

Cambridge Elements

Elements in the Philosophy of Mind

edited by

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FREE WILL

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-98713-4 — Free Will
Derk Pereboom
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
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

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/9781108987134
DOI: 10.1017/9781108982511

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First published 2022

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

ISBN 978-1-108-98713-4 Paperback
ISSN 2633-9080 (online)
ISSN 2633-9072 (print)

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Free Will

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DOI: 10.1017/9781108982511
First published online: February 2022

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Abstract: This Element provides a thorough overview of the free will debate as it currently stands. After distinguishing the main senses of the term “free will” invoked in that debate, it proceeds to set out the prominent versions of the main positions, libertarianism, compatibilism, and free will skepticism, and then to discuss the main objections to these views. Particular attention is devoted to the controversy concerning whether the ability to do otherwise is required for moral responsibility and whether it is compatible with determinism and to manipulation arguments against compatibilism. Two areas in which the free will debate has practical implications are discussed in detail: personal relationships and criminal justice.

Keywords: free will, moral responsibility, libertarianism, compatibilism, free will skepticism

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ISBNs: 9781108987134 (PB), 9781108982511 (OC)
ISSNs: 2633-9080 (online), 2633-9072 (print)

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