

### Key concepts:

- **Hard determinism** is the view that all our actions are caused by **antecedent** (prior) causes.
- This is a **materialist** view that understands the physical world to be the only reality that is **mechanistic** in quality – it operates like a machine.
- Hard determinism is an **Incompatibilism** view that says it is not logically possible to accept that there can be no exceptions to the laws of cause-and-effect – **universal causation** – and free will at the same time.

- **Philosophical determinism** says that the only rational view is that all our actions are caused, not free.
- John Locke is not universally considered a hard determinist, but his analogy demonstrates that free will is **illusory**. Imagine a sleeping man being carried to a room and locked inside with someone he wishes to speak to. On awaking, he willingly stays in the room, unaware that he could not have acted differently.
- **Scientific determinism** argues that the working of the universe operates according to causal laws and, without exception, every effect has a cause.
- **Biological determinism** observes that all human traits have a physical nature and can be accounted for in a person's DNA. There are genes that code for depression, aggression, religious experience, sexuality, and addiction. If we know a person's genes, their behaviour could be predictable not free.
- **Psychological determinism** or **behaviourism** argues that the apparent choices we make are determined by **nurture** or our environment that trains us to make certain choices through upbringing, culture and experiences.
- Ivan Pavlov demonstrated **classical conditioning** in dogs. He showed that a dog can be conditioned to produce a **reflex behaviour** (salivation) by causing an association so strong that when a bell sounds, the dog anticipates food and salivates. This suggests that responses are learned rather than chosen.

- **Soft determinism** is the **compatibilist** view that says free will may co-exist with determinism without contradiction.
- Thomas Hobbes argued that all actions are caused e.g., a person who throws their belongings into the sea because the ship lurches is **compelled** to act by the waves. The person who throws their belongings into the sea from fear their ship may sink, is motivated by fear but acts **voluntarily**. Both acts are caused but free will is acting in the way that we wish without **constraint**.
- Some interpret this to mean there is a difference between **internal causes** – those that originate from within the person in accordance with their desire, and **external causes** – those that originate from outside the person and constrain their behaviour. Voluntary action is in accordance with the will and is unconstrained, but still caused.
- A.J. Ayer differentiated between **caused acts** and **forced acts** e.g., a kleptomaniac can resolve not to steal as much as they like but are compelled to steal anyway by their condition. The kleptomaniac is caused and *not* free because they are forced. A thief may have a reason why they steal (poverty, enjoyment, retribution), but if they resolve not to steal then they will not. Their actions are caused *and* free because they are not compelled to steal.

### Key quotes:

'Being locked fast in, it is evident he is not at liberty not to stay, he has not freedom to be gone.' – John Locke

'Liberty is the absence of all the impediments to action that are not contained in the nature and intrinsic quality of the agent.' – Thomas Hobbes

'For it is not, I think, causality that freedom is to be contrasted with, but constraint.' – A.J. Ayer

### Issues for analysis and evaluation:

#### Key arguments/debates

Some argue that the disciplines of science, psychology and philosophy, together give a complete account of how our actions are determined.

Others argue that the account of soft determinism is more persuasive than hard determinism.

Some argue that human choices are unpredictable, caused only by themselves.

#### Key questions

Is the evidence for hard determinism sufficient to prove we do not have free will?

Is it rational to argue that we are both free and determined?

Is one account of determinism any more successful than any other?

### Key words:

hard determinism	antecedent	materialist	mechanistic	incompatibilism
Universal causation	philosophical determinism	illusory	scientific determinism	biological determinism
psychological determinism	Behaviourism	nurture	classical conditioning	reflex behaviour
soft determinism	compatibilist	compelled	voluntarily	constraint
internal causes	external causes	caused acts	forced acts	