

FREE WILL & LIBETARIANISM PART A REVISION

Make a list below of everything that you know you need to learn for part A questions on 'Free Will & Libertarianism'.

A) Explain Pelagius' concept of free will. (20)

Draft Mark scheme:

On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about answering a question on this topic?

A) Explain Pelagius' concept of free will. (20)

Into to Pelagius' concept:

- Definition of Free Will
- Brief summary of the problems in Rome at the time of Pelagius' writing
- Pelagius insisted that people were responsible for their own actions—wrote two treaties on free will 'On nature' and 'defence of the Freedom of the Will'

Pelagius & the role of original sin:

- Sin does not result from degraded human nature - but from a corruption of ignorance and righteousness
- Humans were created as rational beings, who could distinguish good from evil
- But, Humans cannot take credit for the ability to freely chose - this is the creative a activity of God—a human can only do good, because God has allowed them to do so.
- Pelagius interpreted that the fall didn't reflect God's omnibenevolence - God would not punish all humans for one mans mistake, so Adam's sin only effected Adam: He rejected Augustine's Doctrine of Original Sin: Deuteronomy 24:16 as support.
- It is participation in a fallen world that leads to sin. Evans: 'To make sin necessary, is to deny the nature of the will'

Humanity maturing into God's image & accepting the responsibility of free will

- The fall is a good thing for humans—it enabled the process of maturity to begin
- This free will meant that humans are responsible for God for their own actions
- Example of maturity from the Old Testament: Laws of Moses for example

Free will as used to follow God's laws and the role of grace in salvation

- Human beings can use their free will to follow God's moral laws such as the 10 commandments, as God would not create commandments that we could not follow
- Pelagius saw Gods grace as enabling, not determining, humans good works—God is not acting as the guide, God is the agent of empowerment that allows us the freedom to do good works in the first place.
- God wishes all human beings to be good and tries to guide us towards the good with their own free will
- But, the human still has the free will and capacity to ignore God's guidance and be sinful
- This ability to sin is a good thing, as it emphasises the goodness when a human does good works

Pelagius argued humans DO have the free will to chose to do Good works or be sinful, but when they chose to do good works, it is by the enabling grace of God: 'Free will is in all good works always assisted by divine acts' .

Pelagius argued if you sin, you can seek forgiveness - because through God's grace you can be forgiven and achieve salvation. Pelagius suggests universal atonement - his death on the cross was for all, so all can achieve salvation.

A) Explain Arminius' concept of Free Will. (20)

Draft Mark scheme:

On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about answering a question on this topic?

A) Explain Arminius' concept of Free Will. (20)

Intro to Arminius' concept

- Definition of Free Will
- Arminius' predestination was grounded in the theological concept of God's providence and was compatible with the notion of free will

Denial of Predestination

- Arminius did not reject predestination as it is treated in the scriptures as necessary - he wrestled directly with the relationship between free will and the sovereignty of God, and came up with 'conditional predestination' or 'middle knowledge'.
- Definition of conditional predestination - foreknowledge without determinism , which is linked closely to the idea of providence: God is closely involved with monitoring and guiding the world.
- The notion of providence for Arminius, involves both preservation of the world, but crucially governance of the world.
- Arminius agrees that 'predestination should no be founded upon anything other than God's pure goodness'.
- The key to the governance of the world is the theological idea of divine concurrence—God concurs human activity through being part of it and providing the powers and abilities to act, therefore free will nor the actions of any humans can be outside the parameters of God's providence.
- Therefore—God is the enabler, the one that empowers which is not the same as actually performing or doing the action for the creature.

Original sin and God's prevenient grace in allowing humans to exercise free will

- Arminius rejected that the origin of sin can be found in God - in line with concurrence, God permits sin and allows it to occur, but this does not mean that He approves of sinful behaviour.
- He argued original sin was bad for humankind - it is a lack of original righteousness, but it is also a punishment.
- In a fallen state, humans are deprived of the righteousness, but they can freely seek out good. God's providence does give the grace to freely choose the righteous path through faith.
- Therefore, humans are not predestined to continually sin, due to prevenient grace—this encourages all humans to do good works, so salvation is freely chosen by the righteous
- Arminius argued that free will was possible within God's divine plan: 'A thing does not happen because it is predicted or has been foreknown - but it is foreknown or predicted because it is about to be'.

The Elect and the possibility of rejecting God's grace and the election of believers being conditional on faith

- Salvation was available to all , but God's middle knowledge foresees the conditional predestination of humanity
- Arminius Declaration of Sentiments clarified his position on predestination and salvation
- The ground of election or predestination distinguished Calvin and Arminius - for Calvinists, predestination is unconditional, for Arminius it is conditional.
- Salvation is possible through God's prevenient grace
- Rustin Brian: 'God's divine foreknowledge does not guide, force, or fate anyone into either salvation or damnation'.

Explain the concept of Philosophical Libertarianism. (20)

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for the student to write their explanation of Philosophical Libertarianism. The box occupies most of the page below the question.

Explain the concept of Philosophical Libertarianism. (20)

Intro

- Definition of Libertarianism—(sometimes called ‘agency theory’)
- Philosophical Libertarianism comes from ‘Jean Paul Sarte’ - ‘There is no determinism - man is free, man is freedom’

Explanation of Philosophical Libertarianism

- When Sartre spoke about freedom he was referring to the distinction between the character of human existence and other forms of existence
- Humans are unconditionally free regardless of their circumstances - ‘being for itself’ - ‘Pour Soi’
- This is in contrast to ‘En-Soi’ - ‘being in itself’, which has no say in what happens, lacks consciousness and its destiny is not its own.
- Humans are conscious of their own existence, which enables humans to have free will
- ‘The Gap’ allows humans to have free will
- ‘There is no God - must rely on your own fallible will and moral insight - he cannot escape choosing’
- ‘Man is not free, not to be free’
- Human kind's freedom is obvious because of the way they deny their freedom—he believed freedom can bring pain and anguish, so people try to avoid the reality of their own freedom
- His explanation of bad faith - illustrated with the example of the café waiter
- ‘Existence comes before essence’ - humans are not born with a predetermined nature
- For Sartre, a person determines their own being through the choices they make
- Freedom is both a gift and a curse

Explain the concept of Scientific Libertarianism. (20)

•

Explain the concept of Scientific Libertarianism. (20)

Intro

- Definition of Libertarianism—(sometimes called ‘agency theory’)
- Scientific Libertarianism comes from ‘Dr Angela Sirigu’ in early 2012—although science has been used by determinists to illustrate their arguments, new recent advancements, particularly in genetics and neuroscience, potentially support libertarianism.

Explanation of Scientific Libertarianism

- At the cognitive Neuroscience centre in France, Dr Angele and her team found that free will is cited in the part of the brain called the parietal cortex. (use example of work with 7 patients)
- Dr Angela argues that the parietal cortex wills what particular movements to make from a variety of potential options from the study of 7 patients.
- ‘There are specific brain regions that are involved in the consciousness of your movements’. Therefore, there is part of your brain that allows you to potential make a specific decision from several choices.
- Haggard: This experiment breaks new ground
- Randy has also identified other areas of potential free will - small changes to a mothers diet could have dramatic impact on the gene expression of their baby: epigenetic switches are sensitive to the environment of the gene carrier, therefore what the mother eats in her pregnancy, her behaviour or surroundings could affect the health and behaviour of the child.
- Through the study of epigenetic switches, it would appear human beings have control over their genetic legacy.

Explain the concept of psychological Libertarianism. (20)

Draft Mark scheme:

On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about answering a question on this topic?

Explain the concept of psychological Libertarianism. (20)

Intro

- Definition of Libertarianism—sometimes called ‘agency theory’
- Psychological Libertarianism comes from ‘Carl Rodgers’ - an American humanist, who stressed that the human person is an active, creative, experiencing being who lives in the present and responds freely to current perceptions, relationships and encounters.

Explanation of psychological libertarianism

- A human beings life can become determined by external conditioning such as parental, peer or societal pressures. However, Rodgers rejected the permanent deterministic nature of behaviourism as he believed that human could achieve free will through ‘self-actualisation’
- All children have their own ideas and thoughts but for such ideas to flourish the child needs an environment which provides 3 elements: *Genuineness, Acceptance & Empathy*
- Without these, a healthy free willed person will not develop, much like a plant without water
- A human can regain their own free will by going down the path of ‘self-actualisation’
- ‘Self-actualisation’ occurs when a person is being their ‘ideal self’
- A ‘self-actualised’ person, is known as ‘fully-functioning’
- Everyone is able to achieve their desires, wishes and goals in life, if they free themselves through ‘self-actualisation’
- 5 characteristics of fully functioning person:
 - *Open to experience*
 - *Existential living*
 - *Trust feelings*
 - *Creativity*
 - *Fulfilled life*

A) Explain the implications of Libertarianism on moral responsibility. (20)

Draft Mark scheme:

On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about answering a question on this topic?

A) Explain the implications of Libertarianism on moral responsibility. (20)

Intro:

- *Definition of Libertarianism—sometimes called ‘agency theory’*

The worth of human ideas of rightness, wrongness and moral value

- *As a human has complete free will and therefore has control over their actions, then there is worth in rightness, wrongness and moral value*
- *Refer to example from Pelagius & Arminius here to support that rightness and wrongness has worth*
- *Refer to examples of concepts of Libertarianism also: Sartre, Dr Sirigu & Rodgers*

The value in blaming human beings for immoral acts

- *There is value in blaming humans for immoral acts, as with free will comes total responsibility: Sartre for example!*
- *Refer to the justice systems ‘rational choice theory’ and use the Mark Duggan example!*

The usefulness of normative ethics

- *Normative ethics are useful, as it helps a free willed being to chose morality over immorality—they act as guides*
- *Refer to Divine Command here, as well as Act-Utilitarianism*

A) Explain the implications of Libertarianism on religious belief. (20)

Draft Mark scheme:

On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about answering a question on this topic?

A) Explain the implications of Libertarianism on religious belief. (20)

Intro:

- *Definition of Libertarianism—sometimes called ‘agency theory’*

God’s omnipotence

- *Explanation of how Augustine explains Pelagius’ theory diminishes God’s omnipotence & how Johnathan Edwards supported it*
- *Sartre’s theory also illustrates this as he said there was no God who controlled mankind*
- *But, Perhaps Free Will illustrates God’s omnipotence in another way: Arminius idea of God placing his guiding holy spirit in all people*

God’s omnibenevolence

- *Explanation of how Pelagius & Arminius’ theories support omnibenevolence, in the face of Augustine & Calvin*
- *Russell - ‘God must be a monster’*
- *God is allowing humans to make their decisions - they are not pre-programme robots*
- *Maybe he isn't omnibenevolent—if he is omniscience, then he would know evil would happen e.g. Holocaust - why did he give humans free will to do evil?*

The use of prayer

- *Prayer can be used to build up a rapport with God, to seek guidance or forgiveness*
- *Use Pelagius for support - the work of the Holy Spirit could be enhanced by prayer & he believed human could seek forgiveness and that sins need to be freely confessed through prayer*

The existence of miracles

- *Human Free will does not allow God to perform miracles as an answer to prayer, as miracles by nature involve God compromising human free will*
- *Refer to Aquinas here for support on primary and secondary miracles: use example of Joshua where he made it possible for him to defeat the enemies of Israel*

The link between God and evil

- *It is the humans responsibility to do good works or sins, not God’s responsibility: support this with Irenaeus and Hick*
- *But, maybe God is at fault—he created humans imperfectly according to Irenaeus. Also if God is omniscience, surely he would have known humans were going to use their free will wrongly!*