

Paul Thyry (Baron D'Holbach / Mirabaud) - French / German Sympathizer With Some Epicurean Ideas

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“Free will” can be a fraught concept. What is generally called “libertarian free will” (which might be what most people mean) is incoherent.

The term I learned in economics is “constrained choice” – which I suspect is closer to another version of free will called “compatibilism”: Yes we choose. But our choices are constrained by our resources, by circumstances and our own abilities – some of which are determined (e.g. by evolution), and some of which result from our own (past) choices.

And strict determinism would mean that our (under that principle, illusory) perception that we do choose is also determined. So it would seem to be a vicious circle: “Why do you think it’s all determined?” “Because I believe determinism is correct.” “Why do you think that?” “Because it’s determined ...”