

A DEFINITION OF CHISHOLM'S NOTION OF IMMANENT CAUSATION

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In "Freedom and Action," R.M. Chisholm summarizes the "meta-physical problem of human freedom" as follows:

Human beings are responsible agents; but this fact appears to conflict with a deterministic view of human action (the view that every event that is involved in an act is caused by some other event); and it *also* appears to conflict with an indeterministic view of human action (the view that the act or some event that is essential to the act, is not caused at all).¹

He proposes to solve this problem by making "far-reaching assumptions about . . . the man who performs the act." The old dilemma that Chisholm presents in the quoted passage may be recast in the form of an argument (which, for ready reference, I shall label "the causal argument"):

- (1) If our acts are causally determined, we are not responsible for them
- (2) If our acts are not causally determined, we are not responsible for them
- ∴ (3) We are not responsible for our acts.²

What Chisholm calls the "metaphysical problem of human freedom," we may identify with the problem of determining whether this argument is sound. At least one philosopher, C.D. Broad, has argued that it is sound.³ Few philosophers, however, would be willing to accept this conclusion. I myself would claim to *know* that there are states of affairs that I am responsible for having brought about, and I think I know this beyond all possibility of argument: I am more certain of my responsibility in these cases than I should ever be of the cogency of any philosophical argument. And in this, I think, Chisholm would agree with me.

Among philosophers who reject (3), the most popular view is that (1) is false. Philosophers who deny (1) are now generally called

“compatibilists,” and their arguments are well known. Other philosophers have denied (2), and their arguments are perhaps not so well known as they deserve to be.⁴

Since Chisholm rejects (3), and since the causal argument is formally valid, it should seem that he must, like the philosophers alluded to above, reject (1) or (2). But it would be misleading to say of either (1) or (2) that he rejects it. Perhaps the best way to represent Chisholm’s position is to say that, according to him, there are two distinct senses that might be given to “causally determined.” In one sense of “causally determined,” (1) is true and (2) false; in the other, (2) is true and (1) false.

“Causally determined” has two senses, Chisholm claims, because there are two sorts of causation. One sort, which he calls *transeunt causation*, is a relation that holds between *events*. Transeunt causation is, roughly speaking, the “usual sort” of causation. When we say truly that Jones’s ingestion of 3 grams of arsenic caused his death, the fact in virtue of which what we say is true is, according to Chisholm, the fact that the event *Jones’s ingestion of 3 grams of arsenic* bears the relation *being the transeunt cause of* to the event *Jones’s death*.

Chisholm’s second sort of causation is *immanent causation*. Immanent causation is a relation borne by *persons* or *agents* to events. According to Chisholm, there are certain events – which, as a matter of empirical physiology, almost certainly occur only within the brain – that are not caused by any event, but which are nevertheless not uncaused; these events are caused by the *agent* in whose brain they occur. It is important to realize that Chisholm is not maintaining that an immanent cause is a Cartesian ego. If one *is* a Cartesian *and* believes in immanent causation, then, of course, one will believe that immanent causes are immaterial substances, since that is what a Cartesian thinks persons are. On the other hand, if one believes that (human) persons are living human bodies *and* believes in immanent causation, then one will believe that immanent causes are living human bodies.

Thus, if E is an event that has no transeunt but only an immanent cause⁵ and if E occurs within Tom’s brain, then a correct answer to, “What was the cause of E?” is “Tom” or “Tom himself.” Moreover, such an answer – that is, an answer consisting solely of a phrase that denotes the agent – is the only sort of answer that is true. It might be objected that such an answer must be elliptical.⁶ We often give the name of a person as the answer to a question about causes, but

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(so the objection runs) such an answer must be incomplete and it is always appropriate to ask what the named person *did* in order to produce the event the cause of which is being asked about. Thus:

“What caused that explosion?”

“Tom.”

“How do you mean?”

“He’s at it in the lab again.”

But to say this much is only to say that Chisholm is wrong. One cannot show that the name of a person can *never* be a final answer to a question about causes by producing cases in which a personal name is an elliptical answer; this conclusion would require further argument. Perhaps such an argument is possible, but let us postpone looking at further objections to Chisholm’s view until we have examined the use he makes of it.

If Chisholm is right about there being two sorts of causation, and right in certain other of his presuppositions, then the “metaphysical problem of human freedom” admits of a solution, which, in broad outline, is as follows. We may say that an act of some agent is *transeunt-causally* determined if it is the outcome of a transeunt-causal chain of events that recedes into the infinite past (or, at any rate, that originates outside the agent). We may say that an act is *immanent-causally* determined if (i) its agent is its immanent cause, or (ii) it is the outcome of a finite transeunt-causal chain, where the act’s agent is the immanent cause of the chain’s earliest member.⁷ If we now insist, in order to avoid ambiguity, that every occurrence of “causally determined” in the causal argument be replaced either by “immanent-causally determined” or “transeunt-causally determined,” we obtain four candidates for premises from which (3) is to be derived:

- (1a) If our acts are transeunt-causally determined, we are not responsible for them
- (1b) If our acts are immanent-causally determined, we are not responsible for them
- (2a) If our acts are not transeunt-causally determined, we are not responsible for them
- (2b) If our acts are not immanent-causally determined, we are not responsible for them.

Chisholm would argue that (1a) and (2b) are true: (1a) by the usual arguments for the incompatibility of causation and responsibility and (2b) because it follows from (1a) together with the two obviously true propositions:

If an act is neither immanent- nor transeunt-causally determined,
then it is fortuitous

If an act is fortuitous, then no one is responsible for it.

But (1a) and (2b) do not yield (3). As to (1b), it is obviously false, according to Chisholm, since for an act to be immanent-causally determined is just *what it is* for that act to be such that its agent is responsible for it: produced by the agent himself, and by nothing else. Therefore, if there is available a sound argument for (3) the premises of which are drawn from the above list, then it must be the argument having premises (1a) and (2a). But why should we accept (2a)? This statement is certainly not a necessary truth; in fact, its denial is entailed by

- (a) If our acts are immanent-causally determined, we are responsible for them

together with

- (b) Our acts are immanent-causally determined

and

- (c) If an act is immanent-causally determined, it is not transeunt-causally determined. (See n. 5).

And since, Chisholm would claim, (a) and (c) are necessary truths, we need only assume the truth of (b), and we have solved the metaphysical problem of human freedom, the problem posed by the causal argument, in the sense of having constructed a consistent position⁸ that entails human freedom. We shall later investigate an argument of Chisholm's for the conclusion that (b) is in fact true.

While Chisholm's solution to the problem is formally adequate, many (perhaps most) philosophers would, at least initially, be inclined to reject it on the ground that the concept of immanent causation is incoherent. Chisholm, of course, is aware that such a reaction is likely, and considers three anticipated objections to the notion of immanent causation. To the first of these objections, he has, I think, a satisfactory reply. The second two (which are really variations on a single objection) are more troublesome. I shall briefly summarize the objections and his replies.

Objection I

One never does anything to or with one's brain (except possibly in truly extraordinary circumstances like auto-surgery). Indeed one may not know one *has* a brain, but this is no barrier to one's acting.

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Reply

This is true, but it is not to the point. In saying that an agent is sometimes the immanent cause of events within his own brain, I am not claiming that he *knowingly* brings about these events, or that he brings them about *in order to* raise his arm (or whatever). In the normal course of events, a man simply raises his arm and *does* nothing in order to raise his arm. But *in* raising his arm, he (probably unknowingly) *makes happen* certain events in his brain, just as he (probably unknowingly) makes happen the motion of air molecules in the vicinity of his arm.

Objection IIa

To say, on the one hand, that a certain event having no cause happened in a man's brain, and to say, on the other, that such an event happened and had no transeunt cause but had the man himself as its immanent cause, seems to be to draw a distinction to which no difference corresponds. What *is* the difference between the two cases?

Reply

In the one case, the event has no cause; in the other, the man himself is its cause.

Objection IIb

But what are you *adding* to the assertion that E happened in Jones's brain, when you say that Jones was the *cause* of E's happening in his brain?

Reply

This is a difficult question to answer, but it does not really point to a difficulty peculiar to immanent causation. For a parallel question can be asked about transeunt causation: "What are you adding to the assertion that B followed A when you say that A was the *cause* of B?" Thus, the difficulty you have raised is a real difficulty, but it is a difficulty about causation generally.

In addition to these replies to objections, Chisholm presents a positive argument for both the actuality and the intelligibility of immanent causation:

But we may plausibly say – and there is a respectable philosophical tradition to which we may appeal – that the notion of immanent causation, or causation by an agent, is in fact

more clear than that of transeunt causation, or causation by an event, and that it is only by understanding our own causal efficacy, as agents, that we can grasp the concept of *cause* at all. Hume may be said to have shown that we do not derive the concept of *cause* from what we perceive of external things. How, then, do we derive it? The most plausible suggestion, it seems to me, is that of Reid . . . namely that "the conception of an efficient cause may very probably be derived from the experience we have had . . . of our own power to produce certain effects." If we did not understand the concept of immanent causation, we would not understand that of transeunt causation. (*Op. Cit.*, p.22)

Let us now examine the reply to Objection IIb (the reply to IIa seems to me to be satisfactory if and only if the reply to IIb is satisfactory) and the positive defense.

The reply to IIb is unsatisfactory as it stands owing to the fact that there is at least one theory of causation, the so-called "regularity theory,"⁹ that provides a straightforward (which is not, of course, to say correct) answer to Chisholm's counter-question about transeunt causation; but the regularity theory suggests no corresponding answer to the original question about immanent causation. Indeed it is hard to see how, if the regularity theory is correct, there could be any reason for calling a relation borne by substances to events a *causal* relation. I am not claiming that the regularity theory is true (in fact, I think it is false), but only pointing out that because of the currency of the regularity theory, Chisholm's reply is unsatisfactory unless it is coupled with some cogent objection to the regularity theory.

As to Chisholm's argument in the passage quoted above for the conceptual priority of immanent to transeunt causation, this argument also seems to be unsatisfactory, since it rests on the assumption that we can acquire concepts by attending to our private experience: if I understand the quoted passage correctly, Chisholm is suggesting that each of us observes (in some broad sense of "observes") *himself* as cause, and thereby grasps the concept *cause of* and, once he has done this, is able to extend the concept to things distinct from him. That such a procedure is possible is, of course, denied by many philosophers, and I am inclined to think they are on to something.

Thus, Chisholm's defenses rest, on the one hand, on a denial of the regularity theory of causation, and on the other, on an affir-

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mation of the possibility of learning concepts from one's own case. While Chisholm's defenses *may* be satisfactory (ultimately), it is clear that they rest on large and controversial assumptions. If we were able to provide a defense of immanent causation that did not rest on any such controversial assumption, clearly this would be a more effective defense.

In the remainder of this paper, I shall undertake to provide such a defense. I shall argue that we need not take immanent causation as an undefined concept that must be got hold of by something like ostension. I shall propose a definition of immanent causation in terms of transeunt causation and certain other concepts already in the philosophical inventory. These terms will not be alien to our discussion. In fact I would regard a good explication of them as essential to a precise *statement* of the metaphysical problem of freedom, the problem that immanent causation is supposed to solve. As one might suspect, these other concepts (and transeunt causation itself) are troublesome enough in their own right; I shall attempt only to establish that immanent causation need not raise any *new* conceptual problems. We shall see that the definition will provide a natural reply, a reply more satisfying than Chisholm's *tu-quoque* reply, to Objection IIb.

Before stating this definition, I shall discuss various of the terms it will contain. The discussion will be altogether inadequate. This inadequacy will be due partly to limitations of space, but mainly to my being unsure what to say. Fortunately, these terms are extensively employed in action theory, and there has been a lot of work done on them (suggestive, but, to my mind, unsatisfactory work) and more work will be done on them.

I shall begin with the term "event." I shall so use this term that events are particulars, that is, non-repeatable items. Ordinary language suggests that we normally recognize both what might be called *event-universals* like Jones's coming to be in pain, an event about which we might ask "Could that occur again?", and *event-particulars* like the completion of the Eiffel Tower, about which we cannot ask this.¹⁰ But our language only *suggests* that we ordinarily recognize such things; perhaps plausible alternative accounts of the ontology implicit in everyday discourse can be given. I shall here simply *assume* there are such things as event-particulars (hereinafter called simply "events"). This assumption, of course, has all the advantages of theft over honest toil. "Honest toil" in the present instance would consist at least in providing

criteria of identity and difference for events, and stating truth-conditions for sentences of the form “*e* occurs at *t*.” Perhaps, if certain ontological views are correct, “honest toil” would also involve arguing that there *really are* events, though I am not sure what a demand for such an argument comes to if it is a demand for more than criteria of identity and truth. Since I have not even provided criteria of identity and truth (I should like to, but I know of no satisfactory ones), what I say here is largely programmatic. But I think the program can be carried out, and I do not think that a successful account of events is likely to have any features that will be incompatible with my use of “event.”

One final ontological note: I shall not attempt to answer the question whether there are events that never happen, that is, events that exist in the actual world, but happen or occur only in various merely possible worlds. But any quantification over events that occurs in this paper is intended to be restricted to events that actually happen (at some time or other – I have no qualms about quantifying over events that occur at some time, but which have not occurred yet).

The second term I wish to consider is “act.” The question “What is *an* act?” (or, “What is *an* action?”) is to be sharply distinguished from the question, “What is action?” to which it is ancillary. The former is a question of ontology, a question about the nature of certain abstract entities. The latter is a question of philosophical psychology, a question about agents. In framing a theory of action, a philosopher may or may not find it necessary to presuppose an ontology that includes acts; he may be able to say all he thinks needs to be said about action without supposing that there exists anything in addition to concrete objects like tables and human agents. An analogy I find helpful in this: a philosopher investigating color-perception may or may not find it necessary to assert the existence of colors – that is, abstract entities named by, e.g., “red.” He may find that in order to describe the facts of color-perception to his satisfaction, he need suppose the existence only of perceivers and colored objects.

In this paper I do not present anything so grand as a theory of action, though perhaps what I say is a fragment of one. But even in presenting this fragment I find it necessary to quantify over acts, and I must therefore say something about them. The point of the preceding paragraph is simply to make clear that what is said here about *acts* is not supposed to be any sort of account of

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action, or even part of one. Similarly, if a philosopher says, e.g., that a color is a universal, and that color A is identical with color B if and only if it is impossible that some object instantiate the one and not instantiate the other, he is not saying something that is part of an account of color-perception.

The points I want to make about acts, in the sense of "act" that I shall use, run parallel to those made about events. (Again theft is preferred to honest toil; criteria of identity and difference for acts will not be provided, nor truth-conditions for sentences of the form "s performed *a* at *t*.")

Acts in the present sense are particulars, that is, items than can, of necessity, be performed only once and by only one person. In this they are unlike the (presumed) referent of the ordinary-language phrase "the act of raising one's arm" (in this phrase, of course, "act" does not have our narrow, quasi-technical sense), and are like the referent of "the outrageous act of vandalism some student performed in the library last night." Perhaps this latter phrase could be used to refer to an "act-universal," as in "the outrageous act . . . must never be repeated," though this sounds rather odd to me. But, at any rate, it *can* be used to refer to a particular: "The outrageous act . . . will never be forgotten."

I shall not attempt to answer the question whether there are acts that are never performed. But quantification over acts will be restricted to acts that are at some time or other performed.

I wish now to delimit a special class of acts I shall call (following what is now more or less traditional usage) *basic acts*.¹¹ A basic act is an act such that its agent performs no other act in order to perform it. Of course, *which* names of acts name acts that are basic in this sense is a question the correct answer to which depends upon the solution to some fundamental problems in the theory of action. For example, I should think that if Lincoln uttered the word "fricative" only once in his life, then "Lincoln's utterance of 'fricative'" names what I am calling an act, and, moreover, a basic act. But if some philosopher thinks that typically one, e.g., opens one's mouth, or utters "fric," or produces a volition to speak, *in order to* utter "fricative," this philosopher will reject the example. But I am not particularly interested in defending the example; as long as the reader accepts the notion of a basic act as at least intuitively serviceable, he may construct his own examples.

Now it seems reasonable to say that associated with each act, or, at least, with each basic act, there is a certain change in the way things are that is, roughly speaking, what is necessarily brought about in the performance of that act. The coming to pass of this change (an event-particular) we may call the *event-component* of the act. Perhaps this notion is best explicated by means of examples. Suppose that Jones raises his arm at t ; then the event-component of the act *Jones's raising his arm at t* is the event *the rising of Jones's arm at t* . In the case of those acts that consist in an agent's moving some nameable part of his body in some easily describable way, there is no problem in picking out their event-components. In fact, as our example suggests, given an (informative) name of such an act, a simple grammatical transformation suffices to yield a name of its event-component. But picking out the event-components of instances of such act-universals as *clearing one's throat* or *imagining a red patch* is not so easy. Perhaps names of event-particulars derived from such phrases as "the coming clear of one's throat" and "the occurrence in one's imagination of a red patch" would serve, though I find these phrases dubious. I shall attempt no further clarification of the notion of an event-component, being (once more) content simply to hope that the reader finds a notion intuitively serviceable.¹²

If the reader is willing provisionally to accept the notions of event, act, and event-component, then, using these notions and the notion of transeunt causation, I shall offer a definition of immanent causation. More precisely, I shall provide a sentence-form (IC) such that the sentence-form:

s is the immanent cause of e

may be regarded as an abbreviation for (IC), and such that (IC) contains no technical philosophical terms except those discussed above and "transeunt cause." (IC) is the conjunction of the following clauses:

- (i) s is a person
- (ii) e is an event
- (iii) No event is a transeunt cause of e
- (iv) There is some basic¹³ act a such that s performs a and such that e is a member of a causal chain (a *causal chain* is a finite or denumerable set of events ordered by the relation *is the transeunt cause of*) of which the event-component of a is also a member.

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For example, it would follow from this definition that if event E occurs and has no transeunt cause, and if E "initiates" a causal chain of events one member of which is some event (call it "R") of the general type *a rising of Jones's hand*, and if there is a basic act, a hand-raising (call it "A"), such that Jones performs A, and R is the event-component of A, then Jones is the immanent cause of E.

Given this definition, we can provide a perfectly straightforward answer to the question, "But what are you adding to the assertion that *e* occurred uncaused when you say that *s* was the immanent cause of *e*?" The answer is: "I am adding that *s* performed some *act*, and that *e* is a remote cause of the event-component of the *act*." Thus, Objection IIb is met. But (IC) raises its own problems. I shall attempt to deal with these problems (or those that I see) by offering replies to imagined objections. I shall deal with three such objections. The first (Objection III) seems to me to be neither deep nor difficult to deal with. The second (Objection IV) seems to me to be difficult to deal with but not deep. That is, I am not quite sure what to say in response to it, but I think that the problem it raises is a peripheral one, a matter of hitting on the right wording. The third (Objection V) seems to me to be deep but not difficult to deal with. That is, while I am quite sure about what to say in response to it, and of the correctness of this response, whether one *believes* what I say will probably not be ultimately a matter of philosophical argument, but a matter of how one "sees" human beings.

Objection III

If (IC) is a correct paraphrase of "*s* is the immanent cause of *e*," then to say that one is the immanent cause of an event is really to say that one brings about that event by doing something or other, and doing it at a time slightly *later* than the time at which the event occurs. But obviously no one can bring about an event by doing something *after* that event occurs.

Reply

I have no objection to the gloss on (IC) contained in the objection. But it is false that one cannot bring about an event by doing something after the event occurs. Suppose we fix a light bulb to my head and so arrange matters, by inserting a wire into the motor center of my brain, that the bulb lights whenever the

brain-events happen that cause my arm to rise when I raise my arm. Every time I raise my arm the bulb will light, and, in fact, will light shortly before my arm begins to move.¹⁴ If I am aware that the bulb's lighting is so correlated with my raising my arm, then I can *bring about* the bulb's lighting at will: to cause the bulb to light at t , I have only to raise my arm at $t+\Delta t$, where Δt is the interval it takes motor impulses to travel from my brain to my arm. Or, at least, this is true if the time at which I raise my arm is the time at which my arm rises. But this system of dating is presupposed in the objection.

Objection IV

Suppose that Jones's arm has been amputated, although he does not know this since his field of vision is restricted and since there is "ghost-limb" kinesthetic feedback from the stump. And suppose that we ask Jones to raise his (non-existent) arm and that Jones *believes* that he has complied. (Perhaps we have attached computer-regulated electrodes to the stump in order to supply counterfeit nerve-impulses that facilitate his delusion.) And suppose that immediately after our request, more or less the same things went on in the motor centers of Jones's brain as went on before the amputation when he voluntarily raised his arm, including a transiently-uncaused event E that *would have* caused (remotely) his arm to rise if he had still had his arm. Now unless one can make sense of the notion of a volition or pure act of will — which I cannot — one would have to agree that in this story Jones performs no act at all. And, therefore, by (IC) it follows that Jones was not the immanent cause of E . But it seems obvious that if Jones was the immanent cause of some event E' that once caused his arm to rise, and if E and E' are alike in all interesting respects except for their causal consequences, then it should be true that Jones was the immanent cause of E .

Reply

There seems to be some merit to this counterexample. Perhaps it can be accommodated by the addition of the following clause to (iv):

... or s 's abilities with respect to basic action are, unknown to s , impaired at the time at which e occurs, and s is at that time such that if his abilities were at that time as he then believed them to be, there would be an act a such that ... (etc., with appropriate shifts to the subjunctive).¹⁵

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Objection V

If it is possible that some instantiation of (IC) be true, then it is possible that I raise my arm, and the associated event, the rising of my arm, be caused (at several removes) by an event that has *no cause whatsoever*. But in that case, the rising of my arm would happen "out of the blue," and would in no sense be something I brought about. It would just happen. And therefore, it could not be that I raised my arm. And therefore, the instantiations of clauses (iii) and (iv) to the same event could not be jointly true, and therefore (IC) is self-contradictory.

Reply

But I do not see why anyone should think that this reasoning is sound. It is true that if an event satisfies the conditions of (IC), then that event has no cause, in the sense that no prior event is its cause. But if there is no cause (in this narrow sense) of an event, it does not follow that there is no *explanation* for the occurrence of that event, and thus it does not follow that that event happens "out of the blue." If one asks why a certain event E that (for some agent S) satisfies the conditions laid down in (IC) happened, we have a perfectly good answer: there is some act such that in performing that act, S brought about E. This would seem to me to be a satisfying explanation, and none the less satisfying if it is the *only* explanation.

Perhaps a philosopher who remains unconvinced by this reply might articulate his unease by claiming that to believe that there are events that satisfy (IC) is to be forced into accepting circular explanations: he may claim that friends of immanent causation must say both that *e* happened because *a* was performed, and that *a* was performed because *e* happened. But there is no need for a believer in immanent causation to regard himself as imprisoned in such a circle. We may imagine a series of requests for explanation and answers to these requests that proceeds as follows:

"Why did E occur in S's brain at T?"

"Because S brought it about by raising his hand at $T+\Delta t$."

"But why did S raise his hand at $T+\Delta t$?"

"Because the chairman of the meeting S was attending had just called for a vote; Jones raised his hand *in order to* vote."

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Thus the believer in immanent causation escapes from the circle in which he was thought to be trapped by offering a teleological explanation. Some philosophers, of course, have believed that it could not be true that S raised his hand in order to vote unless the rising of S's hand was *caused* by something like a mixture "within" S of a desire to vote and a belief of the sort one might express by saying, "I shall succeed in voting only if I now raise my hand." And some philosophers have believed that S could not have raised his hand unless God caused his hand to rise. I have no wish to deny either of these theses (in this paper), but I have never seen an argument for either thesis that is or deserves to be convincing. I feel no more strongly inclined to believe one than the other.

Quite possibly, to my mind, the above series of questions and answers contains (except for the detailed physiology of the chain of events leading from E to the rising of S's hand) all there is to know about why E occurred at T. And if this were the case, I do not see why anyone should find the fact that E occurred at T inexplicable.

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NOTES

- ¹ R.M. Chisholm, "Freedom and Action," in Keith Lehrer (ed.) *Freedom and Determinism* (New York, 1966), p. 11.
- ² Arguments for (1) are well known; for arguments for (2), see, e.g., R.E. Hobart, "Free Will as Involving Determination and Inconceivable Without It," *Mind* (1934).
- ³ See "Determinism, Indeterminism and Libertarianism," in *Ethics and the History of Philosophy* (London, 1952).

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- 4 See Philippa Foot, "Free Will as Involving Determinism," *The Philosophical Review* (1957); J.R. Lucas, *The Freedom of the Will* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 56-63.
- 5 Chisholm regards immanent and transeunt causation as logically incompatible: an event cannot have *both* an immanent and a transeunt cause. From here on in, I shall assume that incompatibility with transeunt causation is a part of the concept of immanent causation. Of course we might ask whether a man could ever stand in such a relation to a given transeuntly caused event that, if that event *had* had no transeunt cause, and all else remained unchanged, the man *would have been* its immanent cause. I am not sure what Chisholm's answer to this would be.
- 6 Cf. Broad, *op. cit.*
- 7 This terminology may strike the reader as philosophically unsatisfactory. At any rate, I find it unsatisfactory. Later I shall attempt to make this terminology more serviceable.
- 8 Or, more exactly, if it is inconsistent, this must be shown by considerations different from those raised by the causal argument.
- 9 See, e.g., Tom L. Beauchamp (ed.) *Philosophical Problems of Causation* (Encino, Calif., 1974), Part Three.
- 10 Cf. R.M. Chisholm, "Events and Propositions," *Nous* (1970).
- 11 The term *basic act* (or *action*) was, so far as I know, first used by Arthur Danto in "What We Can Do," *Journal of Philosophy* (1963).
- 12 For all that is said here, the event-component of an act may be the very same thing as the act itself, just as the square root of 1 is the very same thing as 1 itself. Though the act-universal *raising one's arm* and the event-universal *one's arm's rising* are obviously not identical, it may for all I know be possible that some one particular instantiate them both. Nothing said in this paper turns on the answer to this question.
- 13 I say *basic act* since in the case of most non-basic acts, it would be wrong to suppose that there exists a causal chain leading from the brain of the agent to the event-component of the act.
- 14 Since a signal moving through a wire travels at essentially the speed of light, an incomparably greater speed than that of motor impulses. And, in addition, the motor impulses must travel farther.
- 15 This clause does not involve quantification over unperformed acts. We must distinguish between " $\exists x$ (if p were true, x would be ϕ)" and "if p were true, it would be the case that $\exists x$ (x is ϕ)." The second schema, which exhibits the form of our additional clause, is, unlike the first, without existential import.