CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-18027-7 — Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed
Frontmatter
More Information

Newcomb's Problem

Newcomb's Problem is a controversial paradox of decision theory. It is easily explained and easily understood, and there is a strong chance that most of us have actually faced it in some form or other. And yet it has proven as thorny and intractable a puzzle as much older and better-known philosophical problems of consciousness, skepticism and fatalism. It brings into very sharp and focused disagreement several long-standing philosophical theories concerning practical rationality, the nature of free will and the direction and analysis of causation. This volume introduces readers to the nature of Newcomb's Problem, and ten chapters by leading scholars present the most recent debates around the Problem and analyze its ramifications for decision theory, metaphysics, philosophical psychology and political science. Their chapters highlight the status of Newcomb's Problem as a live and continuing issue in modern philosophy.

Arif Ahmed is Reader in Philosophy at the University of Cambridge. He is the author of *Saul Kripke* (2007), *Wittgenstein's 'Philosophical Investigations': A Reader's Guide* (2010), and *Evidence, Decision and Causality* (2014), and is the editor of *Wittgenstein's 'Philosophical Investigations': A Critical Guide* (2010).

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-18027-7 — Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed
Frontmatter
More Information

Classic Philosophical Arguments

Over the centuries, a number of individual arguments have formed a crucial part of philosophical enquiry. The volumes in this series examine these arguments, looking at the ramifications and applications which they have come to have, the challenges which they have encountered, and the ways in which they have stood the test of time.

Titles in the Series

The Prisoner's Dilemma
Edited by Martin Peterson
The Original Position
Edited by Timothy Hinton
The Brain in a Vat
Edited by Sanford C. Goldberg
Pascal's Wager
Edited by Paul Bartha and Lawrence Pasternack
Ontological Arguments
Edited by Graham Oppy
Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-18027-7 — Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed
Frontmatter
More Information

Newcomb's Problem

Edited by
Arif Ahmed
University of Cambridge

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-18027-7 — Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed
Frontmatter
More Information

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107180277
DOI: 10.1017/9781316847893

© Cambridge University Press 2018

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2018

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Ahmed, Arif, editor.
Title: Newcomb's problem / edited by Arif Ahmed (University of Cambridge).
Description: Cambridge ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2018. |
Series: Classic philosophical arguments | Includes bibliographical references.
Identifiers: LCCN 2018029219 | ISBN 9781107180277 (hardback) | ISBN 9781316632161 (pbk.)
Subjects: LCSH: Game theory. | Choice (Psychology) | Decision making.
Classification: LCC QA269 .N487 2018 | DDC 519.5/42–dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2018029219

ISBN 978-1-107-18027-7 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-316-63216-1 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-18027-7 — Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed
Frontmatter
More Information

Contents

Contributors *page* vi
Acknowledgments vii

Introduction 1
Arif Ahmed

1 Does Newcomb's Problem Actually Exist? 19
José Luis Bermúdez

2 Newcomb's Problem, Rationality, and Restraint 42
Chrisoula Andreou

3 The "Why Ain'cha Rich?" Argument 55
Arif Ahmed

4 Epistemic Time Bias in Newcomb's Problem 73
Melissa Fusco

5 Newcomb's Problem is Everyone's Problem: Making Political and Economic Decisions when Behavior is Interdependent 96
Robert Grafstein

6 Success-First Decision Theories 115
Preston Greene

7 Deliberation and Stability in Newcomb Problems and Pseudo-Newcomb Problems 138
James M. Joyce

8 "Click!" Bait for Causalists 160
Huw Price and Yang Liu

9 Game Theory and Decision Theory (Causal and Evidential) 180
Robert Stalnaker

10 Diagnosing Newcomb's Problem with Causal Graphs 201
Reuben Stern

References 221
Index 232

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-18027-7 — Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed
Frontmatter
More Information

Contributors

Arif Ahmed is Reader in Philosophy at the University of Cambridge.

Chrisoula Andreou is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Utah.

José Luis Bermúdez is Professor of Philosophy and Samuel Rhea Gammon Professor in Liberal Arts at Texas A&M University.

Melissa Fusco is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University.

Robert Grafstein is the Georgia Athletic Association Professor of Political Science at the University of Georgia.

Preston Greene is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at NTU Singapore.

James M. Joyce is the C. H. Langford Collegiate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Michigan.

Yang Liu is Research Fellow in the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge.

Huw Price is the Bertrand Russell Professor of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge.

Robert Stalnaker is Professor of Philosophy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Reuben Stern is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Munich Centre for Mathematical Philosophy.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-18027-7 — Newcomb's Problem
Edited by Arif Ahmed
Frontmatter
More Information

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank all of the contributors to this volume for the care that they took over their contributions and for the patience with which they all dealt with my queries and comments. I am grateful to John Jacobs for his meticulous copy-editing work and to Stephen Duxbury for preparing the index. I am once again grateful to my editor at CUP, Hilary Gaskin, for her own patience and for her continued support. I prepared this volume in part during a period of sabbatical leave, and I am grateful to the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge, and to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, for granting me this time. Some of the preparation took place whilst I held a visiting position at the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and I am grateful to that institution, and especially to Jack Spencer and Christine Graham for their support and hospitality.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org