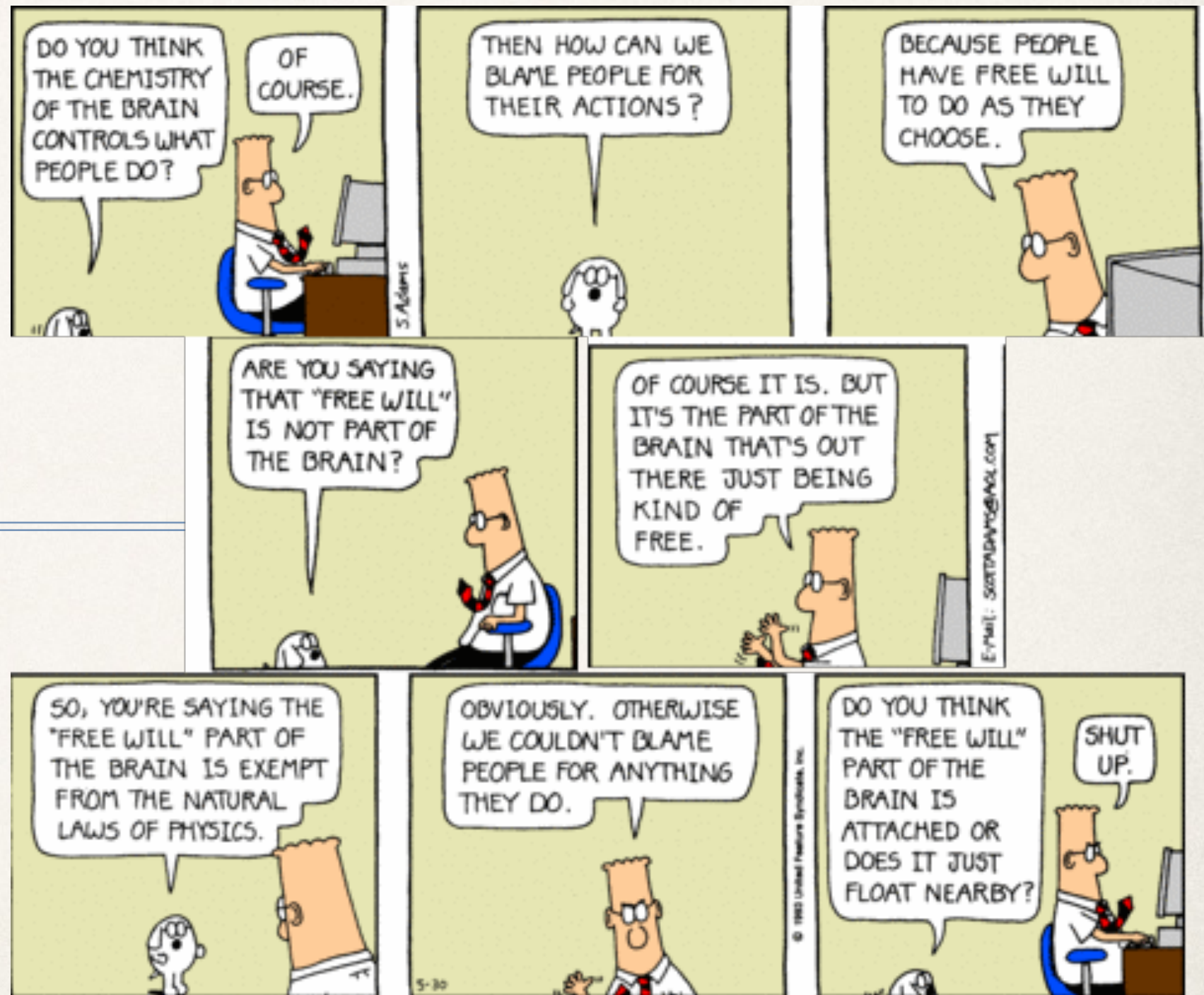


Are Determinism and Free Will Compatible?

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If Determinism Is True, Do We Still Have Free Will?

NO! — Incompatibilism

Determinism and free will are incompatible. If determinism is true, we cannot still have free will.

YES! — Compatibilism

Determinism and free will are compatible. Even if determinism is true, we can still have free will.

A Possible Definition of Free Will

Free Will

This is the power to act and do otherwise. It is the power to have made a choice other than the choice one actually made.

Is Determinism Compatible With Free Will? *It seems Not*

A quick argument that determinism is incompatible with free will:

If all events—including our own actions—happen inevitably because they are caused by previous events, then we do not have the power to change them and act otherwise. *So, if determinism is true, we do not have free will.*

van Inwagen's *Argument* for Incompatibilism

- ❖ Suppose (1) Judge J did not raise his hand in 2014, so the defendant was put to death.
- ❖ Suppose (2) determinism is true. For van Inwagen, determinism implies that every event follows from the past according to the causal laws of nature.
- ❖ Could J have acted otherwise in 2014, given (1) and (2)? No, because...
 - ❖ If J had the power to raise his hand in 2014, J must have had the power to change the state of the world in 2014, since by supposition (1) the state of the world in 2014 is that J's hand was down and not up.
 - ❖ If J had the power to change the state of the world in 2014, J must have had the power to change the state of the world prior to 2014 (for example, the state of the world before his birth) or the laws of nature, since by supposition (2) the state of the world at any give time follows from the laws of nature and the prior state of the world.
 - ❖ But J could not have had the power to change the state of the world prior to 2014 nor could he have had the power to change the laws of nature.
 - ❖ So, if J could not change the state of the world prior to 2014 or the laws of nature, then J could not change the state of the world in 2014 either.
 - ❖ If J could not change the state of the world in 2014, then J did not have the power to raise his hand in 2014, so J could not have acted otherwise.

Looks Like Determinism Is Incompatible with Free Will

But What if Determinism Is False?

Is Non-Determinism Compatible with Free Will?

Non-determinism is the idea that some events could have occurred otherwise, e.g. some events are the result of random or chancy processes.

It *seems* that if some events — including our own actions — happen by chance and randomness without being predetermined in advance, there is room for free will.

But Is Non-Determinism Really Compatible with Free Will?

- ❖ Suppose non-determinism implies that some events happen by chance or randomness as opposed to everything happening inevitably or by necessity.
- ❖ But just as we do not have the power to change what happens by necessity, we do not have the power to change what happens by chance or randomness either.
- ❖ We are powerless with respect to what happens by chance or randomness. *If non-determinism is true, we do not have free will.*

Can You Change the Outcome of a Random Event?



The outcome of a random event is something we cannot control...

The Puzzle About Free Will

- ❖ If everything is predetermined in advance, then we cannot have free will.
- ❖ If *not* everything is predetermined in advance and some events happen by chance or randomness, then we cannot have free will either.
- ❖ *So either way, we lack free will.* How can that be?