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Our Fate: Essays on God and Free Will

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Introduction

God, Freedom, and Moral Responsibility

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter provides an overview of the main themes of the book, focusing on various versions of the basic argument for the incompatibility of divine foreknowledge and human freedom, and various classic responses (or apparent responses) to it (such as Ockhamism, Scotism, and Molinism). It also applies the analysis developed in the papers reprinted here to additional, related issues, and it argues for an “actual-sequence” approach to moral responsibility in the context of God’s foreknowledge. That is, it argues for the doctrine of semicompatibilism about God’s foreknowledge and human moral responsibility, according to which God’s foreknowledge is compatible with human moral responsibility, even if His foreknowledge rules out human freedom to do otherwise. This is parallel to semicompatibilism about causal determinism and moral responsibility.

Keywords: divine foreknowledge, fatalism, freedom, Molinism, moral responsibility Ockhamism, Scotism, semicompatibilism

I. A Family of Arguments for the Incompatibility of God’s Foreknowledge and Human Freedom to Do Otherwise

Arguments for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise have been around for millennia. They are in important ways parallel to a more recent ("Modern") argument for the incompatibility of causal determinism and freedom to do otherwise. More specifically, both families of arguments are driven centrally by ideas about "the fixity of the past." In the case of the argument from divine foreknowledge, the putatively fixed parts of the past are God's beliefs about the future; in the case of the argument from causal determinism, the relevant parts of the past include conditions of the universe which, together with the laws of nature, causally determine the future.

Both families of arguments have members with different specific forms. Here I shall focus on the family of arguments from God's foreknowledge to the conclusion that human beings are not free to do otherwise. (Later, I shall turn to the somewhat different issue pertaining to the relationship between God's foreknowledge and human moral responsibility.) I contend that, although all of the members of the family are driven importantly by the idea of fixity of the past, they have different specific forms and employ some different ingredients. Further, I believe that this opens the possibility that some of the members of the family are problematic in ways that do not affect other members of the family. So, one could reject some specific versions of the argument for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise without thereby having to reject others; counterexamples to elements of one member of the family would not necessarily affect an evaluation of others. (The same is true, I have argued, of the family of arguments for the incompatibility of causal determinism and freedom to do otherwise.)

(p.2) I.1. *Transfer Versions of the Argument*

I begin by specifying the general assumptions that I will be working with throughout. I take "God" to be the name of the individual who necessarily has the Divine Attributes. For the purposes of our discussion, the key attributes are (essential) eternity and (essential) omniscience. By "eternity" I mean "sempiternality"; God exists at all times. Further, God's essential omniscience implies that (for any proposition P), God believes that P if and only if P is true.

So here is the "Transfer Version" of the argument for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise. (For a development and discussion of this argument, see Chapter 2, "Scotism.") We begin by supposing that God (as conceptualized above) exists, and that some ordinary agent Jones does some ordinary act X (like mowing his lawn) at time $T2$. Arguably, it follows from God's essential omniscience and eternity that God believed at $T1$ that Jones would do X at $T2$.¹ So, if Jones can at or just prior to $T2$ do otherwise at $T2$, it would seem that there are three possibilities:

- (1) Jones can bring it about that God held a false belief at $T1$, or

(2) Jones can bring it about that God held a different belief from the one He actually held at $T1$, or

(3) Jones can bring it about that God didn't exist at $T1$.

Since no one can bring about a metaphysical impossibility, (1) is ruled out. And (2) and (3) both seem ruled out by a plausible conception of the fixity of the past. That is, no one can bring it about that something that did take place or obtain in the past would not have. To make this point a bit more precise, no one can bring it about that we are in a possible world in which some actual fact about the past did not obtain in that world. Thus, it appears to follow that Jones cannot do otherwise at $T2$.²

The argument, as presented above, implicitly relies on the following sort of principle:

The Transfer Principle (Transfer 1)

S can (cannot) do X.

In the circumstances, doing X is (or would be) doing Y.

Therefore, S can (cannot) do Y.

(p.3) This is just one principle in a set of “transfer principles” that play a crucial role in some members of the family of arguments for incompatibilism (both about God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise and causal determinism and human freedom to do otherwise). Let us call this principle “Transfer 1.” The general feature of transfer principles is that they are what Timothy O'Connor has called “modal slingshots”; they shoot a modal property from one item to another (via a certain means). Here “can” (or “cannot”) is “shot” from one item to another via subjunctive co-reference.

In various places, Anthony Kenny has developed a reply to this version of the incompatibilist's argument based on a template for counterexamples to Transfer 1 that he attributes to Duns Scotus.³ I lay out and discuss Kenny's examples in Chapter 2, “Scotism.” Here is one of the examples:

I may be able to hit the dartboard; on this particular occasion, I may hit the dartboard by hitting the center of the bull; but it by no means follows that I am capable of hitting the center of the bull.⁴

Kenny's Scotus-inspired examples seem to impugn Transfer 1. In "Scotism," I argue that it is not at all clear that Kenny's examples are indeed counterexamples to Transfer 1. Briefly, as regards this example, it is important to distinguish a general ability and being able, in the circumstances. It is perhaps true that I lack the general ability to hit the center of the bull; but it arguably does not follow that I *cannot, in the circumstances*, hit the center of the bull. After all, in the circumstances I *do* hit the center of the bull.

In this introductory essay, I will not further explore these putative counterexamples to Transfer 1, and I will focus instead on another point I develop in "Scotism." It is an important point: even if we grant that there are counterexamples to Transfer 1, there are other ways of formulating the argument for incompatibilism that do not appear susceptible to such counterexamples. Indeed, there are other—perhaps more familiar—members of the nuclear family of transfer versions of the argument to which these sorts of counterexamples do not seem applicable.

Consider, for instance, the Principle of Transfer of Powerlessness, which I will here call "Transfer 2." This slings "power-necessity" (a certain sort of lack of power over the truth of a proposition) from one item to another.⁵ When I write, "*P* is power-necessary for *S* at *T*," this implies that *P* obtains and also that *S* cannot at **(p.4)** *T* perform any action such that were *S* to perform it, *P* would not obtain. Now consider:

The Principle of Transfer of Powerlessness (Transfer 2)

P is power-necessary for *S* at *T*

It is power-necessary for *S* at *T* that if *P*, then *Q*.

Therefore, *Q* is power-necessary for *S* at *T*.

Here, powerlessness (interpreted as power-necessity) is slung across implication. It is evident that Kenny's Scotus-inspired counterexamples to Transfer 1 do not apply to Transfer 2. Take, for instance, the example about the dartboard. First, it is stated in terms of power, rather than powerlessness. Second, hitting the dartboard does not transfer via *implication* to hitting the bull, even if, in the circumstances, there is co-reference. Note now that we can develop a member of the Transfer family of arguments for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise as follows.

Again, we suppose that God exists (as conceptualized above) and that Jones performs some ordinary act X at $T2$. It follows that God believed at $T1$ that Jones would do X at $T2$. Because of the fixity of the past, Jones is powerless just before $T2$ over the fact that God believed at $T1$ that he would do X at $T2$. And in virtue of God's essential omniscience, Jones is powerless at $T1$ over the fact that if God believed at $T1$ that Jones would do X at $T2$, then Jones would do X at $T2$. Finally, it follows from Transfer 2 that Jones is powerless right before $T2$ over the fact that he does X at $T2$. Clearly, this is a quite general argument to the effect that if God (conceptualized as above) exists, then no human agent is ever free to do otherwise. It is a member of the Transfer family, but it does not employ Transfer 1. If it is problematic, it is not in virtue of the Scotus-inspired examples.

The main point here is to see that it does not follow simply from the fact that one version of the incompatibilist's argument is problematic that other versions will be similarly problematic (or problematic at all). This might seem to be a simple and obvious point. But (lamentably) it has been ignored (or underappreciated) by many who have discussed and evaluated the parallel arguments for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise and causal determinism and human freedom to do otherwise. Of course, members of a family share many characteristics. But it is also well-known that even siblings can be very different in their personalities!

Just as Transfer 1 is contentious, so is Transfer 2. Indeed, there is a long history of disputation of Transfer 2.⁶ This is not the place to explore or seek to **(p.5)** evaluate the debates about Transfer 2. Rather, my point is that we can give versions of the argument for incompatibilism that do not rely explicitly or implicitly on *any* transfer principle. In my view, this is an important, and, again, underappreciated point.⁷

I.2. Conditional Versions of the Argument

In "Scotism" (Chapter 2) I show how we can develop a "conditional" version of the argument for incompatibilism that is immune to the Scotus-inspired counterexamples. Insofar as it does not employ *any* transfer principle, it is also not subject to other counterexamples or objections to transfer principles. I will here present a particular member of this nuclear family of arguments: the conditional version. Imagine, again, that God exists and that Jones does X at $T2$. It follows that God believed at $T1$ that Jones would do X at $T2$. It will be helpful to have a slightly more explicit formulation of the intuitive idea of the fixity of the past:

(FP) For any action Y , agent S , and time T , if it is true that if S were to do Y at T , some fact about the past relative to T would not have been a fact, then S cannot at (or just prior to) T do Y at T .

To simplify a bit, there are three possibilities:

(1*) If Jones were to refrain from doing X at $T2$, then God would have held a false belief at $T1$, or

(2*) If Jones were to refrain from doing X at $T2$, then God would not have existed at $T2$, or

(3*) If Jones were to refrain from doing X at $T2$, then God would have held a different belief from the one He actually held at $T1$.

But (1*) is ruled out by God's essential omniscience. If (2*) were true, then it would appear that (FP) implies that Jones cannot refrain from doing X at $T2$. Not only does (FP) rule out (2*), but (2*) is also incompatible with the plausible idea that God's existence should not counterfactually depend on ordinary human behavior. And if (3*) were true, then it would also appear that (FP) implies that Jones cannot refrain from doing X at $T2$. Again: this seems to be a general argument from the premise that God (conceptualized as above) exists to the conclusion that humans are not free to do otherwise. It does not employ any transfer principle, **(p.6)** and thus purported counterexamples to those principles do not apply. (I argue in "Scotism" that Kenny's Scotus-inspired counterexamples do not apply to this version of the argument.)

I.3. Possible-Worlds Versions of the Argument

There is another nuclear family of arguments for incompatibilism: the "possible-worlds" versions of the argument. It will be helpful to lay out a member of this family before proceeding. This family gets its basic impetus from an insight of Carl Ginet: an agent S has it in his power to do X only if it is possible that X be an extension of the past (relative to S 's situation).⁸ We can formulate a member of the possible-worlds family of arguments as follows. As above, we assume that God exists and that Jones does X at $T2$. Here it will be helpful to have a possible-worlds formulation of the intuitive idea of the fixity of the past:

(FP*) An agent S has it in his power at (or just prior to) T in possible world w to do X at T only if there is a possible world w^* with the same past as that of w up to T in which S does X at T .

It follows from the assumptions above that God believed at $T1$ that Jones would do X at $T2$. Since God is essentially omniscient, His belief at $T1$ that Jones would do X at $T2$ entails that Jones does X at $T2$. By the possible-worlds definition of entailment, in all possible worlds in which God believes at $T1$ that Jones would do X at $T2$, Jones does X at $T2$. So in any possible world in which Jones does not do X at $T2$, God doesn't believe at $T1$ that Jones does X at $T2$. It follows from (FP*) that Jones does not have it in his power at or just prior to $T2$ to refrain from X -ing at $T2$.

I contend that this member of the possible-worlds family of arguments for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise does not employ (either explicitly or implicitly) any sort of transfer principle. Thus any objection to such principles will not automatically apply to the members of this family. Also, I shall contend below that certain examples that call into question the fixity of the past idea as employed in the conditional version of the argument (FP) do not apply to the version of this idea employed in the possible-worlds version (FP*).

I have now presented various versions of the argument for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise. It will be helpful to have these in place as part of an analytic framework with reference to which we can better understand both the thrust of the incompatibilist's argument and the various challenges to it. I now turn to the challenges.

(p.7) II. Replies to the Argument for Incompatibilism

II.1. World-Indexation

The world-indexation strategy of response to the argument for incompatibilism strikes at the very heart of the argument: the contention that the fixity of the past implies that if God exists (or causal determinism is true), no human being is ever free to do otherwise. (Many of the moves, and countermoves, are the same in the parallel arguments from God's foreknowledge and causal determinism; here we shall focus on the issues in the context of God's foreknowledge.⁹)

The world-indexation strategy contends that we must world-index all of the relevant facts. So, for instance, we should not think in terms of Jones's doing *X* at *T2*, but rather, Jones's doing *X* at *T2* in possible world *W1*. Similarly, we should not think in terms of God's believing at *T1* that Jones would do *X* at *T2*, but God's believing at *T1* in possible world *W1* that Jones would do *X* at *T2* in *W1*.

It is crucial to the world-indexation strategy that we conceptualize all of the relevant facts as world-indexed in the way just sketched. If we grant this, an interesting strategy of response to the incompatibilist's argument opens up. Suppose that God exists (as interpreted above), and that Jones does *X* at *T2*. More precisely, Jones does *X* at *T2* in (say) possible world *W1*. So God believes at *T1* in *W1* that Jones will do *X* at *T2* in *W1*. Might Jones have it in his power at or just prior to *T2* to refrain from doing *X* at *T2*? On the world-indexation picture, the proper question is, does Jones in *W1* have appropriate access to another possible world, *W2*, in which he refrains from doing *X* at *T2*? If so, we have it that Jones does *X* at *T2* in *W1*, but Jones refrains from doing *X* at *T2* in *W2*. God believes at *T1* in *W1* that Jones will do *X* at *T2* in *W1*, and God believes at *T1* in *W2* that Jones will refrain from doing *X* at *T2* in *W2*.

God thus has a total set of world-indexed beliefs about Jones's behavior—and everything else about the future—at $T1$ in $W1$. Indeed, God has a total set of such world-indexed beliefs at every time in every possible world— $W2$, $W3$, and so forth. The total package of God's world-indexed beliefs is the same in all possible worlds. The interesting point, for our purposes here, is that Jones's power at $T2$ to do otherwise now does not appear to require a violation of the fixity of the past. After all, God already believed at $T1$ in $W1$ that Jones would refrain from doing X at $T2$ in $W2$. Jones has access to a world— $W2$ —in which God's total package of world-indexed beliefs about his behavior in the future is *exactly the same as in $W1$* .

In Chapter 3, "Freedom and Actuality," I develop and critically evaluate this strategy of response to the argument for incompatibilism. (I employ the **(p.8)** conditional version of the argument, although nothing depends on adopting this particular member of the family of arguments for incompatibilism.) Although the world-indexation strategy seems to avoid the deep problem of the fixity of the past, I argue that it has significant problems of its own. Note to begin that if Jones is indeed free in possible world $W1$ at or just prior to $T2$ to do otherwise at $T2$, he thereby appears to have it in his power so to act that a different possible world ($W2$) would always have been the actual world. But this seems to reintroduce the requirement, for Jones's freedom to do otherwise, that he violate the fixity of the past. In "Freedom and Actuality" I develop and explore this worry. It might not be surprising that the world-indexation strategy faces daunting problems: it seems to salvage freedom (a kind of contingency) by transforming every truth into a necessary truth! (For example, "Jones does X at $T2$ in possible world $W1$ " is a necessary truth—unlike "Jones does X at $T2$.")

II.2. Molinism

Various philosophers have either asserted, or suggested, that certain key doctrines of the Jesuit philosopher Luis de Molina provide an important strategy of response to the argument for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise. (I give references to the work of these philosophers in Chapter 4, "Putting Molinism in Its Place.") They have presented Molinism as on a par with (say) Ockhamism (to be discussed below) as a response to the argument for incompatibilism. But this is incorrect. Molinism represents a helpful and illuminating strategy for understanding divine providence; but it *presupposes without providing* a solution to the problem of the relationship between God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise.

I develop and elaborate this point in “Putting Molinism in Its Place.” (I do so in the context of the possible-worlds version of the argument for incompatibilism, but, again, nothing hangs on using this version rather than any of the others.) Oversimplifying greatly, the Molinist’s picture is that, prior to decreeing that a particular possible world be the actual world, God knows (among other things) what configurations of initial circumstances He can actualize, and He also has “middle knowledge”—knowledge of what free agents would do in various situations in which they might be placed. Middle knowledge is “in-between” God’s knowledge of the necessary truths and God’s knowledge of what is “now” going to happen, given that God has decreed that a particular possible world be actual. This middle knowledge can be represented as a set of conditionals of the form, “If in circumstance *C1*, agent *A* would freely do *X*,” “If in circumstance *C2*, agent *A* would freely do *Y*,” and so forth. Given that Molina assumes that acting freely implies freedom to do otherwise, the Molinist assumes (as part of middle knowledge) that God has available to Him (prior to His decree making a particular world the actual world) knowledge of a set of conditionals of the following general form: “In circumstance *C1*, agent *A* would be free to do **(p.9)** other than he would do (*X*),” “In circumstance *C2*, agent *A* would be free to do other than what he would do (*Y*),” and so forth.

But now it should be evident that middle knowledge simply *presupposes* some solution to the problem posed by the incompatibilist’s argument (in all its versions). That is, the conditionals in question envisage contexts in which God knows in advance what agents will freely do—and thus also (on Molina’s assumptions) that they are free to do otherwise. Molinism does not contain any *response* to the argument for incompatibilism in the sense of identifying some ingredient in the argument (such as the transfer principle, in any of its forms, or the fixity of the past principle, in any of its forms) and showing how it is problematic. Molinism, especially in its central assumption of middle knowledge, does not *engage* the argument for incompatibilism, but simply *presupposes* that some response to this argument can be given. If one did interpret Molinism as offering a response to the incompatibilist’s argument, on a par with the other major responses (such as Ockhamism), we would have to conclude that it is hopelessly question-begging.¹⁰

II.3. The Innocuous Conjunction View

Thus far we have considered some objections to the incompatibilist’s argument that can be evaluated without distinguishing the various versions of the argument. The objection under consideration in this section is importantly different; I argue that even if it successfully impugns the conditional version of the argument for incompatibilism, it does not thereby call into question the possible-worlds version. Again, it is important to see that an objection to one version of the argument does not necessarily translate into an objection to another version (or versions). One should thus hesitate to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

First, the bathwater. Recall the regimentation of the intuitive idea of the fixity of the past employed in the Conditional Version of the argument for incompatibilism:

(FP) For any action Y , agent S , and time T , if it is true that if S were to do Y at T , some fact about the past relative to T would not have been a fact, then S cannot at (or just prior to) T do Y at T .

(p.10) Various philosophers have rejected (FP) on the basis of examples in which they contend that it is innocuous to grant the truth of both a “can-claim” and a paired backtracking counterfactual. The view is that the backtrackers are true in these examples, and further that their truth does nothing to call into question the truth of the corresponding “can-claims.”

There have been many different proposals for cases in which both the backtracking counterfactuals and the paired can-claims are plausibly true. I will here simply use the example of the Salty Old Seadog (Chapter 5, “Power over the Past,”) as a template. (I discuss related examples in “Power over the Past” and also Chapter 6, “Foreknowledge, Freedom, and the Fixity of the Past.”)

The salty old seadog always checks the weather at 9:00 am (after his morning cup of coffee). He calls the weather service. If they tell him that the weather will be fair at noon, he always goes sailing at noon. And if they tell him the weather won’t be fair at noon, he never goes sailing at noon. This is his stable, reliable mindset and disposition with regard to sailing. He enjoys sailing, but detests sailing in bad weather; perhaps this stems from his many years as a fisherman.

We make no assumptions about the existence of God or causal determinism; indeed, let us simply put these considerations aside for now. It is just prior to noon, and this morning the seadog was told that the weather would be horrible at noon. He is his usual self, and he decides not to go sailing at noon. But *can* he nevertheless go sailing at noon? It seems that he has it in his power to do so; after all, he is not coerced, manipulated electronically, hypnotized, and so forth, and we are not assuming the existence of an omniscient God, or that causal determinism obtains. So some would insist that the seadog *can* go sailing at noon.

Now it also seems that the following backtracking conditional is true in the example:

(C1) If the seadog were to go sailing at noon, then the weatherman would have told him at 9:00 am that the weather would be fair at noon.

But if so, then we have a counterexample to (FP): we have a situation in which a can-claim and paired backtracking counterfactual are both true. Here it seems that it is innocuous to posit that the conjunction obtains: the truth of the backtracker, it might be supposed, is a separate issue from the truth of the can-claim.

Of course, things are not this simple. First, it is not evident that (C1) is true in the example. After all, if the seadog were to go sailing at noon, it might have been the case that the seadog misunderstood the weatherman at 9:00, or immediately forgot what he was told at 9:00, and so forth. Perhaps we can be more confident of the truth of something like the following conditional:

(C2) If the seadog were to go sailing at noon, then *some* fact about some time prior to noon would not have been a fact.

(p.11) If (C2) is indeed true in the example, then we would still have a counterexample to (FP), and if so, we would have a compelling objection to the Conditional Version of the argument for incompatibilism.

But it is simply not *obvious* that (C2) is true in the situation. After all, it might be true that if the seadog were to go sailing at noon, he would be acting out of character in a momentary departure from his typical disposition. But let us here put this possibility aside, and grant that (C2) is true in the example. Now it is open to the proponent of the argument for incompatibilism to assert that if (C2) really is true, then it *follows* that the paired can-claim, “The seadog can just prior to noon go sailing at noon” is false. If one denies (C2) or rejects the innocuousness of the pairing of (C2) and the relevant can-claim, “The seadog can just prior to noon go sailing at noon,” one can defend the Conditional Version of the argument for incompatibilism.

But it is interesting to see that a defense of the argument for incompatibilism does not depend on either of these strategies. One need not dig in one’s heels about the falsity of the backtracker or the inimical relationship between the backtracker and the can-claim. In Chapters 5 and 6, “Power over the Past” and “Foreknowledge, Freedom, and the Fixity of the Past,” I explain how the regimentation of the fixity of the past idea employed by the possible-worlds version of the argument for incompatibilism, (FP*), is not touched by examples in which both the backtracking counterfactual and the paired can-claim are true. Recall:

(FP*) An agent *S* has it in his power at (or just prior to) *T* in possible world *w* to do *X* at *T* only if there is a possible world *w** with the same past as that of *w* up to *T* in which *S* does *X* at *T*.

In these chapters I argue that one could accept the conjunction of the backtracker and paired can-claim together with the principle that an agent has it in his power to do X only if it is possible that his doing X be an extension of the actual past. That is, one could accept the conjunction of the can-claim and the backtracker while also adhering to (FP*). This is (in part) because the truth of the backtracker is underwritten by the *closest world or worlds* to the actual world in which the agent does the relevant action X . And this is completely consistent with there being a possible world (*not* the closest or in the ring of closest worlds) with the *same past as the actual world* that underwrites the can-claim. Thus, even if the examples in question (such as that of the salty old seadog) show that (FP) and the conditional version of the argument for incompatibilism are problematic, they do not thereby show that (FP*) and the possible-worlds version of the argument are problematic. In this context it is important to distinguish the different versions of the argument for incompatibilism.

In Chapter 6, “Foreknowledge, Freedom, and the Fixity of the Past,” I employ the analytical framework just sketched above to seek to illuminate various examples similar to that of the Salty Old Seadog. In particular, I apply the analysis **(p.12)** to Alvin Plantinga’s famous case of Paul and the Ant Colony. I argue that it is contentious that this is a case in which both the backtracker and the paired can-claim are true. I further point out that, even if one grants this conjunction, it would do nothing to impugn (FP*) and thus the Possible-Worlds Version of the argument for incompatibilism.¹¹

II.4. Ockhamism

One of the most appealing replies to the argument for incompatibilism (in all of its forms) follows William of Ockham, and is sometimes called, “Ockhamism.” The idea of Ockhamism is first to distinguish different kinds of facts about the past: “hard” and “soft” facts about the past.

Hard facts about a time T are temporally nonrelational facts about T . They are genuinely about T and not even implicitly about times after T . Soft facts about a time T may be genuinely about T but are also (in some genuine sense) about times after T . Soft facts can be said to “masquerade” as the sorts of facts that have to be held fixed when evaluating an agent’s freedom, as in these passages from David Lewis:

Fatalists . . . take facts we count as irrelevant in saying what someone can do, disguise them somehow as facts of a different sort that we count as relevant, and thereby argue that we can do less than we think—indeed, that there is nothing at all that we don’t do but can.¹²

When considering timeless facts about what we will do in later time slices and the limitations these imply for our abilities, he adds that these are **(p.13)**

Irrelevant fact[s] about the future masquerading as . . . relevant fact[s] about the past, and so should be left out of account in saying what, in any ordinary sense, [we] can do.¹³

It is contentious whether God's prior beliefs are hard or soft facts about the past. The Ockhamist contends that they are soft facts about the times at which God holds them, and thus no plausible principle of the fixity of the past gets engaged when evaluating whether a human agent is free at a certain time to do otherwise than he or she does. That is, the Ockhamist claims both that God's prior beliefs are soft facts about the times at which they are held and that they are the sorts of soft facts that are not fixed at subsequent times. Not all soft facts about prior times are now under my control. So, for example, the fact that yesterday my alarm clock went off 24 hours prior to the sun's shining today is not now in my control (insofar as I have no control of the sun). But the fact that yesterday my alarm clock went off 24 hours prior to my typing this sentence now *does* seem to be the sort of soft fact over which I (arguably, and apart from any special assumptions, such as that causal determinism obtains or God exists) have control.

It is important to keep separate, at least analytically, two distinctions. The distinction between hard and soft facts pertains (in the first instance) to temporal nonrelationality and temporal relationality. In contrast, the distinction between fixity and nonfixity pertains to what agents have it in their power to do. It is a mistake to suppose that a hard fact about the past, simply in virtue of the definition of hardness, must be fixed now. Indeed, some compatibilists (who are not Ockhamists) reject the claim that no agent ever has it is her power at a time so to act that a hard (temporally nonrelational) fact about the past (relative to that time) would not have been a fact.¹⁴ Further, as stated above, some soft facts about the past (such as the fact that about my alarm clock's ringing prior to the sun's shining today) are not now such any human agent can so act that they would not have been facts. In evaluating the debates surrounding Ockhamism, it is crucial to keep the two distinctions analytically separate, and to remember that various theorists will posit different relationships between the items involved in the distinctions. The Ockhamist's signature claim here is that whereas hard facts about the past are now fixed, not all soft facts are, and facts about God's prior beliefs are in the subclass of soft facts about the past that are not now fixed. The masquerade is exposed. Happy Halloween!

Ockhamism is attractive to many because it allows one to conceptualize God as within the same temporal framework as human beings and as having a very detailed and robust knowledge of the future. It thus avoids some of the difficulties of Thomism (which places God outside of time) and the Open Theism (discussed **(p.14)** in Chapter 9, “Engaging with Pike: God, Freedom, and Time”).¹⁵ The Open Theist denies that God has beliefs about future contingent propositions, either because they are not true (prior to the times they are about) or because His believing them would render human agents unfree.

Against Ockhamism, I have argued that it is plausible that God’s beliefs are hard facts about the times at which He holds them. In “Freedom and Foreknowledge,” I presented the following condition on accounts of the hard/soft fact distinction (which I called “the incompatibilist’s constraint [IC]”):

The only way in which God’s belief at *T1* about Jones at *T2* could be a soft fact about the past relative to *T2* would be if one and the same state of God’s mind at *T1* would count as one belief if Jones did *X* at *T2*, but a different belief (or not a belief at all) if Jones did not do *X* at *T2*.¹⁶

(IC) seeks to capture the idea that God’s mental states, like human mental states, represent the world in a way that helps to explain His behavior (and His capacity for differential behavior in different contexts). For a discussion of (IC) and a defense against some critiques, see Chapter 7, “Ockhamism: The Facts.”

But I have argued (also in “Ockhamism: The Facts”) that even if God’s beliefs are indeed soft facts, they are plausibly conceptualized as soft facts with hard parts or aspects—hard features that must be altered, if the agent in question is to do otherwise. Thus, they are soft facts with “baggage”; if hard facts are fixed, then so are these soft facts with hard baggage (“hard-core soft facts” and “hard-type soft facts”). Decomposing facts into their parts allows one to see that certain attempts to defend Ockhamism by offering accounts of the hard/soft fact distinction on which God’s beliefs turn out to be soft facts (in opposition to [IC]) about the times at which He holds them are ultimately unsatisfying. In identifying the “baggage” of soft facts, my critique of Ockhamism shares a deep structure with critiques of Ockhamism developed by William Hasker and David Widerker.¹⁷

(p.15) It is helpful to distinguish two versions of Ockhamism; these correspond to different ways of specifying the soft facts. On one approach, which embraces the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood, soft facts entail certain specific sorts of facts about future times. The second approach constrains and specifies the *kind of entailment* that is involved in a proper analysis of soft facthood. The discussion in Chapter 7 (“Ockhamism: The Facts”) takes place within the framework of the first sort of Ockhamism, whereas the discussion in Chapter 8 (“Snapshot Ockhamism”) sketches a version of the second sort of Ockhamism.¹⁸

A recent trend in discussions of the arguments about God's foreknowledge and its relationship to human freedom is to connect the issues about God and free will with important developments in metaphysics, such as views in philosophy of time and also dependence. We shall turn to the connections to the literature on dependence below. Here I simply point out that it might seem that Ockhamism presupposes (or implies) a contentious view about philosophy of time: eternalism (according to which all times are on an ontological par). I and my coauthors discuss this suggestion in Chapter 9 ("Engaging with Pike: God, Freedom, and Time"). Of course, if one finds the opposing views, such as presentism (according to which the present has a special ontological status) less plausible than eternalism, the alleged implication of Ockhamism will not seem problematic. Also, one might resist the contention that Ockhamism does indeed require eternalism.¹⁹

III. Dependence and Dialectical Issues

III.1. Dependence

In addition to connections with philosophy of time, there are important links between the issues involved in the debates about the relationship between God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise and discussions in contemporary metaphysics about dependence. The insights in contemporary discussions of dependence in metaphysics might well help to illuminate the debates about free will. For thoughts on the relationship between dependence and the argument for incompatibilism, see Chapters 10 ("The Truth about Freedom: A Reply to Merricks" [with Patrick Todd]), 11 ("The Truth about Foreknowledge" **(p.16)** [with Patrick Todd]), and 12 ("Omniscience, Freedom, and Dependence" [with Neal Tognazzini]).²⁰

The key idea that relates the two literatures (on dependence and free will) is that soft facts seem to "depend" in a certain way on the future; when facts depend in this sort of way on the future, they might not be fixed and out of our control at the relevant times. The trick is to explicate the notion of dependence in question. (The Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood, mentioned above, can be interpreted as one way of specifying the notion of dependence at issue.)

It is interesting to reflect on the role of dependence here. There are at least two different ways of understanding this role. One way contends that dependence on the future indicates the more "basic" point that the fact under consideration is not "over-and-done-with" and "fully accomplished" in the past—it is also partly "about" (in the relevant sense) the future. Here dependence plays an "instrumental" role: it is a device employed to understand the more fundamental issues about temporal relationality (and nonrelationality).

In contrast, a second way of understanding the role of dependence gives it a more “foundational” role. That is, the idea here is that when a past fact depends (in the relevant sense) on future behavior, and we have no “special reason” (such as manipulation or causal determination or coercion) to deny that the individual has control over that behavior, it follows that he has control over the past fact. Here the connection between a fact’s dependence on the future and our power over that fact does not involve intermediate considerations about temporal relationality. Of course, it is potentially problematic for this more direct conceptualization of the connection that it appears simply to posit a power over behavior that is a matter of controversy; thus, it can at least appear to be question-begging. More specifically, it can seem question-begging simply to suppose that an individual can do otherwise than *X*, when so acting would require the falsity of a fact about the past (a fact that is arguably hard or at least with hard parts of aspects), even when there are no “special reasons” (such as manipulation or coercion) to deny that the agent has the power in question. Put slightly differently, the incompatibilist contends that if one’s doing otherwise requires the hard past to be different, then that *in itself* implies that one lacks the power to do otherwise. That is, the incompatibilist’s point can be interpreted as follows: If I do *X*, and if hard features of the past depend (in the relevant sense) on whether or not I do *X*, then that *in itself and apart from “special reasons” such as manipulation, determination, or coercion* implies that I cannot do otherwise. For a discussion of this sort of worry, see Chapter 12, “Omniscience, Freedom, and Dependence.”

(p.17) Indeed, reflection on the relationship between dependence and the issues relevant to an evaluation of the argument for the incompatibility of divine foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise raises important dialectical issues. Various philosophers have alleged that the argument for incompatibilism about God’s foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise “begs the question.” (This critique has also been leveled against the parallel argument for the incompatibility of causal determinism and freedom to do otherwise.) I turn to this issue in the following section. It is thus ironic that many philosophers who have invoked the notion of dependence on the future to defend compatibilism about God’s foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise are (arguably, at least) guilty of precisely this error; I (together with Neal Tognazzini) contend that some such philosophers do indeed beg the question against incompatibilism (Chapter 12, “Omniscience, Freedom, and Dependence”).

This concludes my presentation of some of the basic issues addressed by the essays collected in this book and the positions defended in these essays. I now offer some additional reflections on a few of the most salient issues, extending and applying elements of the analyses presented in this work (and additional, related papers of mine [in one instance with a coauthor]).

III.2. Does the Theological Incompatibilist’s Argument Beg the Question?

Recently, Trenton Merricks has claimed that the theological incompatibilist's argument begs the question.²¹ Indeed, this is one of the central points of his article, published in *The Philosophical Review*. Elsewhere, I (and my coauthor, Garrett Pendergraft) have defended the argument for the incompatibility of causal determinism and freedom to do otherwise (the "Consequence Argument") against a similar charge of begging the question.²² Here I wish to apply this argumentative strategy to defend the argument for theological incompatibilism against the worry about begging the question. Our contention is that the strategy works just as well in the context of the argument for theological compatibilism; this argument may well be contentious for a number of reasons, but it does *not* beg the question.

As we have seen, the possible-worlds version of the argument for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise employs a certain regimentation of the intuitive idea of the fixity of the past:

(FP*) An agent *S* has it in his power at (or just prior to) *T* in possible world *w* to do *X* at *T* only if there is a possible world *w** with the same past as that of *w* up to *T* in which *S* does *X* at *T*.

(p.18) Merricks essentially objects to (FP*), contending that it begs the question against the compatibilist.

In replying to Merricks, we need first to develop an account of begging the question. It turns out that this is not a straightforward task, and it is beyond the scope of this introductory essay to seek to do this. Here I shall simply rely on an account I (along with my coauthor, Garrett Pendergraft) have sketched elsewhere.²³

So let's start here with the account of begging the question. The suggestion is that an argument begs the question just in case the proponent of the argument has no reason to accept the relevant premise, apart from a prior acceptance of the conclusion.²⁴ Although this is only rough and approximate, and it certainly needs to be filled out more fully (and defended), it will suffice for my purpose here.

(FP*) has it that our freedom is the power to add to the given past. This is indeed an intuitive picture. I contend further that if one rejects (FP*), one is in jeopardy of being committed to implausible conclusions about practical reasoning. That is, I shall argue that rejecting (FP*) could lead to one's having to say that it is rational to choose certain actions in contexts in which it is manifestly irrational to choose those actions. In a nutshell: it is at least plausible that rejecting (FP*) would lead to unacceptable consequences for practical reasoning. Thus, there is a plausibility argument for accepting (FP*)—an argument that does not depend on a prior acceptance of incompatibilism.

As we have seen above (in the example of the Salty Old Seadog and other such examples), it seems that there are examples in which backtracking subjunctive conditionals (of a specific kind) are true. Here is another example of this sort, which I offered originally in *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control*:

Consider the example of the Icy Patch. Sam saw a boy slip and fall on an icy patch on Sam's sidewalk on Monday. The boy was seriously injured, and this disturbed Sam deeply. On Tuesday, Sam must decide whether to go ice-skating. Suppose that Sam's character is such that if he were to decide to go ice-skating at noon on Tuesday, then the boy would not have slipped and hurt himself on Monday.²⁵

I analyzed the example as follows:

The situation is puzzling. It seems that Sam is able to decide to go and to go ice-skating on Tuesday. [In other words, we are supposing that nothing prevents Sam from acting out of character by making a decision to go ice-skating. We can be confident that he won't act of character, but it does not follow that **(p.19)** he can't.] And it also appears plausible that if he were to decide to go skating on Tuesday, the terrible accident would not have occurred on Monday. So it appears that Sam *ought* to decide to go ice-skating on Tuesday. And yet, given that Sam knows that the accident did in fact take place on Monday, it also seems *irrational* for Sam to decide to go ice-skating on Tuesday on the basis of a reason flowing from the truth of the backtracker. Nothing *prevents* Sam from deciding to go and from going ice-skating on Tuesday; and if he were to decide to go ice-skating, the accident would not have occurred. And yet it seems inappropriate for Sam to decide to go ice-skating. To do so would seem to exemplify something akin to "wishful thinking."²⁶

Of course, as with the example of the Salty Old Seadog, someone might deny that the backtracker, "If Sam were to decide to go ice-skating on Tuesday, the accident would not have occurred on Monday," is true in the example. After all, if Sam were to decide to go ice-skating on Tuesday, perhaps he would have been acting out of character. I do not have any knockdown argument that the backtracker is true in the example, but I believe that the story can be filled in so that it is at least *plausible* that the backtracker is indeed true. (Nothing in my argument here depends on defending the claim that the backtracker is obviously true; all I need is the claim that it is at least plausible that, if one fills in the details suitably, the backtracking conditional would be true.)

If we accept (FP*), we can say what we *should* say about practical reasoning in a case such as Icy Patch . Intuitively, what Sam can do on Tuesday is to add to the given past (in which the terrible accident did indeed take place on Monday). So any reasons flowing from the non-occurrence of the accident on Monday are just irrelevant to Sam. But how exactly can one embrace this obvious point, if one rejects (FP*)? After all, if one rejects (FP*), one is committed to the contention that in some contexts an agent in world *w* has access to possible worlds with *different pasts* from *w*. Then why exactly isn't Icy Patch one of these contexts? Having abandoned (FP*), why isn't Icy Patch an example in which Sam has access on Tuesday to a possible world in which the accident didn't happen on Monday? More specifically, given a rejection of (FP*), why can't Sam bring it about on Tuesday—simply by deciding to go ice-skating—that the world did not contain the accident on Monday?

Here is a slightly modified version of Carl Ginet's principle that our freedom is the power to add to the given past, holding fixed the laws of nature:

I have it open to me now to make the world contain a certain event after now only if I have it open to me now to make the world contain everything that has happened before now plus that event after now.

(p.20) (This principle, of course, is equivalent to (FP*), and thus if we reject one then we must reject the other.) Rejecting (FP*) commits us to the claim that at least in some contexts, if we have it open to us now to make the world contain a certain event after now, then we have it open to us now to make the world contain some different event in the past plus that event after now. But then why isn't the Icy Patch case just such a context? More specifically, on the assumption that (FP*) is false, why shouldn't Sam choose to go ice-skating on Tuesday? After all, given a rejection of (FP*), it would be open to him on Tuesday to make the world contain the accident's not happening on Monday plus his decision on Tuesday to go ice-skating. But this is manifestly an unacceptable conclusion.

Perhaps it would be helpful to note that in envisaging that it is open to Sam on Tuesday to make the world contain the accident's not happening on Monday plus his decision on Tuesday to go ice-skating, we are not thereby supposing that Sam can on Tuesday initiate a backward-flowing causal chain issuing in the accident's not happening on Monday. Rather, we are simply envisaging that he can decide on Tuesday to go ice-skating, thereby making the world contain the accident's not happening on Monday plus this decision on Tuesday. Of course, setting aside the question of whether Sam can on Tuesday cause the accident's not having occurred on Monday, if he can on Tuesday make the world contain the accident's not occurring on Monday, this will no doubt be relevant to his practical reasoning on Tuesday.

So if one rejects (FP*), there will be at least some contexts in which an agent has access to a possible world with a different past. It is possible that some such contexts have the signature structure of Icy Patch . In such a case, given a rejection of (FP*), it would follow that it would be rational for the agent to choose or decide to do something that is intuitively clearly irrational to choose or decide to do. Thus, it is plausible to claim that the rejection of (FP*) leads to unacceptable conclusions for practical reasoning. And if this is correct, then we have a reason to accept the relevant premise of the argument for theological incompatibilism that does not depend on a prior acceptance of the argument's conclusion (that God's foreknowledge and human freedom are incompatible). So on the account of begging the question presented above, the argument for theological incompatibilism would *not* beg the question.

Perhaps it will help to put the argument in at least a slightly different form. Given a rejection of (FP*), nothing rules it out that in Icy Patch , Sam has access on Tuesday to a possible world in which the accident did not occur on Monday. After all, Sam can decide on Tuesday to go ice-skating that afternoon. If this claim is rendered true by a possible world W^* accessible to Sam, and on the assumption that we reject (FP*), nothing rules it out that W^* will contain the accident's not happening on Monday. So Sam would have access on Tuesday to a possible world in which the accident did not occur on Monday. (This is simply another way of putting the point just above, namely that, given a rejection of (FP*), it is plausible that Sam can on Tuesday make the world contain [among **(p.21)** other things] the accident's not happening on Monday.) But if this is so, why shouldn't Sam take this as a reason to decide to go ice-skating on Tuesday? If it is appropriate for Sam to take as relevant reasons that obtain in any world genuinely accessible to him at a time, then surely it is (or may well be) rational for him to decide to go ice-skating on Tuesday.

But, again, this is a manifestly unacceptable result: it is clearly *irrational* for him so to decide on Tuesday. The problem, once again, is that the rejection of (FP*) arguably at least leads to unacceptable results for practical reasoning. Thus, as above, we have a reason to accept the relevant premise of the argument for theological incompatibilism that does not stem from a prior acceptance of its conclusion. So the argument does *not* beg the question (on the suggested account of begging the question).²⁷

IV. Hard and Soft Facts

Begin by recalling an important point I made above. The distinction between hard and soft facts about a time is the distinction between temporally nonrelational and temporally relational facts about the time in question. (And this is a different distinction from that between facts that are not within an agent's control at a given time and those that are within his or her control at the relevant time.) So in thinking about hard and soft facts in this section, it is crucial to stick to ideas about temporal nonrelationality and temporal relationality. (These may have *implications* for issues about fixity, but are not themselves about fixity.)

Above I pointed out that my critique of Ockhamism identifies “baggage” of soft facts concerning God's prior beliefs about future human behavior. That is, I argue that once we “decompose” those facts into their parts or aspects, we can see that human freedom to do otherwise would require that *some* temporally genuine or “hard” feature or features of the past would have had to have been different. Thus, if one does indeed adhere to the idea of the fixity of the past, the Ockhamist distinction between hard and soft facts does not suffice to defend human freedom. Crucial to my strategy is to highlight the complexity of soft facts—and to identify their parts. (Other critiques of Ockhamism [Hasker and Widerker, referred to above] share my view that so acting that God would not have believed what He believed requires so acting that *some* hard feature of the past would not have obtained; but they do not necessarily identify these hard features of the past as *parts or aspects* of the facts concerning God's prior beliefs.)

(p.22) Here I shall seek to show how analyzing facts into their parts has a further payoff: it can illuminate a recent argument (or set of arguments) to the effect that God's beliefs are hard facts about the past; this argument offers a critique of the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood (favored by many Ockhamists). My claim will be that the critic of Ockhamism *need not* argue that God's beliefs are hard facts. That is, one can still embrace the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood and yet reject Ockhamism. Although the critique of the Entailment Criterion has considerable force, it is not *obvious* that it is correct; and, fortunately, my contention is that a rejection of Ockhamism does not *depend* on a rejection of the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood (or an insistence that God's beliefs are hard facts about the times at which He holds them).

IV.1. Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd: God's Beliefs as Hard Facts

Recently, various philosophers, especially Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd, have developed similar worries about the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood.²⁸ I shall begin by sketching Patrick Todd's important presentation, which contains perhaps the most fully developed articulation of the objection to the Entailment Criterion. Below I shall return to the treatments of these issues by Widerker and van Inwagen.

Todd contends that the Entailment Criterion is fundamentally mistaken. This is because he holds that the crucial feature of soft facts is that they depend in some specific (but perhaps not easy to articulate) sense on the future.²⁹ A soft fact about a time T depends (in this sense) on the future relative to T , whereas a hard fact about T does not so depend on the future. It is *because* or *in virtue of* the obtaining of the future fact that the fact about T obtains, but not the other way around; according to Todd, when this kind of asymmetric dependence obtains, we have a soft fact. But what, more specifically, is the relevant notion of dependence?

As I pointed out above, the proponent of the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood can be interpreted as suggesting that entailment (of a certain sort of **(p.23)** fact) helps to specify the relevant notion of dependence. So, on the Entailment Criterion, a fact F about T is a soft fact about T if F 's obtaining at T entails that some "basic" fact obtains at a time T^* (after T). Following a general point made by Kit Fine, Todd contends that it is not promising to seek to analyze the relevant kind of dependence in terms of "modal notions," such as entailment.

And Todd provides a specific kind of case in which, he claims, the Entailment Criterion goes wrong: the case of God's decrees:

Consider, instead of God's past *beliefs* about the future, God's past unconditional *decrees* (if such there be) concerning the future. If God has decreed that Jones is to sit at t , this entails that Jones sits at t —God's decrees infallibly come to pass. Given this fact, it follows that God has decreed that Jones will sit at t necessarily only if Jones sits at t . Moreover, that Jones sits at t is obviously a "basic" fact about t . However, it seems plainly incorrect to say that God's past *decrees* concerning the future *depend* on the future (relative to the time the decrees were made).³⁰

Todd's position is that God's decrees lack the sort of dependence on the future that should be part of the conceptualization of soft facts; the future fact obtains because God decrees the relevant thing, but it is not the case that God issues his decree because of the obtaining of the future fact. Thus, the Entailment Criterion must be rejected; entailment of basic facts is not the proper way to specify the signature sort of dependence at issue in the distinction between hard and soft facts. As Todd puts it:

Though God's decrees *entail* certain "basic" facts about the future, what we should conclude here is not that facts about God's past decrees are soft, but that . . . the intrinsic state of the world at a past time may nevertheless necessitate the intrinsic state of the world at a future time. . . . So the entailment view fails.³¹

In his insightful paper (that antedates and anticipates Todd's development of related worries), Widerker employs the examples of God's promises and God's decrees to make a similar point against the Entailment Criterion.³² Widerker writes:

Again, the fact that God decreed at t that Rt' seems intuitively to be over-and-done-with immediately after t , although it entails the obtaining of a state of affairs at a time later than t . The moral to be drawn from these examples is that an assumption such as [the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood] is justified as long as we do not allow for the possibility of there being logically (or metaphysically) necessary connections between temporally distinct **(p.24)** events. [The footnote inserted here states: "Here, as well as in what follows, I take 'event' to refer to concrete, dated, nonrepeatable events of substances and processes. In addition to events, I countenance also such entities as states of affairs and facts."] Once we deviate from this policy, however, and allow for such necessary connections between events as those which obtain between divine forebeliefs and human free actions, we can easily conceive of situations in which [the Entailment Criterion] does not hold.³³

Peter van Inwagen presents an example that is similar to the examples of God's prior decrees and promises.³⁴ Van Inwagen tells a story in which God causes, *ex nihilo*, a monument to come into existence in 1900. On this monument is etched a statement to the effect that van Inwagen will tell a lie at some specified point in the future (11:46am EST, 23 December 2006). Van Inwagen writes:

Suppose God has done this thing he is able to have done. Can it be that my lying . . . was a free act? That is, was I able, on that occasion, to tell the truth? Well, was there, just before that moment, a possible continuation of the (then) present state of affairs in which I told the truth? Let us consider all the possible continuations of that state of affairs. It is true in every one of them that [an inscribed] monument . . . came into existence *ex nihilo* in 1900—and true that its coming to be was caused by God's extra-temporal act of creation. Is it true in any of the possible continuations of the then-present state of affairs that the words inscribed on the monument did not express a true proposition? No, for in that case God would either have been mistaken or have been a deceiver, and both are impossible.³⁵

We can think about the dialectic here in the following way. The Ockhamist contends that God's beliefs about the times at which they are held are soft facts about those times, and she (typically) invokes the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood to underwrite this claim. But it is contested whether God's beliefs are indeed soft facts about the times at which they are held. Todd, Widerker, and van Inwagen seek to make progress by putting aside (temporarily) God's beliefs, and focusing on the cases of God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions in stone. They contend that these cases are plausibly categorized as hard facts. (Todd argues here on the basis of considerations of dependence, and Widerker on the basis of considerations about "over-and-done-with-ness."³⁶) And if they are correct that these cases involve hard facts, then the Entailment Criterion must be rejected, and this criterion is often invoked on behalf of Ockhamism. It is clear that the **(p.25)** rejection of the Entailment Criterion at least etiolates Ockhamism (to the extent that it removes a tool in its analytical arsenal), and the apparent analogy between God's beliefs and the cases invoked by Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd further weakens Ockhamism.

Having contended that dependence on the future should be at the core of any plausible notion of soft facthood, Todd offers the following "proposal" pointing toward a more general and formal definition of soft facthood:

(IDT-S) A fact F at time t is soft if and only if F specifies an entity E as having a property P at t , and whether E counts as having P at t is at least in part determined by whether there exists an event or events in the future relative to t .³⁷

Todd goes on to argue that that on his "identity-dependence" account of soft facthood, God's beliefs turn out to be hard facts about the times at which they are held. And this is how it should be, if one accepts the analogy between God's beliefs and God's decrees (and promises and inscriptions in stone), and one further accepts that God's decrees (and promises and inscriptions in stone) are hard facts about the relevant times.

Todd elaborates on his contention that (IDT-S) implies that God's beliefs are hard facts:

I think we can further unpack IDT-S and see its virtues if we return to the issue that gave rise to these debates in the first place: the fixity of the past. Here we might employ as a heuristic the distinction between *determination* and *discovery*. Recall Smith's belief about Jones. Intuitively, other things being equal, it need not merely fall to Jones to *discover* whether Smith's belief was true; rather, whether it was true is *determined by* what happens at later times. . . . Similar remarks apply to Smith's past prediction; one does not count as *predicting that X will occur* even in part in virtue of the future occurrence of *X*. As I see it, it is for precisely this reason that the fact that Smith made the given prediction belongs to the "hard" past, and further explains why (intuitively) Jones has no choice about whether he made it: nothing he does or doesn't do could *determine* whether he made it [footnote suppressed].

But now consider the case of God's past decrees. Suppose in the past God has somehow decreed everything that shall happen in the future. Intuitively, if this is the case, then all I can do now is to *discover* (or *reveal*) what God's decrees once were; by performing a given action, it follows that God decreed that I shall perform it. But by performing these actions, I do not thereby **(p.26)** *determine* that God once decreed these actions; it is not in virtue of my doing *X* that some given past divine activity counts as decreeing that I shall do *X*.³⁸

Todd now applies all of this to the case of God's beliefs:

Suppose that God had comprehensive beliefs in the past regarding what we do in the future. Now, in doing what we do, do we thereby determine what God's beliefs once were, or is it that what we do merely *reveals* what they once were? In particular, does God count as having believed that you would perform a given action even in part in virtue of your performing it? The answer seems clearly to be "no."³⁹

IV.2. An Alternative Critique of Ockhamism

In evaluating the arguments of Todd, Widerker, and van Inwagen, it is perhaps helpful to begin with the analogy between God's beliefs and God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions in stone. It seems to me that this is a legitimate analogy. But it also seems to me that, upon reflection, the analogy helps us to see that it is just unclear—and, at least, highly contentious—whether God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions are hard facts about the relevant times. After all, it is highly controversial whether God's beliefs are hard or soft facts about the times at which He holds them; indeed, the Ockhamist contends that they are soft facts about those times. She will point out that it is a mistake to think of God's beliefs as in all ways similar to human beliefs, and once one keeps the differences firmly in mind, one will see that God's beliefs at a time about the future (relative to that time) are in important ways like a human's knowing at a time about the future (relative to that time). But a human's knowing on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday is not *just* about Monday—it is also about Wednesday. And if God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions are relevantly similar to God's beliefs, it becomes unclear whether they are hard facts about the relevant times.

We might conceptualize “*S* knows that *p*” as a complex state of affairs that includes the truth of *p*. Given a redundancy theory of truth, we might think of “*S* knows that *p*” as a conjunctive state of affairs, one of whose conjuncts is *p*. This is not at all an implausible view of “*S* knows that *p*.” And if “God believes that *p*” is relevantly similar to “*S* knows that *p*,” we would have it that *p* is a conjunct that is part of “God believes that *p*.” And if so, this would seem to vindicate the Ockhamist's position that (for instance) God's belief on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday is a soft fact about Monday; after all, it includes as a conjunct Jones's mowing on Wednesday, and so it clearly cannot be “over-and-done-with” and “fully accomplished” on Monday. The Ockhamist's (p.27) point here is that God's beliefs are not just about Monday, despite the initial impression; this initial impression might come from inappropriately assimilating God's beliefs to human beliefs. But God's beliefs include more; they are (unlike human beliefs) *not* just a matter of an individual's being in a belief-state. Unlike with human beliefs, God's believing that *p* also includes the truth of *p*, and, arguably, *p*.

Now note that it is not clear that God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions in stone are relevantly different from God's beliefs in this respect. Like human knowledge of the future and God's beliefs about the future, God's promises, decrees, and inscriptions all entail the truth of the future event. So if one is inclined to conceptualize “*S* knows that *p*” as including *p*, and, similarly, “God believes that *p*” as including *p*, one should (it would appear) also conceptualize God's prior decrees, promises, and inscriptions as including *p*. Why would they be any different than God's beliefs in this regard?

Perhaps one should not think of God's belief that p as including p . I grant that this issue is controversial. But it is the view to which the Ockhamist might well be committed, or so it seems to me, and thus it cannot simply be dismissed (in this dialectical context). The idea, for the Ockhamist, is that it is a mistake to assimilate God's beliefs to human beliefs, which are "simple" concrete events or states of affairs. In contrast, God's beliefs are more like human *knowledge*, which, arguably, is to be interpreted as a complex phenomenon that includes not only a state of a human individual's mind, but the thing known. On this sort of view, a state of knowing that p is a *conjunctive* state of affairs, which includes as a conjunct the thing known. And if God's beliefs are like human knowledge, God's beliefs are complex phenomena that include as a conjunct the thing known. And certainly the Ockhamist (who accepts this sort of view) will insist that God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions are relevantly similar to human knowledge and God's beliefs in (arguably, at least) including as a conjunct the thing decreed, promised, or described in the inscription. She will point out that it would be a mistake to think of divine decrees, promises, and inscriptions as only including their "past conjuncts"; they, like human knowledge and God's beliefs, are complex, not simple: they (arguably) include a conjunct about the future. And if so, they are not "over-and-done-with" in the past. It is unclear, then, that the Widerker/van Inwagen/Todd examples make progress within this dialectical niche.

Perhaps the fundamental intuition of the Ockhamist is that God's believing at T that p is *not* a simple state of affairs that obtains only at T ; rather, it is a complex state of affairs that includes as a conjunct p . And if this is so, I don't see why the same analysis would not apply to God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions. Although the words God uses (or the sounds God makes) to issue the decrees or make the promises are intrinsic states of the world at the relevant past times, God's decreeing or promising (arguably) includes *more* than these words and sounds—they include (according to the Ockhamist's intuition) the **(p.28)** things decreed and promised.⁴⁰ Similarly, God's inscriptions include more than the marks on stones; it would be a mistake to construe *God's* inscriptions on a par with *human* inscriptions. God's inscriptions are properly understood as complex phenomena that include the things described in the inscriptions.

We seem to be at a bit of an impasse with regard to the fact that God held a certain belief about the future at T . The Ockhamist contends that this is a soft fact, whereas others—including Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd—insist that it is hard. The examples invoked by the critics of Ockhamism are suggestive, but they fall short of establishing (uncontroversially) that God's beliefs are soft facts about the times at which they are held. Similarly, the point about the possibility that an intrinsic state of the world at a time can necessitate an intrinsic state of the world at a subsequent time does not settle this issue. I wish to be explicit that the impasse is about how we should classify God's beliefs; are they hard (temporally nonrelational) or soft (temporally relational) facts about the times at which He holds them? This is the fundamental point at issue. That is, in the first instance I take the debate to be about the nature of God's beliefs about the future, that is, whether they are temporally nonrelational or relational. This is not (yet) a debate about *how to characterize* the distinction between hard and soft facts about times. Of course, once one comes down on one side or another, one will want (insofar as one wants a "complete" theory, including a way of making the distinction between hard and soft facts) an *account* or *partial account* of the distinction between hard and soft facts that *agrees* with one's view about whether God's beliefs are hard or soft facts about the relevant times.

As I wrote I above, Todd also provides an original account of the hard/soft fact distinction, by reference to which he argues that God's beliefs turn out to be hard facts about the times at which they are held:

(IDT-S) A fact F at time t is soft if and only if F specifies an entity E as having a property P at t , and whether E counts as having P at t is at least in part determined by whether there exists an event or events in the future relative to t .

In the context of applying this account to God's prior decrees about the future, Todd writes (as quoted above):

Suppose in the past God has somehow decreed everything that shall happen in the future. Intuitively, if this is the case, then all I can do now is to *discover* (or *reveal*) what God's decrees once were; by performing a given action, it follows that God decreed that I shall perform it. But by performing these actions, I do not thereby *determine* that God once decreed these actions; it **(p.29)** is not in virtue of my doing X that some given past divine activity counts as decreeing that I shall do X .

If one were relatively confident that this sort of general account of the distinction is correct, then this could help to break the impasse about the status of God's beliefs. But it is not clear how to evaluate Todd's suggestion about how to characterize the distinction between hard and soft facts (IDT-S). It is an attractive proposal, and one could accept it and thus conclude (with Todd) that God's beliefs are hard facts about the relevant past times. But it is also at least plausible to hold that since God's prior beliefs are soft facts about the past, as the Ockhamist contends, then it follows that Todd's suggested account of the distinction between hard and soft facthood is (at least in this respect) problematic. The problem is that it is not clear how to evaluate a proposed account of the distinction; even if it captures all the clear or uncontroversial cases of hard and soft facts, it would seem that there could be a family of accounts that do indeed capture these clear cases, but the members of which disagree about how to categorize God's prior beliefs about the future.⁴¹ How would one decide among accounts of the distinction that capture the clear (uncontroversial) cases but disagree about the status of God's beliefs?

I claim that it is simply not obvious whether God's prior beliefs about the future are soft facts about the times at which they are held. (I am *inclined* toward the position that they are hard facts, based on my acceptance of [IC], as discussed above, but I recognize that not all are convinced.) But I also contend that we *need not* resolve this issue to see that Ockhamism is problematic. My analysis of facts in terms of their parts can help to illuminate this debate—and to show that Ockhamism has significant challenges, even if one stipulates that God's beliefs are soft facts about the times at which they are held, and even if one (provisionally) accepts the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood.

The idea that facts can be decomposed into parts or aspects (discussed above) is helpful here. To review, on one way of dividing up larger facts, they are composed of smaller facts (as it were). On another way of analyzing facts, they are composed of (say) an individual's having a property (perhaps at a time). On the latter approach, the constituents are not "sub-facts," but an individual and a property (perhaps relativized to a time).

Here I wish to focus on this second way of conceptualizing the structure of facts, with the simplifying assumption that the constituents of facts are individuals and properties. Parallel to the distinction between "hard" and "soft" facts, **(p.30)** i.e., the distinction between temporally nonrelational and temporally relational facts, is a distinction between "hard" and "soft" *properties*, i.e., temporally nonrelational and temporally relational properties. The alarm clock's going off at 7 am (shoot!) is a hard fact about 7 am. The alarm clock's going off five hours prior to Sam's having lunch is a soft fact about 7 am. Similarly, the property of "going off" is a hard property of the alarm clock at 7 am, whereas the property of "going off prior to Sam's eating lunch at noon" is a soft property of the alarm clock at 7 am.

The property of “believing that p ” is a hard property relative to the time of the belief. It is not the case that, for any individual I , I ’s believing that p entails that p is true. Thus, for instance, it is not the case that if Monique believes on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, it follows necessarily that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. So believing that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday is not a soft property of Monique on Monday. And, similarly, believing that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday is not a soft property of God on Monday, even though “God believes on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday” entails that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday and is thus a soft fact about Monday (given the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood, which we are assuming, for the sake of the argument, in this section).

What’s going on here is that sometimes we can get a soft fact by combining a hard property with a special kind of individual. In general, when one combines a hard property with an individual, one gets a hard fact. But in the case of certain special individuals, the interaction between the features of those individuals and the hard property gives rise to a soft fact. In the case of God, His essential omniscience, when combined with the hard property of His believing something about the future, gives rise to a soft fact. There can be a synergistic interaction between individuals and certain hard properties that gives rise to soft facts.

This sort of analysis can be applied to all of the cases invoked by Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd. Let us focus on God’s decrees. “God’s decreeing that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday” is arguably a hard-type soft fact about the time at which God issued this decree. That is, it can be analyzed as God’s having the property of decreeing that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday (at the relevant time). Of course, the property of so decreeing is a hard property relative to the time of the decree; it is not the case that if any individual—say Jones’s neighbor—decrees that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, it would follow necessarily that Jones mows on Wednesday. So the property of decreeing that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday is a hard property (relative to the time of the decree), as defined above, and thus God’s so decreeing (at the relevant time) is a hard-type soft fact about that time. (A hard-type soft fact is a soft fact whose constitutive property is hard: see Chapter 7, “Ockhamism: The Facts.”) Insofar as Jones can do otherwise on Wednesday, he must be able so to act that some individual (God) would have had a different hard property in the past. And this would at least seem to rule out Jones’s freedom to do otherwise on Wednesday.

(p.31) Exactly the same analysis would appear to apply to God's promises and inscriptions in stone. This analysis captures the essential *similarity* between all of the phenomena under consideration: God's beliefs about the future, God's decrees about the future, God's promises about the future, and God's inscriptions about the future. In all of these cases there is, as it were, something hard, and something soft. On one way of analyzing these phenomena, they are all hard-type soft facts. The *facts* are soft, but their constitutive *properties* are hard. And the facts, though soft, come with hard *baggage*; in order for the agent in question to do otherwise, he must so act that an individual who did in fact have some hard property in the past would not have had that property. And this would seem to rule out the agent's freedom to do otherwise. We can thus see that Ockhamism is untenable, even if we assume that God's prior beliefs about the future are soft facts about the past. We do not *have* to adjudicate the dispute between the proponents of Ockhamism and critics such as Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd.

Actually, the problem for Ockhamism can be put in terms of a dilemma. Let's suppose that God's beliefs about the future are like God's decrees, promises, and inscriptions about the future. Then either they are hard facts about the times at which God holds them (as maintained by Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd), or they are hard-type soft facts about those times. Either way, if the relevant agent is free to do otherwise (in the future), he must be able so to act that *some* hard (temporally genuine and nonrelational) feature of the past would not have been a feature of the past. And this seems to rule out the agent's freedom to do otherwise. So my framework of analysis provides another way to get to the same conclusion as that of Widerker, van Inwagen, and Todd—but without *having* to argue that God's prior beliefs are temporally intrinsic facts about the past. I consider it a virtue of my critique of Ockhamism that I do not *have* to argue that God's beliefs are hard facts about the past (even though I *do* find this plausible). That is, I do not *have* to argue that they are over-and-done-with; even if they are not, they have temporally nonrelational parts or aspects that issue in their fixity. There's more than one way to skin this cat.

V. God's Knowledge of Future Contingents in an Indeterministic World

It might seem impossible for an essentially omniscient God to know a future contingent truth in a causally indeterministic world.⁴² That is, assuming that **(p. 32)** God does not have some sort of “direct apprehension” of the future, and that His evidence bearing on the future contingent proposition is constituted by facts about the past, present, and laws of nature, it would seem that He could not have knowledge of future contingent truths in a causally indeterministic world. It is contentious whether human agents could have such knowledge in a causally indeterministic world. But suppose, for the sake of argument, that they can. Imagine, that is, that I can know on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, even though the world is indeterministic. (I simply assume this here; I return to motivate it [at least] somewhat below.) My knowledge, let us suppose, is based on the fact that Jones always mows on Wednesday (given all but absolutely inclement weather, and the forecast is for decent weather), that his grass is growing tall, and that he is having a birthday party for his child on Wednesday evening (among other facts). We can simply assume that Jones’s character and dispositions, together with all the relevant background facts, provide strong evidence that Jones will mow on Wednesday. Arguably, given that certain further conditions are met (the conditions that specify knowledge, on one’s favored account of knowledge), I can know on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday.

Now this is not knowledge that comes with *certainty*. I cannot be *certain* on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. After all, the weather might take a sudden turn for the worse, the birthday party might be cancelled, Jones might just act out of character and allow the lawn to get a bit shaggy, and so forth. But there are plausible and attractive “fallibilist” conceptions of knowledge, according to which knowledge does not require certainty. I shall return to some such accounts below, but for now I simply assume the viability of a fallibilist conception of knowledge (while leaving the details unspecified). But whereas it is possible that I believe on Monday (with good evidence, sufficient for knowledge) that Jones will mow on Wednesday and Jones does not in fact mow on Wednesday, it is impossible that God believe on Monday that Jones will mow on Wednesday, while Jones not in fact mow on Wednesday. After all, God is *essentially* omniscient, and thus He cannot have any false beliefs. So it is true, and God knows this, that God’s believing a proposition entails that the proposition is true. Thus, any belief God has must be accompanied by *certainty*. The problem is that it is hard to see how God could have certainty on Monday that Jones will mow on Wednesday, given causal indeterminism (and on the assumption that his evidence must be based on facts about Monday, and not direct apprehension of the future).

Various philosophers have indeed supposed that God couldn’t know future contingent truths in a causally indeterministic world. For example, William Hasker writes:

Some of our actions in the future will be free, and with regard to those actions, it is *not yet determined* which of two or more options we will choose. **(p.33)** *Either option is, as of now, fully possible.* No, I submit that it is rationally incoherent for any being to say, in effect, “Both *e will occur* and *e will not occur* are fully possible, and there is nothing that makes it the case that one is true and the other false; nevertheless, I *know with certainty* that *e will occur* is true.” . . . So if it is now *really possible* that either outcome may occur, no one—not even God—can reasonably claim to know with certainty *which* will occur.

... if it is at present indeterminate which of two things will occur, then what a cognitively perfect being will know about it is just that: that it is indeterminate which will occur.⁴³

And Patrick Todd also finds it appealing that, as he puts it, “God only believes on sufficient evidence, evidence sufficient to entail the truth of the belief.”⁴⁴ Todd’s statement resonates with this passage from Jonathan Edwards’s *Freedom of the Will*:

That no future event can be certainly foreknown, whose existence is contingent, and without all necessity, may be proved thus: ‘tis impossible for a thing to be certainly known to any intellect without *evidence*. To suppose otherwise, implies a contradiction: because for a thing to be certainly known to any understanding, is for it to be *evident* to that understanding: and for a thing to be evident to any understanding, is the same thing, as for that understanding to *see evidence* of it: but no understanding, created or increated, can see evidence where there is none: for that is the same thing, as to see that to be, which is not. And therefore, if there be any truth which is absolutely without evidence, that truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch as it implies a contradiction to suppose that it is known.⁴⁵

Richard Taylor is yet another skeptic about the possibility of divine foreknowledge in an indeterministic context:

I am not saying, nor did Aristotle, that foreknowledge would cause this thing or that to happen, or that propositions, known or unknown, entail events, all of which is surely nonsense, but that the supposition of foreknowledge is inconsistent with the claim that any of several alternative futures might become real, using “might” in the sense of real and not relative contingency. For the assumption that any one of these futures, no matter which, is already **(p.34)** known, and hence will in fact come into being, is incompatible with the theory of real contingency, viz., that some other future is no less likely to come into being.⁴⁶

Despite the vehemence (and distinction) of these philosophers, I shall here argue against the view shared by Hasker, Edwards, Taylor, and Todd. In particular, I shall sketch a picture on which God can indeed *know with certainty* that some future contingent proposition is true (and thus that some future event will occur), in a causally indeterministic world (and hence a world in which the event is not causally determined).

V.1. Human Knowledge

I start with the claim that it is plausible that human beings can know certain things without having evidence that *entails* those things. So, for instance, I now know that Barack Obama is President of the United States, although I do not have evidence that entails this; for instance, I do not know that Obama has not been assassinated in the last five minutes, has not had a fatal heart attack in the last five minutes, has not been hit by lightning in the last five minutes, and so forth. Similarly, I know where my car is parked on campus, although I do not know that it has not been stolen in the last five minutes.⁴⁷ And so forth. I shall simply take for granted in this paper that human knowledge does not require evidence that secures the relevant entailment; it does not require *certainty*. That is, I simply assume (without argument) that *fallibilism* about knowledge is at least a plausible and defensible doctrine, one that I'll accept for the sake of argument here.

Now there are various fallibilist conceptions (or accounts) of knowledge. For my purposes, it will suffice to give the briefest and most cursory overview of such approaches, as nothing in my argument depends on adopting any *specific* account. A traditional, "internalist" account of knowledge would have it that *S* knows that *p* iff *S* believes that *p*, *p* is true, and *S* justifiably believes that *p*. Of course, Gettier presented counterexamples to this biconditional; that is, he presented cases in which it seems that an individual has justified true belief, but not knowledge.⁴⁸ And Gettier's justly famous article has produced a huge "industry" of accounts of knowledge meant to accommodate the Gettier scenarios (and to generalize appropriately).

(p.35) On some such approaches, one might require that *S*'s justification not be "defeated."⁴⁹ Or one might require that all the beliefs *S* would cite when pressed to justify his belief are true; on this approach, one adds to the justification requirement a further condition to the effect that *S*'s belief is "fully grounded" (as explicated just above).⁵⁰

Alvin Goldman pioneered the development of the "causal" theory of knowledge. In the original version, Goldman supplemented the justification condition with a causal condition which required that *S*'s belief that *p* is appropriately connected causally to the fact that makes the belief true.⁵¹ Various more sophisticated causal theories have been developed subsequently; these approaches specify that the beliefs of the agent must result from a certain sort of "method."

Although one could consider sensitivity, adherence, and safety approaches that are not method-based, I will focus on method-based accounts. Here is a method-based sensitivity approach. S knows that p iff S believes that p via a method M in the actual world, p is true (in the actual world), and if p were false and S were to employ M , S would no longer believe that p . Put in terms of possible worlds, the idea would be that in the nearest possible world to the actual world in which S employs M and where p is false (which may be close, or far away from, the actual world), S does not believe that p . This family of views is associated with Dretske, Nozick, and Goldman.⁵² Robert Nozick embraced both a method-based sensitivity account and a method-based “adherence” account, according to which in employing M , S would believe that p , if p were the case. That is, in all of the closest worlds in which p is true and S employs M , S believes that p .

There are also method-based safety accounts. Roughly, such an approach has it that S knows that p iff S believes that p employing method M (in the actual world), p is true (in the actual world), and S would not easily be mistaken (employing M). Put in terms of possible worlds, the idea is that in all nearby worlds (to the actual world) in which S uses M to form a belief, S believes truly (with respect to p).⁵³

(p.36) Another widely influential approach is “virtue theory,” associated with Zagzebski, Sosa, and others.⁵⁴ On this strategy (especially in the version advocated by Sosa), S knows that p iff S 's belief is accurate (i.e., its aim is truth and indeed it is true), S 's belief is adroitly formed (i.e., formed as a result of reliable skill in hitting the target of truth), and S 's belief is “apt” (accurate because adroit). (This is actually just a first approximation to Sosa's full account.)

In an important and appealing approach, Richard Foley argues that S knows that p iff S believes that p , p is true, and there are no relevant, important truths in the neighborhood of p of which S is unaware.⁵⁵

This summary of various fallibilist conceptions of knowledge is, as I wrote above, cursory and also manifestly incomplete (at best). But it should at least give enough of a sketch to work with. I do not wish to advocate any specific version of any of these general strategies for analyzing “ S knows that p .” Of course, each has its pros and cons. And if they were *all* decisively problematic, and for precisely the reason that they are compatible with fallibilism, then this would stop me in my tracks. But I assume, again for the sake of the argument here, that *at least one* such approach, developed suitably, is an acceptable account of knowledge, at the very least as a working hypothesis. Part of my assumption, not argued for, is that fallibilism is at least worth serious consideration (and is not to be dismissed from the beginning).

V.2. Knowledge Is Unified

The above accounts are representative versions of general strategies for giving analyses of knowledge, especially in light of Gettier-style worries (but, of course, not solely in light of such worries). They are consistent with fallibilism. Let us say that when *S*, a believer that *p*, meets the (additional) conditions specified in our favored or designated such account of knowledge, he or she is in a “knowledge conferring situation” (or KCS). When a human being who believes that *p* is in a KCS with respect to *p*, and *p* turns out to be true, she thereby has knowledge that *p*. My claim is that knowledge is all-of-a-piece in the sense that if *any* individual who believes that *p* is in such a context, that is, a KCS, that individual has knowledge that *p*. It would be odd and implausible to suppose that knowledge is splintered and bifurcated in such a way that if a human being were in a KCS, she would thereby have knowledge, but that if God were in a KCS, He would *not* thereby have knowledge. It seems to me that knowledge is unified. That is, if *any* **(p.37)** individual—a human being, a higher primate, an angel, a devil, an extraterrestrial being visiting from Mars, a sophisticated robot of the future, or God—were to believe that *p* in a KCS with respect to *p*, and *p* were true, then that individual would thereby know that *p*. But I needn’t be quite so extravagant (although it is fun!); I am simply committed to a lack of bifurcation as regards God and human agents in this respect: if a human being believes that *p*, is in a KCS with respect to *p*, and *p* is true, and he thereby has knowledge that *p*, then if God believes that *p*, is in a KCS with respect to *p*, and *p* is true, He thereby has knowledge that *p*. (The conjunct, “and *p* is true,” in the consequent is redundant, since God’s belief that *p* entails *p*’s truth.)

Above I wrote that I can know that Barack Obama is president of the United States right now, although I do not have evidence that entails that Obama is currently president. This is a “synchronic” case of fallible knowledge. It seems to me that there are similar cases that are “diachronic” examples of fallible knowledge. As above, I think it is plausible that (given all the evidence about his character, the weather, his plans, and so forth), I can know on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday.

If indeed I can know this, then I must be able to be in a KCS today with respect to the proposition that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. And, on my view, if I can be in a KCS today with respect to the proposition that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, God can also be in a KCS today with respect to the proposition about Wednesday. Given that God holds the relevant belief, it is at least in part in virtue of being in such a context—a knowledge conferring situation (on one’s favored conception of knowledge, whatever that may be)—that God knows the relevant future fact.

But whereas my belief on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday can turn out to be false, God's can't (in virtue of His essential omniscience). Unlike God, I am not essentially omniscient. How can God know *with certainty* on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, given that causal indeterminism obtains? (Whenever God knows that *p*, He knows that *p* with *certainty*.) As Jonathan Edwards and Patrick Todd put it (quoted above), God must believe on *sufficient evidence*—where “sufficient evidence” is here taken to be evidence that entails the truth of the believed proposition.

My answer here is relatively simple (although I am confident that it will not be uncontentious). As above, God knows on Monday that *p*, a future contingent proposition (such as that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday), in the same way that an ordinary human being can know this: (at least in part) by believing that *p* while being in a KCS with respect to *p*. But unlike an ordinary human being, God knows that if He believes that *p*, then it follows of necessity that *p* is true. He knows this via His self-knowledge: He knows that He is essentially omniscient. Thus, not only does God know on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, He knows it with certainty. He takes no risks in holding the belief on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday insofar as He is in **(p.38)** a KCS on Monday with respect to Jones's mowing his lawn on Wednesday and He knows that He is essentially omniscient. God can thus “bootstrap” His way to certainty in this distinctive way. We might even call the approach to God's foreknowledge I am sketching “the Bootstrapping View.”

This then provides my answer to Hasker, who supposed (as quoted above) that it would be “absurd” to suppose that anyone, including God, could know with certainty future contingent propositions in a causally indeterministic world, and to Edwards, who supposed that it would “imply a contradiction” to suppose this. He can know them partly in the same way as ordinary mortals can know them, and partly via His self-knowledge. And this explains why Jonathan Edwards and Patrick Todd are correct, but only in one sense, when they write that God only believes on the basis of sufficient evidence. One needs to distinguish first-order from second-order evidence (or one needs to make some such distinction). God's first-order evidence, or evidence that bears directly on whether Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, does not in itself entail that Jones will mow on Wednesday. But God's having this evidence, in a KCS, *together with his second-order evidence*, i.e., His self-knowledge of His essential omniscience, is indeed sufficient to entail that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. Importantly, the fact that God only believes on the basis of sufficient evidence (in the indicated sense, i.e., the sense that entails the truth of the believed proposition) does *not* imply that God cannot have knowledge (with certainty) of future contingents in a causally indeterministic world.

Note that on the view I am developing here, God does not believe (and know) at a time all propositions about the future that are true at that time. So God does not believe on Monday all propositions true on Monday, and, in particular, all future contingent propositions relative to Monday. So my approach is not an attempt to defend a “traditional” view of God’s omniscience, according to which God believes (and knows) at T all (and only) those propositions true at T . Rather, God believes at T all (and only) those propositions with respect to which He is (or could be) in a KCS.

So suppose that on Wednesday you flip a fair coin and it comes out tails. And imagine further, what is surely controversial, that it follows that it was true on Monday that the coin would come up tails on Wednesday (even though we stipulate that the world is indeterministic and that the coin flip is a genuinely random event). It would not follow from the truth on Monday of the proposition to the effect that the coin will turn up tails on Wednesday that God can know this on Monday. In contrast, He can know on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. And, of course, He can know on Monday that the probability that the coin will turn up tails on Wednesday is (say) 50%. On this view, God knows at a time everything that can be known at that time—nothing more, and nothing less. He thereby knows less than on the traditional picture, but more than on the Open Theist picture. He knows *some* true contingent facts about the future with 100% certainty, and He knows other true contingent facts as qualified by less than 100% certainty.

(p.39) To elaborate a bit, on this (admittedly) nonstandard picture, God knows (with certainty) some future contingents, although there will be other future contingents that do not have probabilities attached that God simply doesn’t believe. He may assign them a probability that they are true, but he refrains from believing the future contingent unqualified by a probability assignment. So, God may assign a probability of 60% to a glacier’s fully melting by the end of the year 2015. He refrains from believing, “The glacier will melt by the end of 2015,” but He does believe, “It is 60% probable that the glacier will melt by the end of 2015.” Arguably, this is not an unattractive conceptualization of God’s foreknowledge in an indeterministic world.

One might worry that, on the Bootstrapping View, God could bootstrap to too much knowledge. That is, one might worry that He could believe any old proposition, and thereby bootstrap (inappropriately) to knowledge of it. But God wouldn’t (and arguably couldn’t) believe *any* old proposition, since, as a perfect being, he must maximally exhibit all virtues, including the virtue of epistemic responsibility. And it would be epistemically irresponsible for God to believe any proposition He is not in a legitimate position to know (i.e., a proposition with respect to which he cannot be in a KCS). Thus, the Bootstrapping View would not entail that God would (or could) bootstrap to “too much knowledge.”

V.3. Hard-Type Soft Facts

Above I pointed out that there can be a synergistic interaction between individuals and certain hard properties that gives rise to soft facts. Note that this sort of phenomenon is taking place in the context of God's being in a KCS with respect to His belief on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. Given fallibilism, an individual's being in a KCS is a hard property of the individual at the relevant time. And, specifically, being in a KCS with respect to believing that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday is a hard property of any individual (including God) on Monday. But God's being in a KCS on Monday with respect to His belief that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday is a soft fact with respect to Monday.⁵⁶ The synergism between God—an essentially omniscient individual—and the hard property of being in a KCS has again worked its wonders. We get a soft fact by combining a special kind of individual (God) with a hard property (being in a KCS).

The key idea here is different from the mysterious doctrine of Divine Supercomprehension.⁵⁷ On this doctrine, evidence that would not give a human **(p.40)** being certainty can give God certainty; it is as if He can “get more” out of the evidence—more epistemically—than we can. This, to borrow Hasker's epithet, just seems absurd. But it is crucially different from the view I am developing here. On the view sketched here, God does not get more out of the first-order evidence than we do; rather, the “more” comes from the *combination* of this evidence and God's self-knowledge. Like any good cocktail, the secret is in the synergism of ingredients. God bootstraps to certainty, but He doesn't get more out of the first-order evidence than we do. This is as it should be. The Bootstrapping View is not implausible in the way in which the doctrine of Supercomprehension is.

V.4. Some Implications

The possibility that God knows (with certainty) future contingent propositions in a causally indeterministic world has some interesting implications. I sketch just a few here.

Molinism has it that God can know future contingents in a world that is not causally deterministic. Indeed, Molina himself, and many of his followers, believe that human freedom is incompatible with causal determinism but fully compatible with God's foreknowledge. The Bootstrapping View, although of course it does not vindicate all aspects of Molinism, would at least provide a conceptual framework within which it is possible that God has foreknowledge of future contingents in an indeterministic world. Of course, the Bootstrapping View does not have anything to say about the possibility of grounding "counterfactuals of freedom," nor does it suggest that Molinism provides an answer to the argument for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom. Rather, the Bootstrapping View provides a framework that makes sense of God's foreknowledge of the future after God has decreed that a certain indeterministic world be the actual world.

Indeed, various philosophers (in addition to Molinists) either explicitly or implicitly hold that divine foreknowledge is possible even in the absence of causal determination. Ockham and his followers held this view. In his classic paper, "Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action," Nelson Pike at least *appears* to hold that the problem for human freedom posed by God's foreknowledge is independent of and does not reduce to the problem posed by causal determination.⁵⁸ It is thus useful and potentially illuminating to have a conceptual framework that allows for this possibility.

Todd and others have also suggested that God's foreknowledge does not *in itself* rule out human freedom to do otherwise. Rather, they have contended that God's foreknowledge is a *sign of something else*, where it is the "something else" (**p. 41**) that is really making it the case (or at least threatening to make it the case) that humans are not free to do otherwise. And the something else in question is causal determination. On this view, the only way God could have foreknowledge is by having sufficient evidence, and the only way God could have sufficient evidence is by having first-order evidence that *entails* the truth of the relevant future proposition, and this requires causal determinism. So the real culprit in the free will debates is causal determination (either via God's prior decrees or independent of such decrees), not God's foreknowledge; God's foreknowledge is a mere symptom of something deeper and more threatening.

Todd attributes this sort of view to Jonathan Edwards:

As Jonathan Edwards rightly emphasized, divine foreknowledge may *prove* (that is, provide good epistemic reason for) the necessity (or the causal determination) of what is foreknown, without itself doing the necessitating (or determining).⁵⁹

Now if I am correct in my argumentation above, this would provide an alternative way of conceptualizing these matters. More specifically, God's foreknowledge would *not* require causal determinism, and thus the challenge to human freedom stemming from God's foreknowledge would *not* be coming from causal determinism. This could issue in embracing compatibilism about God's foreknowledge and human freedom, insofar as one believes (as Todd and others appear to) that the *only* reason God's foreknowledge would rule out human freedom is that it points to the *real* worry: causal determination. But I do not wish to suggest that the possibility of God's foreknowledge in a causally indeterministic world *must* lead to compatibilism; after all, one might believe that God's foreknowledge would in itself (or for some reason apart from being a sign of causal determinism) rule out human freedom.

For example, it would seem that the intuitive idea of the fixity of the past (suitably formulated) would imply that God's foreknowledge would threaten human freedom (quite apart from worries about causal determination), on the assumption that God's prior beliefs are hard facts about the past, or, if soft (as the proponents of the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood would contend), are soft facts with hard features (hard sub-facts or hard properties). If being free at *T* to do *X* requires a possible world in which the relevant agent does *X* holding fixed all the hard facts about the past relative to *T* (and all hard features of soft facts about the past relative to *T*), and if God's prior belief is a hard fact about the past, then it would seem that human freedom is called into question, quite apart from any assumption about causal determinism.⁶⁰

(p.42) The Bootstrapping View thus provides a framework for understanding central parts of David Hunt's "Augustinian" view of freedom, foreknowledge, and moral responsibility.⁶¹ (This strategy might also be dubbed a "Frankfurt-style" approach, as I shall note below.) On Hunt's view, God can indeed have foreknowledge even in the absence of causal determination; this is fortunate (given that one believes in moral responsibility), since Hunt believes that causal determination, but not divine foreknowledge, would rule out moral responsibility. For Hunt, moral responsibility does not require freedom to do otherwise, and thus even though God's foreknowledge rules out freedom to do otherwise, it does not thereby rule out moral responsibility. (I further develop this sort of approach to moral responsibility below.) If causal determinism obtained, then human individuals would not be the sources of their behavior in the way required for moral responsibility; but God's foreknowledge does not similarly imply the lack of the requisite sourcehood.

The Bootstrapping View gives an account of how God could have foreknowledge in the absence of causal determination. (This foreknowledge would not be *comprehensive* foreknowledge of *all* propositions true at the relevant time, and thus my approach does not vindicate the full Augustinian view defended by Hunt.) Further, I sketched above a way of arguing that God's foreknowledge rules out human freedom to do otherwise, quite apart from an invocation of causal determination. If Hunt is correct that moral responsibility does not require freedom to do otherwise, and that God's foreknowledge need not threaten the sourcehood required for moral responsibility, then a significant part of Hunt's package of views can be rendered coherent. (Again, I develop and discuss this sort of approach to moral responsibility in a bit more detail below.)

Patrick Todd has suggested on behalf of certain Open Theists (such as Hasker) an *explanation* of God's not knowing future contingents that are indeed *true*.⁶² The impossibility of God's knowing at *T* certain propositions that are indeed *true at T* is mysterious, and, in Todd's view, needs an explanation. And the explanation is at hand: God must believe on sufficient evidence, and thus God cannot believe on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday, if the world is causally indeterministic—even if it is true on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. God wouldn't have the right kind of evidence.

I have offered an alternative picture. Although God would not have sufficient evidence, considering only first-order evidence, his self-knowledge, combined with that first-order evidence, gets him to sufficient evidence. So this proposal does not help the Open Theist.

(p.43) V.5. Some Objections

As I suggested in the previous section, the Bootstrapping View has some interesting and arguably appealing implications. But it is not without significant problems (or, at best, mysteries). I shall just pick two for discussion here, although there are, no doubt, more.

First, it might seem impossible for God to get Himself into a state of believing at *T* that *p*, where He does not have decisive first-order evidence for *p* (that is, first-order evidence that entails that *p*). And if He can't get Himself into this state of believing that *p* in the first place, then He cannot use his self-knowledge to bootstrap to certainty.

The objection might seem to presuppose a *temporally sequential* picture of God's beliefs, according to which He would *first* formulate a belief that *p* based on first-order evidence and *then* apply His self-knowledge of this essential omniscience to bootstrap to certainty. But I think that a sequential picture is misleading, and we should presuppose that all of this happens simultaneously. That is, God simultaneously believes that *p* on the basis of the relevant first-order evidence and believes that He is essentially omniscient. Thus He simultaneously believes with *certainty* that *p*.

But there still might be a worry about the "order of explanation" here, not necessarily the temporal order.⁶³ The first-order evidence explains God's "coming to believe that *p*," which simultaneously causes Him to bootstrap to certainty with respect to *p*. The order of explanation is sequential, it seems, and at the first logical moment of this order, God is being portrayed as risking error! It is thus unclear how God could get Himself into the belief-state from which He would "simultaneously" bootstrap to certainty.

The worry might be put as follows.⁶⁴ The idea of bootstrapping itself seems to imply that one thing explains or otherwise makes possible something else, or that one thing happens because of or as a result of something else. You "first" have whatever thing is in question; "next," you bootstrap *from* that thing. So there is an explanatory structure here—an order of explanation, or a relation of explanatory priority. One thing is explanatorily prior to another: God's believing on the basis of the first-order evidence is explanatorily prior to the certainty of His belief.

This raises deep difficulties, and I am not sure whether the Bootstrapping View can be defended in a compelling way. I would however again emphasize that God's beliefs are all simultaneous, so the sequence at issue is *not* a temporal sequence. Thus, God has the belief about His essential omniscience *simultaneously* with His belief based on the first-order evidence. Of course, we can **(p.44)** "crystallize out" or "analytically separate" God's belief based on His first-order evidence from His belief about His own essential omniscience; but this does *not* imply that He has (or can have) the one belief temporally prior to the other. The bootstrapping here is *logical or analytical*, not *temporal*. (Perhaps then a better name for the view would be the "Logical Bootstrapping" View.) It is as if God's beliefs all interpenetrate with respect to content, but that *we* can crystallize out parts of the total content for our descriptive purposes. The total interpenetration of God's beliefs suggests that in reality God's mind is in one giant belief-state, the contents of which can be crystallized out by us for certain purposes. But these contents are necessarily informed by the totality of God's belief-state.

The second objection starts with the fact that, on a fallibilist approach to knowledge, there will be contexts in which a human believer believes that p in a KCS and yet p turns out to be false. Indeed, there may be a situation in which God notices that most or all of the reliable human believers believe that p , and He knows that He is in a KCS, and yet He does not believe that p . He would obviously conclude that, although the situation is a KCS with respect to p , p will not turn out to be true. But it is possible (given the structure of the Bootstrapping View) that God Himself has no additional evidence on the basis of which He, unlike the human reliable believers, can see why p will turn out to be false.

We then have *at least* a mystery. If His evidence is exactly the same as that of all the reliable human believers in the situation in question, why doesn't He also form the belief that p ? On the Bootstrapping View, this must be thought of as a *bare difference* between God and reliable human believers; at least it is a difference that is not explained by differentially accessible evidence. Perhaps the idea is this: the explanation of the asymmetry between God and human reliable believers in this sort of situation is not a matter of first-order evidence, but God's essential omniscience. The explanation, then, of God's not forming a belief in this kind of context would be that He is essentially omniscient.

But this "explanation" only goes so far; it is not *really* an explanation, at least an explanation of the "How precisely does it work?" sort. As far as I can see, the Bootstrapping View just is committed to the possibility of contexts of the sort under consideration, and thus must accept that God will not believe that p while all (or most) of the reliable human believers will believe that p , and there is no explanation of the difference other than the fact that God is essentially omniscient. This leaves it mysterious as to how precisely it works, in the sense of how "from the inside" God is guided away from believing that p .

Here is perhaps a related difficulty for the Bootstrapping View.⁶⁵ Let us suppose that God is in a KCS on Monday with respect of Jones's mowing his lawn on Wednesday, and He further believes that the objective probability of Jones's mowing his lawn on Wednesday is 90%. We also suppose that God finds himself **(p.45)** with the belief that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. Given this belief and His knowledge of his omniscience, He can apparently conclude on Monday that there is a 100% chance that Jones will mow on Wednesday. But this seems problematic: here God is not bootstrapping to too many beliefs, but to too much certainty, as it were. It is as if God now transforms indeterministic sequences into deterministic sequences simply by knowing the future.

But we need to be a bit more nuanced in the description of the situation. God can indeed infer in the above situation that, taking into account not just the natural facts, there is a 100% objective probability on Monday that Jones will mow his lawn on Wednesday. But He cannot thereby conclude that the natural facts imply that there is a 100% objective probability on Monday of Jones's mowing on Wednesday. So indeterminism is preserved in the natural world. The mundane facts are indeterministic; it is only when one conjoins the ultramundane (facts about God) with the mundane that one gets determination.

Some will no doubt take it that this set of objections is decisive against the Bootstrapping View. Perhaps it is; my main goal has simply been to sketch this view—made possible by thinking of facts as having parts in a certain way—and point to some of its attractions. But please allow me to remind the reader that *no* view of God's knowledge of the future is without its problems or perhaps "mysteries." For instance, as pointed out above, it appears that an Ockhamist must reject what I called "the incompatibilist's constraint" (IC), which posits that content of beliefs (including God's beliefs) supervenes on the structure of the mind in a certain way. But if one denies the incompatibilist's constraint, it is (at best) mysterious how God can "from the inside" distinguish a world in which (say) p will obtain in the future from a world in which p will not obtain in the future. This is because a denial of the incompatibilist's constraint would imply (for instance) that one and the same state of God's mind at T would count as a belief that p , if p turns out to be true in the future relative to T , and would count as a different belief, if p turns out to be false in the future relative to T . Thus, from the inside, as it were, it is mysterious how God distinguishes a future- p world from a future-not- p world. This would make it mysterious as to how God could intervene differentially, should He wish to. So Ockhamism seems to be committed to a significant mystery here; or perhaps one should say that it is *incomplete* in an important way.

I contend—without argumentation here—that *every* major view about God's knowledge of the future has at least a mystery associated with it, if not a significant problem. One might think of the views as importantly incomplete. One's evaluation of the various views will presumably be a holistic cost/benefit analysis in which one weighs the pros and cons, where the cons will include these gaps as well as implausibilities (such as Open Theism's denial of God's foreknowledge of future contingents—a view in apparent conflict with scripture). Whether the Bootstrapping View will fare worse than others in this holistic evaluation is not obvious to me.

(p.46) VI. A Semicompatibilist Theory of Moral Responsibility

In the previous section I sketched an approach according to which God could have foreknowledge of human actions, even in a world that is not causally deterministic. Here I wish to assume that God can indeed have foreknowledge of human actions in an indeterministic world and argue that nevertheless human agents can be morally responsible (despite God's foreknowledge of their actions).

I shall simply sketch the rudiments of an overall theory of moral responsibility that I have presented (and defended) in more detail elsewhere.⁶⁶ In addition, I shall assume here that God's foreknowledge rules out human freedom to do otherwise. I shall contend that even though (under the envisaged circumstances) human individuals would not have freedom to do otherwise, they could still exhibit a kind of freedom that is enough for moral responsibility. I thus will be "filling in" the Augustinian strategy favored by David Hunt above.⁶⁷

I start with what has come to be called a "Frankfurt-Style Case":

Black is a stalwart defender of the Democratic Party, despite some disappointments about Obama. He has secretly inserted a chip in Jones's brain which enables Black to monitor and control Jones's activities. Black can exercise this control through a sophisticated computer that he has programmed so that, among other things, it monitors Jones's voting behavior. If Jones were to show any inclination to vote for anyone other than the Democrat, then the computer, through the chip in Jones's brain, would intervene to ensure that he actually decides to vote for the Democrat and does so vote. But if Jones decides on his own to vote for the Democrat (as Black, the old progressive, would prefer), the computer does nothing but continue to monitor—without affecting—the goings-on in Jones's head.

Now suppose that Jones decides to vote for the Democrat on his own, just as he would have if Black had not inserted the chip in his head. It seems, upon first thinking about this case, that Jones can be held morally responsible for this choice and act of voting for the Democrat, although he could not have chosen otherwise and he could not have done otherwise.⁶⁸

(p.47) This sort of case has a signature structure involving preemptive overdetermination, and similar examples were presented by Chrysippus and John Locke. Although they are highly contentious, I believe that they render plausible the claim that an individual can be morally responsible for his behavior, even though he could not have done otherwise. Of course, a defense of this view is beyond the scope of this introductory essay, and I simply ask the reader's indulgence as I move forward without further ado. (Many readers will not agree with my conclusion about the Frankfurt Cases, and I certainly do not suppose that I could provide a knockdown defense of it; rather, I invite the reader to see how far one can get toward an approach to a compatibilist account of moral responsibility, under the assumption that moral responsibility does not require freedom to do otherwise. To be a bit more explicit, here I shall be assuming that at least some indeterministic Frankfurt Case "works" in the sense that it is a case in which an agent is morally responsible and yet cannot do otherwise.)

On my view, one is morally responsible for one's behavior insofar as one meets both an epistemic and a "freedom-relevant" condition. We are assuming here that the freedom-relevant condition does not involve freedom to do otherwise (or genuine metaphysical access to alternative pathways or possibilities). On my view, this condition involves "acting freely," rather than freedom to do otherwise; alternatively, it involves the exhibiting of a distinctive kind of control: "guidance control," which does not require control *over* one's behavior (or "regulative control").

What follows is a rough account of guidance control.⁶⁹ An individual exhibits guidance control to the extent that he acts from his own, suitably reasons-responsive mechanism. There are thus two important components of the analysis: *ownership* of the actual-sequence mechanism, and *reasons-responsiveness* of that mechanism. Clearly, the analysis presupposes that we can distinguish (in a reasonable way) the actual-sequence mechanism from various alternative-scenario mechanisms. This is the key to accommodating the Frankfurt Cases. That is, in these cases, the actual-sequence mechanism may be the agent's own, suitably reasons-responsive mechanism, even though the alternative-scenarios involve mechanisms that are not the agent's own or not appropriately reasons-responsive (or both). So, for example, in the Frankfurt Case sketched above, Jones's actual-sequence mechanism is "ordinary practical reasoning" or "the human deliberative mechanism," whereas the alternative scenario features a manipulation mechanism.

On my view, an agent's mechanism becomes his own when he *takes responsibility*; he thereby *makes the mechanism his own*. Here are the three conditions for taking responsibility and thereby making one's mechanism one's own:

- a) The individual must see himself as an agent; he must see that his choices and actions are efficacious in the world. This condition includes **(p.48)** the claim that the individual sees that if he were to choose and act differently, different upshots would occur in the world.
- b) The individual must accept that he is a fair target of the reactive attitudes as a result of how he exercises this agency in certain contexts.
- c) The individual's view of himself specified in the first two conditions must be based, in an appropriate way, on the evidence.⁷⁰

As I wrote above, in order for an agent to be morally responsible for his behavior, it must be the result of his own, suitably reasons-responsive mechanism. I contend that “moderate reasons-responsiveness” is precisely the sort required for moral responsibility. We can give an account of moderate reasons-responsiveness by building up from the notion of “weak reasons-responsiveness” as follows:

An agent is *weakly reasons-responsive* when a certain kind *K* of mechanism, which involves the agent's rational consideration of reasons relevant to the situation, issues in action, and in *at least some alternative circumstances* in which there are sufficient reasons for her to do otherwise than she actually does, she would be receptive to these reasons and would have chosen and done otherwise by the efficacy of the same mechanism that actually results in the action.⁷¹

Now moderate reasons-responsiveness is the same as weak reasons-responsiveness, except for the following changes:

- a) In the alternative situation in which there is sufficient reason to do otherwise and the agent does otherwise, the agent performs the action for that (sufficient) reason.
- b) The agent must show regularity in recognizing reasons—the agent must be receptive to a pattern of reasons. (This condition rules out situations in which an agent is weakly reason-responsive but recognizes only random elements in a pattern of reasons.)
- c) The agent must be receptive to a range of reasons that includes moral reasons.⁷²

Of course, this is just a sketch of an account of guidance control, *sans* any defense. This is not the place for a more detailed elaboration or defense; again, I try the reader's patience by asking her to put aside any qualms or reservations for the time being.⁷³ Here I wish to claim that such an account of the freedom-relevant **(p.49)** component can show how an individual could be morally responsible for his behavior, even though he did not possess freedom to do otherwise, and even though God knew in advance exactly what he would do.

God's knowledge need not be part of the mechanism that issues in the individual's behavior. Thus, an individual may act from his own, suitably reasons-responsive mechanism, even though God knows in advance precisely what he will do. Here the agent acts freely (exhibits guidance control), even though he lacks freedom to do otherwise (regulative control). So, on my view, the agent meets the freedom-relevant condition, even though God has foreknowledge of what he will do. Further, there is no reason to suppose that God's foreknowledge would rule out the individual's meeting the epistemic condition on moral responsibility. I conclude that an agent could be morally responsible in a world in which God has foreknowledge of his behavior and he thus lacks freedom to do otherwise.

Semicompatibilism is the doctrine that moral responsibility is compatible with causal determinism, even if causal determinism rules out freedom to do otherwise. Elsewhere, I have argued that the account of guidance control sketched above helps to vindicate semicompatibilism. For our purposes here, we need not defend semicompatibilism. Here what matters is that the account of guidance control is an "actual-sequence" account; it does not require freedom to do otherwise for moral responsibility. It can thus also help to establish the compatibility of God's foreknowledge and moral responsibility. Indeed, I am a semicompatibilist with respect to God's foreknowledge and moral responsibility: God's foreknowledge is compatible with human moral responsibility, even if God's foreknowledge rules out human freedom to do otherwise.

Note that some philosophers, including Derk Pereboom, are "source incompatibilists"; they do not believe that moral responsibility requires freedom to do otherwise, but they nevertheless hold that moral responsibility requires that the agent be the "ultimate source" of his behavior in a way that is inconsistent with causal determination. I do not accept source incompatibilism, but I wish to point out here that actual-sequence theological compatibilism avoids this problem for actual-sequence compatibilism about causal determination and moral responsibility. This is an important point: the objection about sourcehood simply does not apply in the theological context (as opposed to the deterministic context), insofar as God's beliefs are not conceptualized as bringing about human action. (Of course, if one holds that God does indeed bring about human action, then sourcehood worries would re-emerge [but perhaps in a different form].) So perhaps the most important worry about semicompatibilism—or, at least, the worry that drives the source incompatibilists, such as Pereboom—does not apply to my defense of theological compatibilism. In my view, the best theological compatibilism is an actual-sequence model patterned after the doctrine of semicompatibilism.

To elaborate a bit, we can think of Black, the “counterfactual intervener” in the Frankfurt-style case, as a factor that renders the relevant action (by **(p.50)** Jones) inevitable (or unavoidable). Various philosophers have emphasized that Black functions as such a factor without playing any role in the causal sequence that issues in Jones’s behavior. But if causal determinism is true, then the relevant factors are part of a sequence that does in fact play a role in the causal sequence that issues in Jones’s behavior. One can then distinguish two kinds of unavoidability-producing factors. The first kind (arguably present in the Frankfurt-style cases) does not play a role in the actual causal sequence, whereas the second kind (present under causal determinism) does play such a role. The question then emerges whether one can extrapolate from conclusions one might draw from the Frankfurt-style cases to the context of causal determinism.⁷⁴ If one takes this sort of worry as decisive, one might be a source incompatibilist. In any case, the difference between the two kinds of unavoidability-generating factors points to a significant difference between the cases for compatibilism about God’s foreknowledge and moral responsibility and causal determinism and moral responsibility.

Whereas it is important to recognize this difference, I nevertheless think that one can argue successfully for compatibilism about causal determinism and moral responsibility.⁷⁵ And it is interesting to see that the situation with regard to God’s foreknowledge may well help in this effort. Note that when God knows (and thus believes) in the past that an agent will behave in a certain way now, there is some condition that is entirely external to the agent (God’s belief) that is sufficient for the behavior in question. In this sense then one could say that the “source” of the behavior is entirely outside the agent. (I am not here contending that this is the sense of “externality” that would be endorsed by a source incompatibilist; I am merely identifying it as a starting point in a challenge for this sort of incompatibilist.) And yet, as I argued above, it is plausible that the agent is morally responsible for his behavior insofar as he exhibits guidance control of it (i.e., the behavior issues from his own, appropriately reasons-responsive mechanism). (Further, we are here supposing the falsity of causal determinism, and thus there is no reason that is based on causal determination to think that the agent is not morally responsible.) So an individual could apparently be morally responsible for behavior, even though he is not the “source” of it in the indicated sense.

Actually, we can learn the same lesson from the Frankfurt-style cases. Black’s presence, dispositions, and “technology” ensure that Jones will behave as he does; that is, some condition obtains (Black’s presence, constituted and disposed as he is) **(p.51)** that is entirely external to Jones and sufficient for his behavior. So, again, it might be thought that the “source” of Jones’s behavior is external to him. And yet, as I argued above, it is plausible that Jones is morally responsible for his behavior.

If all of this is (roughly) correct, why not say that an agent can be morally responsible for his behavior, even on the supposition that causal determinism obtains? Someone might insist that there is a relevant difference between the context of causal determination and those of God's foreknowledge and the Frankfurt-style cases. In the former, there is an external source of the behavior that is also along the deterministic causal sequence that issues in it; in the latter cases, the external source is not along a deterministic causal chain that issues in the behavior.

The interesting question, in my view, is whether this difference *makes a difference*. The incompatibilist needs to argue that it does make a crucial difference, but I am not sure why this is plausible. After all, in the contexts of God's foreknowledge and the Frankfurt Cases, something entirely external to the agent and (apparently, at least) out of his control is sufficient for his behavior. In this sense the source of his behavior is external to him. An external factor is sufficient for the behavior in question: there is then "already" an external source of the behavior. How could it be the case that this fact *does not* rule out moral responsibility, but the fact that there is something external to the agent and (apparently, at least) out of his control that is *also* along the (deterministic) causal sequence that issues in the behavior *does* rule out moral responsibility? The incompatibilist may well be able to provide an answer here, but I would suggest that such an answer needs to be forthcoming. The contexts of God's foreknowledge and the Frankfurt-style cases thus not only cast doubt on the requirement of alternative possibilities for moral responsibility, but also at least pose a challenge for the proponent of an incompatibilistic sourcehood requirement for moral responsibility.

Now the source incompatibilist might seek to answer this challenge by insisting that the relevant notion of "internality" and "externality," and thus "sourcehood," must involve explanation in a certain way. Black (in the Frankfurt Cases) and God are not along the causal sequence that issue in the relevant agents' behavior, and thus these conditions are explanatorily irrelevant; but the causal conditions on the pathway to an agent's behavior might well be explanatorily relevant to it. Thus, the source incompatibilist might insist that the *explanatory source* of the agent's behavior be internal. Here I cannot further evaluate source incompatibilism; but I claim that considerations pertaining to God's foreknowledge (as well as Frankfurt Cases) appear to provide a challenge that at the very least requires the source incompatibilist to *sharpen* her analysis of sourcehood.⁷⁶

(p.52) As above in the evaluation of the parallel arguments from causal determinism and divine foreknowledge to the conclusion that human beings are never free to do otherwise, here—in the evaluation of the parallel threats from causal determinism and divine foreknowledge to human moral responsibility—we see how it can be illuminating to consider the arguments in light of their similarities and differences. There are two kinds of freedom—freedom to do otherwise and acting freely (corresponding to regulative control and guidance control). Given that guidance control is the freedom required for moral responsibility, it is not surprising that causal determinism and divine foreknowledge generate parallel—but also interestingly different—challenges to moral responsibility.

It is sometimes said that we cannot control our “fate” or “destiny.” We can take “fate” to imply the lack of any kind of control. If God knows in advance everything we will ever do, does it follow that we cannot control our future—in any relevant sense of control? Does it follow that our future is our fate? I have argued that it is at least plausible that, if God knows everything about our future, it follows that we are never free to do otherwise. That is, we would lack regulative control of our future. But I have further argued that it would *not* follow from our lack of regulative control that we would thereby lack *guidance control* of our future. If guidance control is the freedom-relevant condition for moral responsibility, then we can be morally responsible for our behavior, even if God knows everything we will ever do in advance. Insofar as we have guidance control, our future need not be our fate.⁷⁷

Elsewhere, I have argued that, not only can we be fully morally responsible in a world in which we lack freedom to do otherwise (and regulative control), but we can live deeply meaningful lives in such a world.⁷⁸ In acting freely (and thus exhibiting guidance control), we transform our lives into genuine narratives. We are thus the authors of our lives. In acting freely, we help to write the stories of our lives, and our stories need not be our fate.

Notes:

(¹) This move is contentious, but, for simplicity’s sake here, I shall accept it (for the sake of the argument). It would be denied by those who would resist the move from the fact that Jones does *X* at *T2* to “it is true at *T1* that Jones would do *X* at *T2*.” Even if one does not think that propositions can be true at times, one might simply deny that “Jones would do *X* at *T2*” is “available” for God to believe at *T1*, even if Jones does in fact do *X* at *T2*.

(²) Note that (3) is also ruled out by the plausible idea that God’s existence should not be dependent on human action. More specifically, if God exists, God should not be conceptualized as “counterfactually dependent on ordinary human action.” This would violate God’s independence or “aseity”: John Martin Fischer, “Ockhamism,” *Philosophical Review* 94 (1985): 81–100.

⁽³⁾ Anthony Kenny, *Will, Freedom, and Power* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1975): 155–7; and *The God of the Philosophers* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1979): 55–8.

⁽⁴⁾ Kenny, *Will, Freedom, and Power*: 156.

⁽⁵⁾ The term, “power necessity,” was introduced by Carl Ginet in “The Conditional Analysis of Freedom,” in Peter van Inwagen, ed., *Time and Cause: Essays Presented to Richard Taylor* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1980): 171–86.

⁽⁶⁾ For some discussion, see John Martin Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994): 23–66, and 248 (endnote 12); Timothy O’Connor, *Persons and Causes: The Metaphysics of Free Will* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000): 5–15. For an interesting recent attempt to “prove” a version of Transfer 2, see: Alexander Pruss, “Incompatibilism Proved,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 43 (2013): 430–7.

⁽⁷⁾ For a similar argument (in the context of the argument for the incompatibility of causal determinism and freedom to do otherwise, see John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza, “Free Will and the Modal Principle,” *Philosophical Studies* 3 (1996): 213–30. Jordan Howard Sobel presents more formal versions of the arguments I merely sketch here and shows how some of them do not require any transfer principle in his *Puzzles for the Will* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

⁽⁸⁾ Carl Ginet, *On Action* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990): 102–3.

⁽⁹⁾ For a discussion that focuses on the world-indexation strategy in the context of the argument for the incompatibility of causal determinism and human freedom to do otherwise, see John Martin Fischer, “A New Incompatibilism,” *Philosophical Topics* 24 (1996): 49–66; reprinted in Laura Ekstrom, ed., *Agency and Responsibility: Essays on the Metaphysics of Freedom* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000): 38–56.

⁽¹⁰⁾ I also discuss Molinism (as a putative response to the argument for incompatibilism) in John Martin Fischer, “Molinism,” in Jonathan Kvanvig, ed., *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008): 18–43; and “More on Molinism,” in Kevin Timpe, ed., *Metaphysics and God: Essays in Honor of Eleonore Stump* (New York: Routledge, 2009): 27–40. For an earlier and very important development of the point that Molinism does not in itself provide a response to the argument for incompatibilism, see Nelson Pike, “A Latter-Day Look at the Foreknowledge Problem,” *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 33 (1993): 129–64. Also, for a recent discussion, see Christoph Jaeger, “Molina on Foreknowledge and Transfer of Necessities,” in Christian Tapp and Edmund Runggaldier, eds., *God, Eternity, and Time* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2011): 81–96.

(¹¹) (FP*) is thus an important ingredient in illuminating various arguments for the incompatibility of God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise (and also arguments for the incompatibility of causal determinism and human freedom to do otherwise). I have also argued that it can be employed to provide a surprising (but also deeply appealing) analysis of Newcomb's Problem. In *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), I argue that accepting (FP*) issues in a defense of a position suggested by Robert Nozick (but not developed or defended). This is the rather surprising view that the one-box strategy is correct for the case of an infallible predictor (an essentially correct predictor, such as God), whereas the two-box strategy is correct for the case of a merely inerrant predictor. (This view is in contrast with those of such theorists as David Lewis and Terence Horgan, who argue that the appropriate strategy is invariant with respect to the distinction between inerrancy and infallibility. Lewis is an invariant two-boxer, and Horgan is an invariant one-boxer (at least in his later work on this subject). For my analysis, see *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control*: 98–109. For critical discussions of my approach, see Eric Carlson, "Fischer on Backtracking and Newcomb's Problem," *Analysis* 58 (1998): 229–31; and Jordan Howard Sobel, "Critical Notice of John Martin Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control*," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 28 (1998): 95–117; and *Puzzles for the Will*. I reply in John Martin Fischer, "Newcomb's Problem: A Reply to Carlson," *Analysis* 61 (2001): 229–36; and "Critical Notice of Jordan Howard Sobel, *Puzzles for the Will*," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 31 (2001): 427–46.

(¹²) David Lewis, "Paradoxes of Time Travel," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 13 (1976): 145–52; the quotation is on p. 150.

(¹³) David Lewis, "Paradoxes of Time Travel": 150.

(¹⁴) For a discussion of "multiple-pasts compatibilism," see Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control*: 67–73.

(¹⁵) For a discussion of Thomism, see "Introduction: God and Freedom," in Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom*: 49–53; for a preliminary discussion of Open Theism, see "Introduction: God and Freedom," in Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom*: 23–30.

(¹⁶) John Martin Fischer, "Freedom and Foreknowledge," *Philosophical Review* 92 (1983): 67–79; reprinted in John Martin Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989): 86–96; the quotation is on pp. 93–4 in the reprinted article.

(¹⁷) William Hasker, "Hard Facts and Theological Fatalism," *Nous* 22 (1988): 419–36 (reprinted in John Martin Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989]: 159–77); "Foreknowledge and Necessity," *Faith and Philosophy* 2 (1985): 121–57 (reprinted in Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom*: 216–57); and *God, Time, and Knowledge* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); and David Widerker, "Troubles with Ockhamism," *Journal of Philosophy* 87 (1990): 462–80. I initially developed versions of the critique of Ockhamism that involves decomposing facts into their parts or aspects in "Ockhamism" and "Hard-Type Soft Facts," *Philosophical Review* 95 (1986): 591–601. For a critical discussion of aspects of my approach, see David Widerker, "Why God's Beliefs are Not Hard-Type Soft Facts," *Religious Studies* 38 (2002): 77–88.

(¹⁸) For a critical discussion of "Snapshot Ockhamism," see David Widerker, "Contra Snapshot Ockhamism," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 39 (1996): 95–102.

(¹⁹) In the introductory essay to John Martin Fischer and Patrick Todd, eds., *Freedom, Fatalism, and Foreknowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), I and my coauthor suggest that Ockhamism (appropriately construed) does *not* in fact require eternalism (despite our earlier suggestion that it does).

(²⁰) For additional reflections on the connections between dependence and the issues pertaining to the relationship between God's foreknowledge and human freedom to do otherwise, see John Martin Fischer and Patrick Todd, eds., *Freedom, Fatalism, and Foreknowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015). In the introductory essay to this volume we present an analytic framework that connects the issues about dependence with the issues about free will.

(²¹) Trenton Merricks, "Truth and Freedom," *Philosophical Review* 118 (2009): 29–57.

(²²) John Martin Fischer and Garrett Pendergraft, "Does the Consequence Argument Beg the Question?" *Philosophical Studies* 166 (2013): 575–95.

(²³) Fischer and Pendergraft, "Does the Consequence Argument Beg the Question?"

(²⁴) Fischer and Pendergraft, "Does the Consequence Argument Beg the Question?": 584. In this article we discuss various complications and caveats: see especially footnote 16 (p. 582).

(²⁵) Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control*: 95.

(²⁶) Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control*: 95.

(²⁷) Note that I have provided one kind of reason to suppose that the argument does not beg the question, given the suggested account of begging the question in the text. I do not hereby mean to suppose that this is the *only* reason that could be invoked to show that the argument does not beg the question.

(²⁸) David Widerker, “Troubles with Ockhamism”; Peter van Inwagen, “What Does an Omniscient Being Know about the Future?” in Jonathan L. Kvanvig, ed., *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Oxford, 2007): 216–30; and Patrick Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence,” *Philosophical Studies* 164 (2013): 829–44. For a very helpful and illuminating discussion of some of the issues in this literature, and especially the arguments of Widerker and van Inwagen, see Garrett Pendergraft and D. Justin Coates, “No (New) Troubles with Ockhamism,” in J. Kvanvig, ed., *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion Vol. 5* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 185–208.

(²⁹) Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence” contains a helpful discussion of the relationship between dependence (of various sorts) and the hard/soft fact distinction. For further elaboration, see the introductory essay in Fischer and Todd, eds., *Freedom, Fatalism, and Foreknowledge*.

(³⁰) Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence”: 835.

(³¹) Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence”: 835.

(³²) Widerker, “Troubles with Ockhamism”: 467–8.

(³³) Widerker, “Troubles with Ockhamism”: 468.

(³⁴) Van Inwagen, “What Does an Omniscient Being Know about the Future?”

(³⁵) Van Inwagen, “What Does an Omniscient Being Know about the Future?": 219.

(³⁶) It is interesting to reflect on the relationship between these two notions. Perhaps Todd employs dependence to get at the more basic notion of “over-and-done-with-ness”; on this approach, a fact is not over-and-done-with if it depends (in a certain way) on a future fact (of a certain sort). Or perhaps he simply finds “over-and-done-with-ness” too vague, and he wishes to replace it with an account of softness (and hardness) that employs a specific sort of dependence on the future.

(³⁷) Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence”: 839.

(³⁸) Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence”: 841.

(³⁹) Todd, “Soft Facts and Ontological Dependence”: 841.

(⁴⁰) So does God have to “wait around” for p in order to decree that p ? No: God can of course utter the words (or have the thought) whenever He wishes: this will then count as part of the complex state of affairs of His decreeing that p , which won’t be over until the time of p .

(⁴¹) Of course, it is to Todd’s credit that he has indeed *provided* a plausible and attractive account that captures all of the clear cases, as well as having the implication that God’s beliefs are hard facts; he can be seen (in part) as offering a challenge to come up with alternative accounts that capture all of the clear cases and have the opposite implication about God’s beliefs. For some strategies that arguably do indeed capture the clear cases and yield the result that God’s beliefs are soft, see many of the contributions to John Martin Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom*.

(⁴²) In the text I use “future contingent” simply to mean a proposition that could (in some relevant sense, to be supplied by context) be or have been otherwise. I do not take it that “future contingent” implies indeterminism. I thus assume that there might be future contingents in a causally deterministic world.

(⁴³) William Hasker, personal correspondence with Patrick Todd, September 26, 2011. Reprinted with permission from the correspondents.

(⁴⁴) Patrick Todd, “Against Limited Foreknowledge,” *Philosophia* 42 (2014): 523–38; the quotation is on p. 532.

(⁴⁵) Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards: Freedom of the Will*, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven: Yale University Press): 258–9.

(⁴⁶) Richard Taylor, “The Problem of Future Contingencies,” *Philosophical Review* 66 (1957): 1–28; the quotation is on p. 27.

(⁴⁷) I owe these famous examples to Jonathan Vogel, who argued that they (and similar cases) exhibit the falsity of the Principle of the Closure of Knowledge Under Known Implication. See, for example, Jonathan Vogel, “Are There Counter-Examples to the Closure Principle,” in Michael David Roth and Glenn Ross, eds., *Doubting: Contemporary Perspectives on Skepticism* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990): 13–29.

(⁴⁸) Edmund L. Gettier, “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?” *Analysis* 23 (1963): 121–3.

(⁴⁹) For example, Keith Lehrer and Thomas Paxson, Jr., “Knowledge: Undefeated Justified True Belief,” *Journal of Philosophy* 66 (1969): 225–37.

(⁵⁰) Michael Clark, “Knowledge and Grounds: A Comment on Mr. Gettier’s Paper,” *Analysis* 24 (1963): 46–8.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Alvin Goldman, "A Causal Theory of Knowing," *Journal of Philosophy* 64 (1967): 357–72.

⁽⁵²⁾ Fred Dretske, "Conclusive Reasons," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 49 (1971): 1–22; *Knowledge and the Flow of Information* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981); Alvin Goldman, "Discrimination and Perceptual Knowledge," *Journal of Philosophy* 73 (1976): 272–91; and Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

⁽⁵³⁾ Stephen Luper, "The Epistemic Predicament: Knowledge, Nozickean Tracking, and Scepticism," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 62 (1984); Ernest Sosa, "How to Defeat Opposition to Moore," *Philosophical Perspectives* 13 (1999): 137–49; and Duncan Pritchard, *Epistemic Luck* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Linda Zagzebski, *Virtues of the Mind: An Inquiry into the Nature of Virtue and the Ethical Foundations of Knowledge* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Ernest Sosa, *A Virtue Epistemology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and *Knowing Full Well* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Richard Foley, *When Is True Belief Knowledge?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ I assume, simply for the sake of argument here, the Entailment Criterion of Soft Facthood, which is of course contentious. It is perhaps helpful to see how far one can get in a critique of Ockhamism, while conceding as much as possible to the Ockhamist.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Luis de Molina, *On Divine Foreknowledge: Part IV of the "Concordia,"* Alfred J. Freddoso, trans., (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). Freddoso discusses "comprehension and supercomprehension" in the introductory essay: 51–3.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Nelson Pike, "Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action."

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Patrick Todd, "Against Limited Foreknowledge"; the quotation is on p. 533. The relevant passages from Jonathan Edwards are pp. 262–5.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ In contrast, Ryan Byerly argues that God's foreknowledge would only imply the lack of human freedom to do otherwise if God's foreknowledge piggybacks on causal determinism: Ryan Byerly, *The Mechanics of Divine Foreknowledge and Providence: A Time-Ordering Account* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014).

⁽⁶¹⁾ David P. Hunt, "On Augustine's Way Out," *Faith and Philosophy* 16 (1999): 3–26.

⁽⁶²⁾ Patrick Todd, "Against Limited Foreknowledge."

(⁶³) I am indebted to Patrick Todd for this worry (and for the formulation of it in the text). Neal Tognazzini also raised a similar issue.

(⁶⁴) Again, I am indebted to Patrick Todd for this formulation.

(⁶⁵) I owe this objection to Yuval Avnur, to whom I'm very grateful.

(⁶⁶) John Martin Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control*; John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza, *Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); John Martin Fischer, *My Way: Essays on Moral Responsibility* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and John Martin Fischer, *Deep Control: Essays on Free Will and Value* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

(⁶⁷) The possibility of developing this sort of approach, which distinguishes different kinds of freedom, and does not require the kind of freedom that involves alternative possibilities for moral responsibility, was noted by Nelson Pike in "Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action," in endnote 9, which appears on p. 302 of the reprinted paper (in Fischer, ed., *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom*). Linda Trinakus Zagzebski also considers this possibility in her *The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996): 154–68.

(⁶⁸) I originally presented such an example in John Martin Fischer, "Responsibility and Control," *Journal of Philosophy* 79 (1982): 24–40.

(⁶⁹) For a more comprehensive development, see Fischer and Ravizza, *Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility*.

(⁷⁰) Fischer and Ravizza, *Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility*: 210–4.

(⁷¹) John Martin Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will*: 164.

(⁷²) Fischer and Ravizza, *Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility*: 69–82.

(⁷³) For some further discussion, see Fischer, *My Way: Essays on Moral Responsibility*; and Fischer, *Deep Control: Essays on Free Will and Value*.

(⁷⁴) For a development of the worry about extrapolating from the first kind of unavoidability- generating factor to the second, see Randolph Clarke, “Determinism and Our Self-Conception” [part of a book symposium on John Martin Fischer, *My Way: Essays on Moral Responsibility*], *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 80 (2010): 267–78. I seek to reply in my “Responsibility and the Actual Sequence,” Keynote Address to the Second New Orleans Workshop on Action and Responsibility, forthcoming, *Oxford Studies in Agency and Responsibility*.

(⁷⁵) See Fischer, “Responsibility and the Actual Sequence.”

(⁷⁶) I do not believe that whenever a deterministic factor is external to the agent and helps to explain his or her behavior, it follows that they agent is not the source of the behavior in the way required for moral responsibility. It is not just that the factor in question must be explanatory; in order to exculpate, it must point to an explanation of a *certain sort*—one that does not involve guidance control. For a development of this point, see Fischer, “Responsibility and the Actual Sequence.”

(⁷⁷) Recently, the American television commentator, Bob Costas, fulminated on a telecast, “Sunday Night Football,” about the tendency of describing certain teams as “controlling their destinies” or “controlling their fates.” He contended that “destiny” and “fate” are by definition out of anyone’s control. And another commentator (on a philosophy of language blog) agreed, pointing out that to suppose that at team could control its fate would be to imagine that it could control the uncontrollable. On my analysis, one can indeed control the uncontrollable. That is, one can have guidance control over something over which one lacks regulative control.

(⁷⁸) John Martin Fischer, *Our Stories: Essays on Life, Death, and Free Will* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); and “The Path of Life” [American Philosophical Association Presidential Address], *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association* 87 (2013): 60–77.

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