

FREE WILL

Course Information & Outline

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Office Hours: Wednesday 11 – 12; or by appointment

There is a web page for the course (linked to my homepage, and to the Stella page for the course), which will contain details of readings and links to online articles. I shall be relying on the links for access to articles that are not in the texts or on reserve.

<http://web.mit.edu/holton/www/courses/freewill/fwhome.html>

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be by means of one short (four page) assignment, and two longer (eight page) papers.

TEXTS

I have ordered four books for the Coop:

Gary Watson (ed.) *Free Will* Second edition (OUP 2003)
John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza (eds.) *Perspectives on Moral Responsibility* (Cornell, 1993)
Daniel Dennett *Freedom Evolves* (Penguin 2004)
Daniel Wegner, *The Illusion of Conscious Will* (MIT Press, 2003)

Of these, only the Watson, which is a recent collection of key papers, is really essential to start with. The Fischer and Ravizza provides a number of additional papers that might be interesting; but I wouldn't advise buying it straightaway unless you are very keen. The Dennett and Wegner books raise various issues about the bearing of empirical work; we'll be discussing this towards the end of the course.

In addition I have put a number of other books on reserve:

Robert Kane (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Free Will* (OUP 2002)
Timothy O'Connor (ed.), *Agents, Causes and Events* (OUP 1995)
Timothy O'Connor, *Persons and Causes* (OUP 2000)
Susan Wolf, *Freedom Within Reason* (OUP 1990)
Robert Kane, *The Significance of Free Will* (OUP 1996)
Johannes Roessler and Naomi Eilan (eds.), *Agency and Self-Awareness* (OUP 2003)

PROVISIONAL OUTLINE

Week One

Wednesday September 8: Introductory session

Week Two

Monday September 13: The Classical Compatibilist account

Wednesday September 15: 'Could have done otherwise'

Week Three

Monday September 20: Denying Closure of unavailability

Wednesday September 22: Lewis on law breaking

Week Four

Monday September 27: Libertarianism I

Wednesday September 29: Libertarianism II

Week Five

Monday October 6: Causation in a non-deterministic world

Wednesday October 8: Frankfurt on Alternate Possibilities

Week Six

Monday October 11: Columbus Day Holiday

Wednesday October 13: Reactions to Frankfurt

Week Seven

Monday October 18: Strawson

Wednesday October 19: Reactions to Strawson

Week Eight

Monday October 25 Frankfurt's Higher Order account

Wednesday October 26 Reactions to Frankfurt

Week Nine

Monday November 1: Reason Responsiveness

Wednesday November 3: Scanlon

Week Ten

Monday November 8: Choosing; intentions; weakness of will

Wednesday November 10: Choice and Freedom

Week Eleven

Monday November 15: Empirical work: Social psychology I

Wednesday November 17: Empirical work: Social psychology II

Week Twelve

Monday November 22: Empirical work: Neuroscience I

Wednesday November 24: Empirical work: Neuroscience II

Week Thirteen

Monday November 29: Addiction I

Wednesday December 1: Addiction II

Week Fourteen

Monday December 6

Wednesday December 8