

views of what makes an act a right act we *do* look to the causes of that act, and we do *not* say that a particular act of punishing is justified regardless of what causes led the judge to punish. However, this is merely to repeat what I have already said; the point may be made clearer by turning our attention from punishment to praise and blame.

The characteristic position of determinists with respect to praise and blame is one which regards all praise and blame as special cases of reward and punishment. Now, it is true that saying kind words, or saying harsh words, can function as rewards and punishments. However, it seems to be the case that while we sometimes use praise and blame for this purpose, on other occasions on which we do not. In such cases we are praising an act because it appears to us as a right act, or blaming it because it appears wrong. This is moral praise and blame.<sup>9</sup> And if such praise or blame has side-effects on the future conduct of those whom we praise or blame (as it often does) this is purely coincidental. Now, holding fast to praise and blame in this sense the libertarian insists that if determinism is true then even this sort of praise and blame must be "conditioned." (We cannot stop causal determination whenever it suits us to do so.) And if our praise and blame is to be causally explained in this way, from what source is a universally valid moral standard to be derived? Thus the libertarian would argue that, if determinism were true, any person making a moral judgment would be caught in precisely the same causal nexus as the judge, and any attempt to justify a moral judgment would simply be another case in which we were causally determined to talk one way rather than another.

The seriousness of this objection is easily overlooked because we fall into the habit of assuming that the standard by means of which we justify specific moral judgments is an obviously correct standard. We therefore do not usually feel any urgency to justify the standard itself. However, I submit that the acceptance of a moral standard itself involves a moral judgment, or must be deduced from the moral judgments which we accept.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, what holds of specific moral judgments also holds of the standard. If it is the case that every specific moral judgment is causally explicable in the way that determinists usually say that it is, then our acceptance or rejection of a particular moral standard is explicable in precisely the same way. And if there are any disagreements between individuals concerning the standard which is to be accepted, then the justification of a particular moral judgment in terms of a particular standard does not solve the controversy; the acceptance of one standard rather than another would simply be another case in which we were causally determined to talk and act in one way rather than another.

If the determinist has any answer to this type of argument, it certainly does not appear in most statements which are designed to show the compatibility between determinism and the justification of punishment or the validation of praise and blame. The reason why the characteristic position of determinists has been (as I believe) so naïve is that it is easy to slip into what may be called the *self-excepting fallacy*: my statements about people are true of all people except me. The judge-excepting fallacy is but a special case of this; so too is the fallacy that we can justify (i.e., vali-

enced. Conversely, if it can be established by empirical evidence that a mind-body dualism is overwhelmingly probable, then I should suppose that no determinist would feel confident of the possibility of establishing that in every choice situation an analysis in terms of material causes would be sufficient to explain the choice. Thus I am claiming that whatever empirical evidence can be marshalled for or against a mind-body dualism will be evidence which is relevant to the controversy over freedom in choice.<sup>13</sup> Since, for my part, I find that a particular form of non-dualism seems to be demanded by empirical evidence from such fields of psychology as perception and learning, I find the Meritarian position unacceptable. I would therefore wish to be clearly understood that in what follows I am speaking as a determinist. However, I also wish to separate my view from the view of what, for want of a better name, I shall designate as "traditional psychological determinism." The distinction I wish to draw is based on the fact that the latter view places what I consider to be a mistaken emphasis upon the past as a determining factor in choice situations. I think that there are two main reasons why determinists have frequently made this mistake: first, they have erroneously assumed—following Hume—that whenever we speak of the cause of an event we must be speaking of some temporal antecedent of that event; second, they have often accepted certain empirical assumptions concerning the psychology of acts of choice. I shall state and criticize what I take to be the traditional theory with reference to each of these points.

a) The problem of freedom in choice, unlike the problem of freedom in action, is a question of why I choose as I

do; it is not a question of why I act as I do. It may be true that whenever we raise the latter question, an answer is to be given in terms of some antecedent state or event. For example, in a case in which I act after deliberation, taking into account various alternative possibilities, the explanation of my action will (at least on one level of explanation) be couched in terms of my choosing to act in this way, and my choice in such a case clearly preceded my action. However, the question of what factors, or types of factor, led me to choose as I chose need not in such a case, be found in some preceding event. What demands analysis is, as we have seen, not the fact that I chose *X*, but the complex fact that I chose *X* rather than *Y*. Now, it may be the case that we could explain this in terms of my past experiences with *X* and with *Y*, taken separately. Or it might be the case that we could analyze what we take to be the process of deliberating into a series of moments in which, say, I first incline to *X*, then to *Y*, etc., and that finally some factor intervenes to break into this sequence of alternating states. That factor could then be said to be responsible for my decision, and it would have preceded (if only instantaneously) that decision. However, is there any contradiction in saying that whatever factors are responsible for my deciding in one way rather than another are not prior to my decision, but that their conjoint effect *is* my decision? Or, differently put, may we not say that the cause of my choice is to be found in the forces which act on me *when* I choose? If this sounds strange, it is, I suggest, only because we too readily assume that whenever we speak of the cause of an effect we must be speaking of something which was temporally prior to that effect. This,

cal terms we cannot give a privileged status to the past: the precise nature of the activity incited by the stimulus, which bears some relation to the specific nature of the stimulus itself, must also be taken into account. The degree to which, and the ways in which, traces left by past experience affect perception, and the degree to which perception can be explained in terms of autochthonous factors (including the specific nature of the stimulus) is an empirical problem on which different contemporary schools of psychology disagree. There are on the one hand those who (in some cases at least) stress the autochthonous (i.e., "unlearned") factors; on the other hand there are those who stress the role of past experience in all cases. Similarly, in the field of learning theory there are those who stress nothing into the specific case, and those who stress conditioning, i.e., the role of repeated past experiences. What I wish to point out is that the traditional form of psychological determinism presupposes what *must be* the solution to this empirical problem: that the determinants of behavior in choice-situations are always to be found in the past.<sup>17</sup>

Now let us suppose that it is *not* true that what we perceive or what we learn is in every case a function of past experience in similar situations. (I believe that there is ample empirical evidence in perception and learning to prove this.) What difference would it make to our theory of determinism in those situations in which choice is involved? It would, I submit, make a tremendous difference *if* any of these choice-situations were of the type in which what we see in the alternatives was not wholly conditioned by the past. For if there were such cases then our choice, though still determined, would be determined by the envisioned alternatives before us. The

specific natures of these alternatives, and (especially) the contrast between them, would be the determinants of our action; the answer to the question of why we chose *X* rather than *Y* would be found in the present contrast between the *X* and the *Y* and not in past experiences with other *X*'s and *Y*'s in other situations. While still determined, we would, so to speak, be no less determined by our present vision of the future alternatives than we are by traces left by our past. In short, the alternatives themselves, though yet unrealized, would have every bit as good a status as present causal determinants as would anything which had happened to us in the past.

I have purposely employed this seemingly paradoxical language in order to insist that whatever determinants of choice there may be, these determinants are to be found in the present: the past can only influence us through the modifications which it has left in the present, and if we have present ideas of the future the physiological correlates of these ideas must (from a non-dualist point of view) also be reckoned as possible determinants. It is only if we assume, on the basis of the empirical hypotheses assumed by traditional psychological determinists, that our ideas of the alternatives (and the contrast which exists between them) are necessarily what they are because of our past experience, that we will ascribe greater significance as a determinant of behavior to what we have already experienced than we ascribe to the nature of the situation which we confront.

#### VII. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROBLEM OF RESPONSIBILITY

Let us suppose that the foregoing general statement is correct. Let us further suppose that there are sound empirical