

Key concepts:

- Libertarianism is an **Incompatibilism** position that says since moral agents have free will, determinism must be false.
- Jean Paul Sartre was an **atheist, materialist, existentialist** philosopher who rejected the **dualist** idea that a human being consists of both body and soul.
- Since there is no pre-existent soul that makes us who we are, we are brought into the world as **tabula rasa** or a blank slate.
- We go through the process of making ourselves through our interactions with the world and our free decision making.
- There are two types of beings:
 1. **Être-en-soi** – being in itself – inanimate objects that lack consciousness.
 2. **Être-pour-soi** – being for itself – beings conscious of their own consciousness, constantly under construction, forced to create themselves from nothing.
- Pour-soi is responsible for its own free decision making without guidance from any **meta-physical** reality like God or Truth.
- The universe is absurd and irrational: we have no choice but to choose.
- There is a distance between the human mind and the causal world – **the gap**. It is what makes us free yet brings fear as moral responsibility is a burden.
- An authentically free existence requires removal of **bad faith**, the delusion we are not free e.g., a pretentious waiter behaves as though he is *en-soi*, but he is hiding in the safety of a prescribed role instead of taking responsibility.

- Angela Sirigu is a scientist who led a team alongside Michel Desmurget researching the relationship between intention and action within the brain.
- Sirigu's team stimulated part of the **parietal cortex** of the brain in surgical patients to produce an intention to act.
- Subjects reported a desire to move and even a belief that they had moved but did not actually move.

- Stimulation of the **premotor cortex** of the brain produced movement, but subjects were unaware of their own movements.
- The conclusion is that the parietal cortex is where decision making originates.
- This means that we can establish where free will might reside within the brain, but it does not mean that we certainly have free will.

- Carl Rogers was a practicing humanistic psychologist; he followed a person-centred approach to psychology.
- His therapy involved helping the patient achieve **congruence** between the **actual self** – our view of ourselves in the present as a result of our upbringing and life experiences, and the **ideal self** – the self we would like to be.
- He called the achievement of congruence **self-actualisation**. A congruent individual is a **fully functioning** person.
- Everyone is free to become a fully functioning person. Such people are open to growth and change, are adaptable, trust themselves (self-confident), are creative and have a fuller experience of life.
- An incongruent person is not free to make effective choices because they are determined by denial and distortion. The fully functioning person can utilise absolute freedom by willing what is determined.
- Freedom must exist for change and creativity to exist in our lives.

Key quotes:

'Existence precedes essence.' – Sartre

'Conscious intention and motor awareness thus arise from increased parietal activity before movement execution.' – Desmurget

'It appears that the person who is psychologically free moves in the direction of becoming a more fully functioning person.' – Rogers

Issues for analysis and evaluation:

Key arguments/debates

Some argue that scientific and psychological evidence makes free will convincing.

Others agree that, cumulatively, these approaches offer evidence for free will.

However, some question whether the evidence for free will still depends upon acceptance of cause-and-effect.

Key questions

Does identifying a decision-making centre of the brain equate to proving free will?

Can anything be the cause of itself?

If a decision is uncaused, is it freely willed or is it random?

Key words:

Incompatibilist	atheist	materialist	existentialist	dualist
tabula rasa	être-en-soi	être-pour-soi	meta-physical	the gap
bad faith	parietal cortex	premotor cortex	congruence	actual self
ideal self	self-actualisation	fully functioning		