by saving his time, but if that behavior is adopted by every resident the collective cost is no clean plates for anyone.

The commons are not always exploited: William Poundstone, in a book about the prisoner's dilemma (see References below), describes a situation in New Zealand where newspaper boxes are left unlocked. It is possible for people to take a paper without paying (*defecting*) but very few do, feeling that if they do not pay then neither will others, destroying the system. Subsequent research by Elinor Ostrom, winner of the 2009 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, hypothesized that the tragedy of the commons is oversimplified, with the negative outcome influenced by outside influences. Without complicating pressures, groups communicate and manage the commons among themselves for their mutual benefit, enforcing social norms to preserve the resource and achieve the maximum good for the group, an example of effecting the best case outcome for PD.

In international politics

In international political theory, the Prisoner's Dilemma is often used to demonstrate the coherence of strategic realism, which holds that in international relations, all states (regardless of their internal policies or professed ideology), will act in their rational self-interest given international anarchy. A classic example is an arms race like the Cold War and similar conflicts. During the Cold War the opposing alliances of NATO and the Warsaw Pact both had the choice to arm or disarm. From each side's point of view, disarming whilst their opponent continued to arm would have led to military inferiority and possible annihilation. Conversely, arming whilst their opponent disarmed would have led to superiority. If both sides chose to arm, neither could afford to attack the other, but at the high cost of developing and maintaining a nuclear arsenal. If both sides chose to disarm, war would be avoided and there would be no costs.

Although the 'best' overall outcome is for both sides to disarm, the rational course for both sides is to arm, and this is indeed what happened. Both sides poured enormous resources into military research and armament in a war of attrition for the next thirty years until the Soviet Union could not withstand the economic cost. The same logic could be applied in any similar scenario, be it economic or technological competition between sovereign states.

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8.1.6: The Trial of Leopold and Loeb

The Trial of Leopold and Loeb

Closing Argument

The State of Illinois v. Nathan Leopold & Richard Loeb

Delivered by Clarence Darrow

Chicago, Illinois, August 22, 1924

...

I insist, Your Honor, that had this been the case of two boys of these defendants' age, unconnected with families of great wealth, there is not a state's attorney in Illinois who could not have consented at once to a plea of guilty and a punishment in the penitentiary for life. Not one. No lawyer could have justified any other attitude. No prosecution could have justified it.

We are here with the lives of two boys imperiled, with the public aroused. For what? Because, unfortunately, the parents have money. Nothing else.

I have heard in the last six weeks nothing but the cry for blood. I have heard from the office of the state's attorney only ugly hate. I have heard precedents quoted which would be a disgrace to a savage race. I have seen a court urged almost to the point of threats to hang two boys, in the face of science, in the face of philosophy, in the face of humanity, in the face of experience, in the face of all the better and more humane thought of the age.

...

We have said to the public and to this court that neither the parents, nor the friends, nor the attorneys would want these boys released. Unfortunate though it be, it is true, and those the closest to them know perfectly well that they should not be released, and that they should be permanently isolated from society. We are asking this court to save their lives, which is the least and the most that a judge can do.

...

Who were these two boys? And how did it happen?

On a certain day they killed poor little Robert Franks. They were not to get \$10,000; they were to get \$5,000 if it worked; that is, \$5,000 each. Neither one could get more than five, and either one was risking his neck in the job. So each one of my clients was risking his neck for \$5,000, if it had anything to do with it, which it did not.

Did they need the money? Why at this very time, and a few months before, Dickie Loeb had \$3,000 [in his] checking account in the bank. Your Honor, I would be ashamed to talk about this except that in all apparent seriousness they are asking to kill these two boys on the strength of this flimsy foolishness. At that time, Richard Loeb had a three-thousand-dollar checking account in the bank. He had three Liberty Bonds, one of which was past due, and the interest on each of them had not been collected for three years. And yet they would ask to hang him on the theory that he committed this murder because he needed money.

How about Leopold? Leopold was in regular receipt of \$125 a month; he had an automobile; paid nothing for board and clothes, and expenses; he got money whenever he wanted it, and he had arranged to go to Europe and had bought his ticket and was going to leave about the time he was arrested in this case. He passed his examination for the Harvard Law School, and was going to take a short trip to Europe before it was time for him to attend the fall term. His ticket had been bought, and his father was to give him \$3,000 to make the trip. Your Honor, jurors sometimes make mistakes, and courts do, too. If on this evidence the court is to construe a motive out of this case, then I insist that a motive could be construed out of any set of circumstances and facts that might be imagined.

The boys had been reared in luxury, they had never been denied anything; no want or desire left unsatisfied; no debts; no need of

money; nothing. And yet they murdered a little boy, against whom they had nothing in the world, without malice, without reason, to get \$5,000 each. All right. All right, Your Honor, if the court believes it, if anyone believes it, I can't help it. That is what this case rests on. It could not stand up a minute without motive. without it, it was the senseless act of immature and diseased children, as it was; a senseless act of children, wandering around in the dark and moved by some motion, that we still perhaps have not the knowledge or the insight into life to thoroughly understand.

...

We have sought to tell this court why he should not hang these boys. We have sought to tell this court, and to make this court believe, that they were diseased of mind, and that they were of tender age. However, before I discuss that, I ought to say another word in reference to the question of motive in this case. If there was no motive, except the senseless act of immature boys, then of course there is taken from this case all of the feeling of deep guilt upon the part of these defendants.

There was neither cruelty to the deceased, beyond taking his life, nor was there any depth of guilt and depravity on the part of the defendants, for it was a truly motiveless act, without the slightest feeling of hatred or revenge, done by a couple of children for no sane reason.

But, Your Honor, we have gone further than that, and we have sought to show you, as I think we have, the condition of these boys' minds. Of course it is not an easy task to find out the condition of another person's mind. Now, I was about to say that it needs no expert, it needs nothing but a bare recitation of these facts, and a fair consideration of them, to convince any human being that this was the act of diseased brains.

But let's get to something stronger than that. Were these boys in their right minds? Here were two boys with good intellect, one eighteen and one nineteen. They had all the prospects that life could hold out for any of the young; one a graduate of Chicago and another of Ann Arbor; one who had passed his examination for the Harvard Law School and was about to take a trip in Europe, another who had passed at Ann Arbor, the youngest in his class, with \$3,000 in the bank. Boys who never knew what it was to want a dollar; boys who could reach any position that was given to boys of that kind to reach; boys of distinguished and honorable families, families of wealth and position, with all the world before them. And they gave it all up for nothing, for nothing! They took a little companion of one of them, on a crowded street, and killed him, for nothing, and sacrificed everything that could be of value in human life upon the crazy scheme of a couple of immature lads.

Now, Your Honor, you have been a boy; I have been a boy. And we have known other boys. The best way to understand somebody else is to put yourself in his place. Is it within the realm of your imagination that a boy who was right, with all the prospects of life before him, who could choose what he wanted, without the slightest reason in the world would lure a young companion to his death, and take his place in the shadow of the gallows?

How insane they are I care not, whether medically or legally. They did not reason; they could not reason; they committed the most foolish, most unprovoked, most purposeless, most causeless act that any two boys ever committed, and they put themselves where the rope is dangling above their heads.

There are not physicians enough in the world to convince any thoughtful, fair-minded man that these boys are right. Was their act one of deliberation, of intellect, or were they driven by some force such as Dr. White and Dr. Glueck and Dr. Healy have told this court?

There are only two theories; one is that their diseased brains drove them to it; the other is the old theory of possession by devils, and my friend Marshall could have read you books on that, too, but it has been pretty well given up in Illinois. That they were intelligent, sane, sound, and reasoning is unthinkable. Let me call Your Honor's attention to another thing.

Why did they kill little Bobby Franks? Not for money, not for spite; not for hate. They killed him as they might kill a spider or a fly, for the experience. They killed him because they were made that way. Because somewhere in the infinite processes that go to the making up of the boy or the man something slipped, and those unfortunate lads sit here hated, despised, outcasts, with the community shouting for their blood. Mr. Savage, with the immaturity of youth and inexperience, says that if we hang them there will be no more killing. This world has been one long slaughterhouse from the beginning until today, and killing goes on and on and on, and will forever. Why not read something, why not study something, why not think instead of blindly shouting for death?

Kill them. Will that prevent other senseless boys or other vicious men or vicious women from killing? No! It will simply call upon every weak-minded person to do as they have done. I know how easy it is to I talk about mothers when you want to do something cruel. But I am thinking of the others, too. I know that any mother might be the mother of little Bobby Franks, who left his home and went to his school, and who never came back. I know that any mother might be the mother of Richard Loeb and Nathan

Leopold, just the same. The trouble is this, that if she is the mother of a Nathan Leopold or of a Richard Loeb, she has to ask herself the question: "How come my children came to be what they are? From what ancestry did they get this strain? How far removed was the poison that destroyed their lives? Was I the bearer of the seed that brings them to death?" Any mother might be the mother of any of them. But these two are the victims.

No one knows what will be the fate of the child he gets or the child she bears; the fate of the child is the last thing they consider.

I am sorry for the fathers as well as the mothers, for the fathers who give their strength and their lives for educating and protecting and creating a fortune for the boys that they love; for the mothers who go down into the shadow of death for their children, who nourish them and care for them, and risk their lives, that they may live, who watch them with tenderness and fondness and longing, and who go down into dishonor and disgrace for the children that they love.

All of these are helpless. We are all helpless. But when you are pitying the father and the mother of poor Bobby Franks, what about the fathers and mothers of these two unfortunate boys, and what about the, unfortunate boys themselves, and what about all the fathers and all the mothers and all the boys and all the girls who tread a dangerous maze in darkness from birth to death?

Do you think you can cure the hatreds and the maladjustments of the world by hanging them? You simply show your ignorance and your hate when you say it. You may here and there cure hatred with love and understanding, but you can only add fuel to the flames by cruelty and hate.

Your Honor, that no human being could have done what these boys did, excepting through the operation of a diseased brain. I do not propose to go through each step of the terrible deed, it would take too long. But I do want to call the attention of this court to some of the other acts of these two boys, in this distressing and weird homicide; acts which show conclusively that there could be no reason for their conduct.

I want to come down now to the actions on the afternoon of the tragedy.

Without any excuse, without the slightest motive, not moved by money, not moved by passion or hatred, by nothing except the vague wanderings of children, about four o'clock in the afternoon they started out to find somebody to kill. For nothing.

They went over to the Harvard School. Dick's little brother was there, on the playground. Dick went there himself in open daylight, known by all of them; he had been a pupil there himself, the school was near his home, and he looked over the little boys. They first picked out a little boy named Levinson, and Dick trailed him around. Now, of course, that is a hard story. It is a story that shocks one. A boy bent on killing, not knowing where he would go or who he would get, but seeking some victim. Here is a little boy, but the circumstances are not opportune, and so he fails to get him. Dick abandons that lead; Dick and Nathan are in the car, and they see Bobby Franks on the street, and they call to him to get into the car. It is about five o'clock in the afternoon, in the long summer days, on a thickly settled street, built up with homes, the houses of their friends and their companions known to everybody, automobiles appearing and disappearing, and they take him in the car.

If there had been a question of revenge, yes; if there had been a question of hate, where no one cares for his own fate, intent only on accomplishing his end, yes. But without any motive or any reason they picked up this little boy right in sight of their own homes, and surrounded by their neighbors. They hit him over the head with a chisel and killed him, and go on about their business, driving this car within half a block of Loeb's home, within the same distance of the Franks's home, drive it past the neighbors that they knew, in the open highway, in broad daylight. And still men will say that they have a bright intellect.

I say again, whatever madness and hate and frenzy may do to the human mind, there is not a single person who reasons who can believe that one of these acts was the act of men, of brains that were not diseased. There is no other explanation for it. And had it not been for the wealth and the weirdness and the notoriety, they would have been sent to the psychopathic hospital for examination, and been taken care of, instead of the state demanding that this court take the last pound of flesh and the last drop of blood from two irresponsible lads.

They pull the dead boy into the backseat, and wrap him in a blanket, and this funeral car starts on its route. If ever any death car went over the same route or the same kind of a route driven by sane people, I have never heard of it, and I fancy no one else has ever heard of it.

This car is driven for twenty miles. The slightest accident, the slightest misfortune, a bit of curiosity, an arrest for speeding, anything would bring destruction. They go down the Midway, through the park, meeting hundreds of machines, in sight of thousands of eyes, with this dead boy. They go down a thickly populated street through South Chicago, and then for three miles take the longest street to go through this city; built solid with business, buildings, filled with automobiles backed upon the street,

with streetcars on the track, with thousands of peering eyes; one boy driving and the other on the backseat, with the corpse of little Bobby Franks, the blood streaming from him, wetting everything in the car.

And yet they tell me that this is sanity; they tell me that the brains of these boys are not diseased. Their conduct shows exactly what it was, and shows that this court has before him two young men who should be examined in a psychopathic hospital and treated kindly and with care. They get through South Chicago, and they take the regular automobile road down toward Hammond. They stop at the forks of the road, and leave little Bobby Franks, soaked with blood, in the machine, and get their dinner, and eat it without an emotion or a qualm.

I repeat, you may search the annals of crime, and you can find no parallel. It is utterly at variance with every motive, and every act and every part of conduct that influences normal people in the commission of crime. There is not a sane thing in all of this from the beginning to the end. There was not a normal act in any of it, from its inception in a diseased brain, until today, when they sit here awaiting their doom.

But we are told that they planned. Well, what does that mean? A maniac plans, an idiot plans, an animal plans; any brain that functions may plan. But their plans were the diseased plans of the diseased mind. Is there any man with an air of intellect and a decent regard for human life, and the slightest bit of heart that does not understand this situation? And still, Your Honor, on account of its weirdness and its strangeness, and its advertising, we are forced to fight. For what? Forced to plead to this court that two boys, one eighteen and the other nineteen, may be permitted to live in silence and solitude and disgrace and spend all their days in the penitentiary. Asking this court and the state's attorney to be merciful enough to let these two boys be locked up in a prison until they die.

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8.2: Believing in Free Will makes you feel more like your True Self

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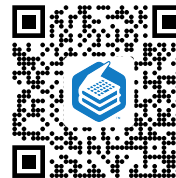


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