

Soft Determinism (“Compatibilism”)

“Every event has a cause, but there are some “free” actions, so we can sometimes act “freely” even though we are unable to do anything other than what we in fact do. When we do this, we are morally responsible for what we have done.”

Some Definitions

D1: *e* is a *volition* =df. *e* is an act of choosing, deciding, or willing to perform some action.

D2: *e* is a *standard volition* =df. *e* is a volition, and *e* is caused by the beliefs and desires of the agent.

D3: *a* is a *voluntary action* =df. *a* is an action that is caused by a standard volition.

A Typical Form of Soft Determinism

- A. Every event has a cause. (PUC)
- B. There are some *voluntary* actions. (FWT')
- C. People are responsible for their own voluntary actions, as well as for the consequences of those actions.
- D. Whenever a person performs a voluntary action, and is responsible for that action, s/he was caused to perform that action, and was unable to have done anything else instead.

An Argument against Soft Determinism

1. If Soft Determinism is true, then Poor Paula is morally responsible for assassinating the Great Leader.
2. It's not the case that Poor Paula is morally responsible for assassinating the Great Leader.
3. Therefore, Soft Determinism is not true. 1,2 MT