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# THE NEW REDDIT

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# **Psychology**



Students who believe they have more "free will" do better academically digest.bps.org.uk

3 days ago by Lightfiend

127 comments share

# All 127 Comments

sorted by: best

[-] anonymousbach 134 points 3 days ago

Or maybe students who do better academically believe they have more free will?

permalink

[-] PsychoKiller-fafafa 86 points 3 days ago

I can agree with this. Getting bad grades makes you feel pretty damn trapped and hopeless after a while.

permalink parent

[-] Sevcode 47 points 3 days ago

"People doing well in life feel happier"

No kiddin' eh?

permalink parent

[-] Ahmoed 7 points 2 days ago

Definitely not always true. A girl I dated in college graduated at the top of her class; never made less than an A, and she was one of the most miserable people I've encountered in my life. She could pretty much have any entry level job in her field, but she doesn't believe it. She always felt the pressure and anxiety to be perfect in everything. That is hard to sustain for 4-5 years.

permalink parent

[-] Sevcode 1 point 2 days ago

We're talking about trends, and why your story provides an example of what search

Submitted on 05 Jan 2016

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happens to the exceptions that doesn't make it the norm.

Besides, if she was anxious and pressured, how would she have felt scraping by on minimum wage and having trouble affording food? It sounds to me like there was some mental health issues going on there, but making her less successful in life wouldn't have cured that.

permalink parent

[-] lilchaoticneutral 2 points 2 days ago

That's basically stating that there are no advantages to hitting rock bottom, but there's tons of reasons to think that there are

permalink parent

[-] **Sevcode** 0 points 2 days ago

Everyone likes a hero, and many people talk fondly about struggles they overcame. All the while the 9/10 who didn't overcome the odds stay quiet and deal with the misery of that reality.

Media does indeed warp how we see things.

permalink parent

[-] **lilchaoticneutral** 1 point 2 days ago

and if you believe it's your destiny to be a mother robbing crackhead then you're gonna stay there for sure

permalink parent

[-] **Sevcode** 2 points 2 days ago

My argument isn't that people can refuse to help themselves. It's more that people can try their best and still fail. Life doesn't dole out ability to succeed in even remotely fair amounts from the get go.

# **Upcoming AMAs**

(All times and dates are USA East Coast Time)

I helped put 6 elements on the periodic table

12 Jan-11am

8 Jan-1pm

American Chemical Society AMA

13 Jan-12pm

Reddit AMA Center for Open Science

The Preregistration Challenge: We are rewarding 1,000 scientists with \$1,000 prizes for preregistering their research

13 Jan-1pm

PLOS Science Wednesday:

14 Jan-1pm

John Hammersley

Career transitions out of academics

created by spez a community for 9 years

MESSAGE THE MODERATORS

# MODERATORS

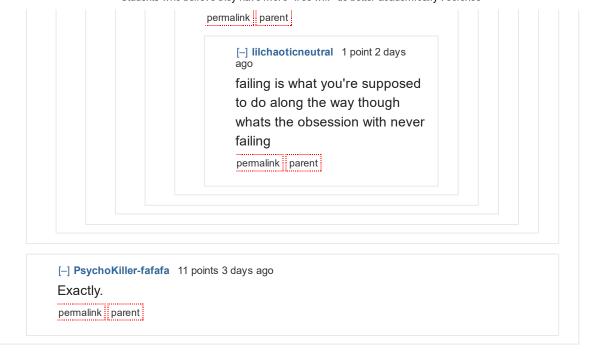
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> discussions in /r/science

27 points · 260 comments

Valuing Your

Valuing Your Time More Than Money is Linked to Happiness: "It appears that people have a stable preference for Χ



#### [-] Encouragedissent 14 points 3 days ago

Not entirely sure of that, many of the best academics have believed in Determinism rather than free will. Nietzsche, Einstein, hell you can go back 2000 years to Augustus and find good arguments against free will.

Maybe its just that the whole notion of free will is skewed among most of the population, so that people who believe it doesnt exist believe so for religious and supernatural reasons.

permalink parent

#### [-] YouAreWhoYouEat 7 points 3 days ago

Determinism doesn't imply there is no free will. If I recall correctly, compatibilism is held by a majority of philosophers according to some recent polls.

permalink parent

#### [-] magruff 1 point 3 days ago

How could determinism imply anything BUT that there's no free will?

e: My bad, "compatibilism" didn't register when I read your comment. First time seeing it.

permalink parent

# [-] YouAreWhoYouEat 9 points 3 days ago

(Sorry in advance if this is poorly explained.)

When people think of Free Will, they usually have something like the following definition in mind whether they know it or not: Free Will consists of the ability to do otherwise than what one actually does. This means that, if we have Free Will, one of many decisions might result from exactly one set of beginning circumstances (by this I mean particular placement of atoms at a time before the decision point--a "state of the world" at a given time). Determinism seems to rule out such a notion of Free Will. (As an aside, it's often also argued that indeterminism doesn't help either, since that only involves adding randomness to the mix. How could adding randomness -- with, say, quantum mechanical notions -- give us any of control over our lives that we wouldn't have otherwise?) However, this definition (often referred to as the "ability to do otherwise"

conception) isn't the only game in town, especially among professional

philosophers. David Hume was a well-known compatibilist. He stated (roughly) that, one has free will when one is acting according to one's desires. This definition is compatible with determinism because one's actions can merely follow from one's desires, which themselves can be determined in some manner. Generally, this is thought to be a failed definition at best. Nevertheless, there's a long tradition of defining Free Will in such a way that it dodges threats from determinism.

Here are a couple of my personal favorite stances on the issue: Daniel Dennett's works on the topic are great. He argues that what we really want out of free will is what our sense of morality needs to get going (concepts like praise, blame, and responsibility). These notions are not threatened by determinism, according to Dennett, but are enhanced by the fact that the way the world works is determined and therefore at least somewhat predictable. What we can't get -- this desire to somehow break the laws of nature -- isn't what was important anyway. Dennett, as is his typical move, gives his arguments from an evolutionary perspective.

Another position that I think is very much related to Dennett's arguments is the notion of semi-compatibilism. This notion, popularized by Fischer I think, starts by not even touching the traditional "ability to do otherwise" notion of Free Will. Instead Fischer claims that moral responsibility is compatible with determinism. One can be morally responsible, according to Fischer, when one's actions result (proximally) from a reasons-responsive mechanism. That is, when one's actions can be influenced in the right way by reasons for/against action, one can said to be morally responsible.

This only touches the surface of the literature...

A great source: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/compatibilism/

If you want an intro book, I highly recommend A Contemporary Introduction To Free Will by Robert Kane. It was the book I taught out of when I was teaching philosophy a couple years ago. Great overview of the subject's landscape.

permalink parent

## [-] Juracule 1 point 2 days ago

Compatibilism always kind of feels like a cop-out to me (although this primarily applies to Hume's conception of free will) due to its redefinitions of the "common" definition of Free Will. Why do we so badly want free will to exist? A lack of free will introduces issues with moral responsibility (how do we punish those if they had no choice), but I think that's a good thing as it should shift the prison system towards helping and rehabilitation.

permalink parent

# [-] magruff -1 points 3 days ago

I think my tone implied a belief of there being no free will. It's quite the opposite really. Don't get me wrong though, I don't have free range of will, meaning my chemical composition and cultural context and geographical situation play a huge part in who I am, and I won't, for instance, pick up ballet on a whim. But based on my experience I truly believe I have some amount of control. And if you can't trust your own senses what can you

trust?

I like the bits I've heard about Dennett. When he frames compatibilism from an evolutionary perspective did he say/imply that we may not be finished evolving the ability to choose? That's something I wonder about a lot, especially with our exponentially expanding technologies. You can only choose between things you're aware of after all.

Thank you for the response. Most of my influence has come from Terence McKenna, and Alan Watts' lectures on eastern thought. Western thought can sometimes feel a little too sterile for me, if that makes any sense. No less honest though.

permalink parent

#### [-] XkF21WNJ 2 points 2 days ago

Well, determinism just means that your thoughts are the inevitable consequence of your experiences and your actions are the inevitable consequence of your thoughts.

The opposite, non-determinism means that some of your thoughts are not a consequence of your experience and some of your actions are not the consequence of your thoughts. If anything, non-determinism suggests you have less control (over your thoughts as well as your actions).

permalink parent

#### [-] APeacefulWarrior 1 point 3 days ago

Shorter explanation: We have minimal choice in the circumstances we find ourselves in, but still have free will in how we choose to deal with those circumstances. Free will doesn't necessarily have to mean *unrestricted* free will.

It's like the famous old Jack Benny joke. Benny (a rich penny-pinching miser) was walking down an alley when a mugger sticks a knife in his back and says "Your money or your life!" But Benny doesn't respond. The mugger repeats, "Didn't ya hear me? I said, your *money* or your *life*!"

And exasperatedly Benny retorts, "I know! I'm thinking it over!!"

That's free will in nutshell. :-)

permalink parent

[+] Comment removed 3 days ago (18 children)

#### [-] jamditis 2 points 3 days ago

This is pretty much what the last line of the article says.

permalink parent

#### [-] VoiceOfRealson 2 points 3 days ago

Yes.

I was pleasantly surprised by seeing such balanced and reasoned reporting.

So an interesting follow up study would be to go one step closer and try to influence a

group of students to believe more strongly in their free will and then monitor their academic performance before or after such an intervention.

permalink parent

[-] stealth\_sloth 1 point 2 days ago

Or alternatively (and possibly easier to measure) ask students how much they believe in free will before they take a big test, then ask again after they get test scores back.

permalink parent

#### [-] Roger765 2 points 3 days ago

While it looks like they avoid causal claims in general. The use of time lagged designs support the directionality listed in the title. Or in other words temporal precendence indicates that free will belief influences academic success.

This is in line with the idea that believe in ability to change and grow leads to improved academic success.

permalink parent

[-] louis25th 1 point 3 days ago

Look, that's some free will this comment!

permalink parent

#### [-] flammable99 -1 points 3 days ago

It's not just that they believe they do, they actually do. I'm a high school student who has already completed all the mandatory classes by doubling up and skipping some. I can choose pretty much whatever schedule I would want to. Otherwise, you're taking the same mandatory classes as everyone else.

permalink parent

#### [-] TheDankPuss 35 points 3 days ago

Ive come across similar findings relating to personal beliefs about intelligence. Ill try to find the sources but essentially Fixed-intelligence mindsets tend to believe that one's intelligence is set and is demonstrated by comparing your ability to others (who can solve the math problem first/the fastest/etc). Since intelligence is viewed as predominately immovable, fixed-intelligence believers are less willing to seek out and persist through difficult lessons/challenges. Rather, they seek out experiences that portray their intelligence through normative standards (ie:taking a class where they can comparatively do well compared to the class average), and avoid experiences that demonstrate their inabilities (ie: avoiding math because "they are bad at math")

growth-mindset individuals think that intelligence can increase dramatically through hard work and experience. They seek challenges and persist through them. They do not measure their intelligence by how well they perform compared to the group but by their ability to master a specific skill or task.

Obviously, fixed mindset beliefs and correlated behaviors create stagnation while growth-mindset individuals continually strive to reach their full potential.

permalink

#### [-] Flowah 3 points 3 days ago

I don't believe in free will but I don't believe intelligence is fixed either because it clearly isn't.

Nutrition and environment will have a tremendous effect on intelligence. We've had studies showing everything from tiny amounts of iodine at critical moments, or baby talk, or even poverty and stress can have big effects on people's measured IQ. To me that also shows simultaneously

the lack of free will and the malleability of intelligence. We don't have free will but we are immensely affected by our environment.

Telling someone they can train themselves to be better at something isn't really an indicator of the existence or lack of existence of free will. It's just a statement about the obvious. Human beings, like every other creature and every machine, respond to stimuli and incentives.

Really all you'd have to do is ask people "do you think practice has no effect?" Instantly it becomes obvious. Even if you don't believe in free will, practice works and you can practice your brain as you can anything else. There's nothing contradictory about those ideas.

permalink parent

#### [-] anzuo 2 points 3 days ago

Very interesting. I feel like self awareness allows for free will though, even if our thoughts are just the result of physical interactions of matter in the brain, responding to stimuli.

permalink parent

#### [-] TheDankPuss 1 point 3 days ago

I suppose I should clarify that I don't think believing or not believing in free will means you have a fixed or growth mindset. What makes you "fixed" or "growth" is your default or preference way you assess your intelligence: group comparison or task mastery.

In my mind I suppose I was changing the subject a bit. Growth mindset emphasizes the agency individuals have in their own development. That's basically the point I was trying to make.

permalink parent

#### [-] secretchimp 1 point 2 days ago

It's more complex than that - some people can excel at math but as a constant hair-pulling struggle, others have it come naturally. those same people might not be able to write their way out of a box in a history class. There are multiple types of intelligence and proficiencies.

permalink parent

#### [-] TheDankPuss 1 point 2 days ago

I used math as one example of where a person could apply a fixed or growth mindset.

This mindset concept is also complex and fluid. Its application and intensity fluctuates over time and under different circumstances.

permalink parent

#### [-] Snarfler 0 points 3 days ago

I think intelligence is fairly fixed. Like any other muscle there is only so much one person can do to improve theirs. But for learning things I think everyone should take the mindset of an electrical engineer. Everything you learn in electrical engineering is basically about "dumbing down" your current problem into something you can understand. Like you have something very complicated looking and say "Well this can act as a resistor, so I'm just going to turn it into one on this diagram so I can solve this problem."

Quite a few people think I'm smart when it comes to CS or EE things because of how I would preform on tests in schools and such. But really it's just that I knew how to sit down and turn something I don't understand into something I do understand.

permalink parent

[-] Viklove 6 points 3 days ago

That's just problem solving, not "EE thinking."

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permalink parent

[-] DepartureOfLight -1 points 3 days ago

Why not both?

permalink parent
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#### [-] TheDankPuss 3 points 3 days ago

You are right, not everyone can be an Einstein. And even if two similar individuals do reach that same level of Einstein ability, the path may have been easier or faster for one and harder/slower for the other. In that definition, intelligence as a talent, *is* innate. (although environmental factors such as childhood experiences contribute to this talent level)

However, I would wonder if the "faster/easier" Einstein truly reached their full potential? Most likely their end ability would be greater if they put the same time/effort as the "slower/harder" Einstein. This is important when talking about meeting full intellectual potential. I argue that a growth mindset is necessary for reaching one's full potential.

We cannot achieve our full potential without laboring through tasks in which we are not yet competent. If the "slow" Einstein focused on his inadequacy compared to the "fast" Einstein and developed a "fixed mindset", studies show he/she would be much less likely to persist through challenges. The very challenges *needed* to become an Einstein. If the "slow" Einstein simply focused on mastering the skills needed to be an Einstein, they would be much more likely to persist.

permalink parent

### [-] Eyeownyew -4 points 3 days ago

there's a lot of studies to back this up.

http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-secret-to-raising-smart-kids1/

http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/edu/88/3/397/

permalink parent

# [-] downeverythingvote\_i 8 points 3 days ago

One is an opinion piece and the other one is behind a paywall. Though if you bothered to read anything beyond the title:

Children's beliefs in intelligence as fixed and affecting performance were negatively associated with academic achievement, but a path analysis provided only modest support for the hypothesis that the effect of such beliefs would be mediated by a performance goal orientation and accompanying superficial learning strategies.

So much back up...

permalink parent

#### [-] Eyeownyew -3 points 3 days ago

No, that's perfect evidence. It says, word for word, "Children's beliefs in intelligence as fixed and affecting performance were negatively associated with academic achievement". The fact that attempting to remedy it with learning strategies wasn't successful means nothing towards the point he was making

permalink parent

[+] Comment removed 3 days ago (5 children)

[-] Flowah 4 points 3 days ago

Next, the researchers asked 614 more students (again a mix of Hong Kong, Chinese and international) to answer questions at the start of their university semester about their free will beliefs, their self-control, and whether people's traits are fixed or malleable

But asking about free will and malleability are different questions. You can lack free will while still being malleable. I'd say it's actually malleability that indicates a lack of free will. That we can be manipulated with incentives and deterrents and through the environment suggests that we're just a complex network of those things at play. We're just a more complicated version of a dog responding to training.

permalink

# [-] NondeterministSystem 5 points 3 days ago

In public health (the parts that borrow heavily from applied psychology), this is strongly related to the concept of self-efficacy. Basically, "if you think you can or you can't, you're right." This is I love the Stockdale paradox so much: to succeed, we must (a) confront the most brutal facts of our reality and (b) retain faith that we will prevail in the end. Prevailing doesn't always happen, but it's more likely to happen if we retain faith that we will prevail.

permalink

#### [-] DeHavilan 14 points 3 days ago

I'm pretty skeptical of the initial findings of this. I would imagine the set of students who are philosophically deterministic is proportionally rather small. Of those that are, if people are philosophically versed enough to identify as believing in determinism, then I'd expect them to be more academically inclined. I'm not convinced that this study really ascertained if people believe in determinism in a philosophical sense, or if they just have a broader belief in 'fate'

permalink

# [-] apajx 2 points 3 days ago

Is there any difference? You can't swat away the study because of colloquial understanding of the subjects versus your perceived technical understanding. Philosophy very much cares about the layman's point of few and understanding of the subject.

If a layman views fate as "unchangeable", then it is sufficiently close to a technical determinism. Obviously they might not be versed in the finer details of compatibilism, but that's irrelevant. The study (assuming good methodology) has demonstrated that a layman belief in "free will" effects academic performance.

permalink parent

#### [-] DeHavilan 8 points 3 days ago

I'm saying the question of 'does an individual's actions or thinking have an impact on the outcomes in their lives?' is very different than 'does someone have free will?'. I feel that the first question would produce the kinds of results seen in the study. In fact, I've seen studies that show peoples responses to a question like that yield the kinds of results shown here.

I think the real issue lies in what we define as free will. The way I see most people explain it, is as something that transcends causality, which seems fundamentally impossible to me.

permalink parent

[-] apajx 1 point 3 days ago

The way I see most people explain it, is as something that transcends causality, which seems fundamentally impossible to

me

Why? Why do you have faith in causality? I see this a lot, and I have a hard time understanding it. Almost-always it comes from a misuse of Newtonian dynamics applied to "everything". There is no good reason for us to believe that if we know everything about every particle that we will know everything. There is no good reason to believe there aren't random effects. There is no good reason to believe that to even know *one* particle would require a finite amount of information.

That's not to say I belief in free will anymore than causality. However, I do like to take Mele's perspective, that it *seems to be the case* that were are autonomous (given his descriptions of it) even if we don't have any good way to prove it.

permalink parent

#### [-] DeHavilan 5 points 3 days ago

I'd say that there is more evidence in the observable universe that causality is a useful concept to apply to understanding the universe than accepting that everything is completely random and unrelated. I'd say there's a spectrum from flawless determinism to total randomness, and on the macro-level our universe is somewhere in between but with a healthy slant toward determinism.

For instance, if I go to the fridge to get a drink, I think whether I choose milk or juice isn't necessarily 100% predictable, but that doesn't mean there isn't some kind of causal history to observe that could give you a good idea of what I might choose. I can also say with confidence, I wouldn't reach into the fridge and pull out a jug full of little versions of myself while finding that I had turned into a glass of orange juice. That's what would be possible if there wasn't at least some casual relation between instances in time.

permalink parent

#### [-] Beloson 2 points 2 days ago

I have a problem accepting the notion of true randomness. To me everything must have some causality no matter how exotic it may be. My brain is not wired to accept randomness.

permalink parent

# [-] **lilchaoticneutral** 1 point 2 days ago

then try to consider what came before the big bang

permalink parent

#### [-] Beloson 1 point 2 days ago

Why?

permalink parent

[-] **lilchaoticneutral** 1 point 2 days ago

no causality. a fundamental principle of reality is that there is no cause

permalink parent

[-] **Beloson** 1 point 2 days ago

I do not accept that: "a fundamental principle of reality is that there is no cause." We do not know what conditions may have been before a big bang. To me, all reality has cause, including the universe. I'm not buying that the big bang was a random event.

permalink parent

#### [-] lilchaoticneutral 1 point 2 days ago

There is good reason to believe that causality isn't something you should believe in when you try to consider what came before t=0 or the big bang

permalink parent

## [-] the\_red\_scimitar 1 point 3 days ago

Well, there is a difference, and that is causation - which is implied, but not even vaguely shown in this study. If free-will-belief MAKES a better student, then if the goal is students with higher grades, it would make sense to foster that belief.

But if the being a good student itself results in such beliefs, then there would be no point in promoting the belief to help obtain the desired outcome.

permalink parent

#### [-] TheRugAteMyShoe 1 point 3 days ago

Other forms of academic study, such as physics, chemistry, or biology, exposes researchers to concepts of probability, quantum mechanics, chaos, etc. Many of these concepts suggest that determinism does not exist at a fundamental level. I don't think you can say whether believing in free will vs predeterminism is a matter of your level of academic inclination.

Although perhaps you can say that believing in free will is the default state, and that people seldom switch sides without first reading about the philosophical arguments. So maybe there is a bias there, but I am skeptical that it would be a large one.

permalink parent

#### [-] Varzem 6 points 3 days ago

In some senses the quantum mechanical models do suggest a form of determinism.

Take radioactive dating. The chance of any particular atom undergoing fission is completely random. However, we can make incredibly accurate descriptions of the mass of the substance itself because we know the "average," or what is known as the expected value in statistics.

Take that to quantum mechanics and eventually all interactions average out to something. Consistently. Yes any specific instance is random. But for the most part these specific instances don't drive the universe on larger scales.

Besides, all of this assumes a role in behavior, which it may not have. It could be that our behavior is not determined by anything quantum. I mean yes, it is, on a fundamental level, but it could be that deterministic models are sufficient.

Regardless, indivisible or sufficiently complicated determinism is practically the same thing as free will. Essentially even if we are determined, free will is what we should act like is happening anyway.

[-] Sharou 5 points 3 days ago
Randomness doesn't imply or even support free will though.

pemalink parent

[-] Beloson 1 point 2 days ago
Agree. It would just make some causation more serendipetous. But I reject randomness.

pemalink parent

[-] nenyim 2 points 3 days ago

exposes researchers to concepts of probability, quantum mechanics, chaos, etc. Many of these concepts suggest that determinism does not exist at a fundamental level

Depend what you mean by "determinism". If it's that everything is already played and by knowing everything about the universe right now you would be able to perfectly describe what it will be then sure.

However if you see it strictly as an opposition to free will, so it's not that you can perfect predict the future but that absolutely everything you do/think/feel is due to physical laws on which you have no control then chaos and such don't prevent a deterministic universe. It's kind of random and unpredictable but it still wouldn't involve any kind of free will.

permalink parent

[-] igrokyourmilkshake 1 point 3 days ago

Other forms of academic study, such as physics, chemistry, or biology, exposes researchers to concepts of probability, quantum mechanics, chaos, etc. Many of these concepts suggest that determinism does not exist at a fundamental level.

Quite the opposite. Coincidently, chaotic systems are, *by definition*, deterministic. They do nothing but lend more support to the hypothesis that reality is deterministic.

Copenhagen interpretation isn't the only game in town: there are several interpretations of quantum mechanics that are fully deterministic (deBroglie Bohm, Many Worlds, etc).

Probability, biology, chemistry, and physics do not disprove determinism nor do they suggest that determinism does not exist at a fundamental level.

permalink parent

#### [-] hartscov 6 points 3 days ago

Also known as an internal locus of control (meaning that you believe that you have control over your life and the decisions that you make as opposed to those who believe they are victims of fate and the decisions of others, known as an external locus of control).

Possessing an internal locus of control is associated with all sorts of positive outcomes (better in school, less likely to be in jail, etc). Nowicki and Strickland did a bunch of research about this (as did I in graduate school)

[-] kow\_pow 2 points 3 days ago

Montessori kid here can confirm.

permalink

[-] Slaterslo 1 point 3 days ago

I think this is why I did so well in high school, being the young, idealist. Then I took my first law class, and studied the justice system. It's a bit scary.

permalink

[-] pwncloud 1 point 3 days ago

I have straight As but I definitely feel like 90% of my time is devoted to doing homework and a lot of my homework is not even relevant to the job I am trying to get within the next 6 months. I'm kind of considering purposely slacking just enough to pass those classes so I can get my degree and focus most of my time on what's actually going to benefit my portfolio.

permalink

[-] kobekramer1 1 point 3 days ago

Determinism gives you an excuse. Not necessarily an invalid one, but I would argue that the belief in determinism is one of the external factors that determinism speaks of. It definitely affects decision making and emotional responses to your situation. Source: I'm a philosophy major drop out.

permalink

[-] guineapigcalledSteve 1 point 3 days ago

well, 4th demension tells me they have no free will.

permalink

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[-] Z1rith -1 points 2 days ago
you should learn how to spell before pretending to be smart
permalink parent
```

[-] ombwtk 1 point 2 days ago

Daniel Miessler (and maybe Sam Harris) has written about how it's best to act as if Free Will does exist if you want to perform as well as you can, even if you logically deduce it's a delusion. Luckily the delusion is so strong it's easy to believe the latter while acting on the former.

permalink

[-] InequalityCreatesJob 1 point 2 days ago

The free will argument is weaker than the quasi-deterministic argument. But I can see how this correlation can be logical. It's similar to what a study found, that people of unfair monetary privilege tend to think they are self-made and skilled. Just listen to Trump, who actually think he had "skills" to become rich, while the truth is dogmatically different. "In 1968 his 22-year-old son Donald Trump joined his company Trump Management Co., becoming president in 1974, and renaming it The Trump Organization in 1980." His father just gave him wealth, and like a common fool he has done short of mediocre with his unfair advantage. Similarly, I can see that well-doing people have to believe in free will to maintain an illusion that they should be credited for their good choices. And on the contrary, people who have accepted that free will is a mere illusion, can be less motivated, for sure.

permalink

```
[-] idownvotestuff 1 point 2 days ago
But then again, do you choose to act as if free will exists?

[joke]Free Will![/joke]

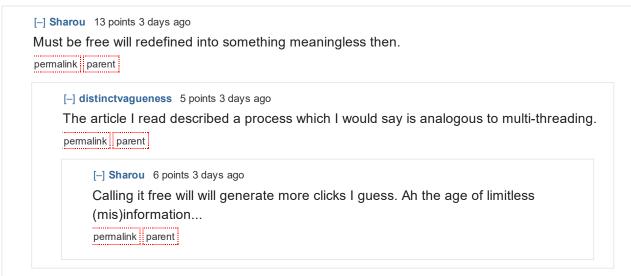
permalink parent
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[-] lilchaoticneutral 1 point 2 days ago

If you don't believe you have it then it stands to reason that you will have less.

[-] TapiocaTuesday -1 points 3 days ago

And now it's believed that we do in fact have free will, according to a recent study.



```
Not to be rude, but a study by who/where/of what?

Neuroscientists? Philosophers? Psychologists? Physicists?

permalink parent

[-] TapiocaTuesday 1 point 3 days ago

http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/01/160104130826.htm

permalink parent

[-] fsmpastafarian 1 PhD | Clinical Psychology 1 point 3 days ago

This is most likely the study they're referring to.

permalink parent
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[-] FriendlyAlcoholic -4 points 3 days ago

Haven't you ever heard not to look the gift horse in the mouth?

permalink parent

#### [-] HEBushido 2 points 3 days ago

I'm not sure free will can be determined that easily as in the events that occur may actually be fixed based on physics. For example I am typing this because the events that occurred leading to this moment caused me to type this. Therefore I don't have free will because this was all predetermined. Quantum mechanics certainly muddles this, but there needs to be a lot more than one study here.

permalink parent

#### [-] runcannyvalley 1 point 3 days ago

Doesn't this apply to everybody, not just students?

permalink

[-] tk-not21 1 point 3 days ago

Thank god that illusion broke for me only after i had left school.

permalink

## [-] EdwardDupont 1 point 3 days ago

These tests were done in Hong Kong. I'd be interested to see tests in the UK/US. Free will is an illusion regardless of whether or not these students believe in it. But I can see why the thought of having a choice can really impact someone esp. a student.

From the article:

Now a study in Personality and Individual Differences has added to this picture by showing that students who believe they have "free will" in the philosophical sense (they agree with statements like "I have free will" and "I am in charge of my actions even when my life's circumstances are difficult") tend to do better academically.

If I believe I can do better because I choose to do it then it gives me motive or incentive to try harder and to do better but that exact incentive/motive wasn't my choice. It's just the thought of having the choice that makes me feel better about myself. The thought of having control of oneself and the outcomes.

I did misunderstand the title. I felt like the title almost tries to imply free will exists which now rereading it's obvious that it doesn't imply it at all.

permalink

[+] Comment removed 3 days ago (1 child)

[-] **gordonjames62** 0 points 3 days ago

at least as measured by their feelings of well-being.

That was interesting.

permalink

#### [-] Disenculture 0 points 3 days ago

I find it rather strange since if one truly understands determinism and free will, then whether you believe one or the other should have no effect on your behavior.

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