

Chapter 1 : Freedom - Waldorf Watch

The Philosophy of Freedom is the fundamental philosophical work of the philosopher and esotericist Rudolf Steiner (). It addresses the questions whether and in what sense human beings can be said to be free.

This leads on to the notion of predestination. The second has come from the idea of determinism which suggests that in a law governed universe, the law of cause and effect means that the future is already decided. This implies that human freedom is an illusion as all choices and decisions a person makes are determined by physical laws and chemical interactions. Historical origins Ama-gi written in Sumerian cuneiform The ama-gi, a Sumerian cuneiform word, is the earliest known written symbol representing the idea of freedom. The English word "freedom" is an Anglo-Saxon word combining the words "free" and "doom. The word "doom" means law and personal judgement or opinion. Such a person follows his own well considered personal judgment which is within the law. Freedom is a sociological concept and without society the word has no meaning. Liberty is often used as an alternative to freedom. It is a Latin word incorporated into English via French. The most important literature in Europe for the understanding of freedom has been the Bible, especially the Exodus story of the transition of the Hebrews from slavery to a law governed society described in Deuteronomy and Leviticus. Saint Paul expounded a more internal sense of the freedom of the spirit. The Value of Freedom Mohandas K. Gandhi - Freedom can be achieved through inner sovereignty. Freedom is valuable for the individual and also for society. For the individual freedom is a pre-requisite for spiritual and moral growth. A person who as they grow older is not given more and more responsibility and the freedom that goes with it does not fully mature. Human beings are treated as moral agents because they are held to be responsible for their actions. If a person is not free then they are not responsible. For example if someone is physically forced to pull a trigger and kill someone they are not treated as a murderer. Freedom enables a person to make decisions that will affect their future. It gives them the chance to take or not to take opportunities that occur instead of having such decisions made by someone else. Thus freedom enables a person to become responsible, following their own lights, pursuing and creating beauty, truth and goodness. The Anglo-Saxon king Alfred the Great c. The Christian idea of freedom includes the expectation that a truly free person will live following their conscience. As Saint Augustine said, "Love God and do what you want. In short the freedom to follow their conscience. Such a person would naturally live within the moral law. Of course if a person breaks the law committing murder or stealing they can expect a fair trial followed by an appropriate punishment. The social order that develops in a free society is self-generated. It is not designed or the product of a central plan but is incredibly complex with many different types of relationships. Each person and institution freely makes make their own plans and self-coordinates them with others. It has been called a catallaxy by F. These relationships are primarily regulated by manners, tradition, custom and in the last resort by laws which describe the limits of acceptable behavior beyond which the state will intervene to punish transgressors. Freedom within the law is thus the basis for a peaceful society as it makes it possible for people with incommensurate religions and opinions to live side by side as neighbors. The freedom to own property and do with it what one chooses is also important. This has traditionally been expressed through owning land and being able to farm the land and enjoy what one produces. In the modern world this has been transformed into owning a house and creating a garden. There is also the freedom to create, manage and invest in businesses and again to make a profit or loss depending on how hard one works and the decisions one makes. When people have the freedom to be responsible they naturally enough will seek to improve their lot and that of their family and society. Using their creativity to make and create things for others and for mutual sharing and exchange will lead to prosperity for the whole society. The epistemological value of freedom rests on the recognition of human ignorance about the past, present and future. Since the future is unknown and unknowable, it is important that people have the opportunity to respond creatively to accidents, opportunities, events and changing circumstances. In free society there is a growth of knowledge as people come up with discuss and perhaps implement new ideas. A society which discourages or tries to control new ideas and innovations will tend to be stagnant and lack the flexibility that is necessary to survive and prosper. To

establish and maintain a planned society it is necessary to punish those who refuse to conform. Furthermore in a society where there is a complete monopoly of employment as under Communism, anyone who loses their job because they upset their employer for whatever reason loses the ability to survive. This freedom to experiment also means the freedom to make mistakes and learn from them. This is why free societies are more moral, just and prosperous. The British philosopher Isaiah Berlin made a distinction between positive liberty and negative liberty in his essay "Two Concepts of Liberty. Greater "negative freedom" meant fewer restrictions on possible action. Positive liberty should be exercised within the constraints of negative liberty. While Berlin granted that both concepts of liberty represent valid human ideals, as a matter of history the positive concept of liberty has proven particularly susceptible to political abuse. Hegel all committed to the positive concept of liberty, European political thinkers often equated liberty with forms of political discipline or constraint. Under this understanding poor people are not free because they cannot afford to buy or do the things they want. To achieve such positive freedom collective political action is necessary to empower such people through a redistribution of wealth. The consequences of such action always lead to the creation of a large state apparatus to restructure human society and the economy. This is usually accompanied by wholesale violence, imprisonment and often murder of people who disagree. So the demand for positive freedom always leads to the loss of negative freedom as people are no longer protected by the law. One example that dominated the twentieth century world was Communism. A more recent example of forcing people to be free is the war in Iraq to create a liberal democracy. This negative liberty is central to the claim for toleration due to incommensurability. This concept is mirrored in the work of Joseph Raz. Hayek made a similar distinction. He contrasted this with the Gallican tradition of freedom articulated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Condorcet and the Encyclopedists who did not live in a free country and so did not understand freedom. So they mistakenly equated freedom with power. Hayek showed that the opposite to a free society is totalitarianism while the opposite to democracy is authoritarianism. He said that democracy does not guarantee freedom as a majority is always tempted to enforce its will upon a minority. Mill in his book *On Liberty* described this as the tyranny of the majority. Hayek also pointed out that national independence also is no guarantee of freedom. Hayek expands this distinction between Anglican and Gallic freedom into a comparison between what he calls true and false individualism. This continental tradition of false individualism and freedom had influenced philosophers such as J. Mill and was being adopted in Britain and America replacing the traditional Anglican view. Edmund Burke supported the American war of Independence but was the earliest and most perceptive critic of the French Revolution. He predicted that the latter would descend into chaos followed by tyranny because of its mistaken concept of freedom. He emphasized the importance of the inner life to be able to enjoy the fruits of freedom. Otherwise people would descend into self-centeredness, trying to impose their will on others. People without an inner spiritual life find it hard to cope with freedom and often turn to alcohol, drugs and join gangs as an escape. Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites; in proportion as their love of justice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding is above their vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are more disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves. Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters. A Free Society The concept of political freedom is closely allied with the concepts of civil liberties and individual rights. Most liberal democratic societies are professedly characterized by various freedoms which are afforded the legal protection of the state. Some of these freedoms may include in alphabetical order:

The Philosophy Of Freedom is a science of freedom based on the observation of human nature. "The purpose of The Philosophy Of Freedom is to lay the foundations of ethical individualism and of a social and political life."

Incompatibilism may occupy any of the nine positions except 5 , 8 or 3 , which last corresponds to soft determinism. Position 1 is hard determinism, and position 2 is libertarianism. The position 1 of hard determinism adds to the table the contention that D implies FW is untrue, and the position 2 of libertarianism adds the contention that FW implies D is untrue. Position 9 may be called hard incompatibilism if one interprets? Compatibilism itself may occupy any of the nine positions, that is, there is no logical contradiction between determinism and free will, and either or both may be true or false in principle. However, the most common meaning attached to compatibilism is that some form of determinism is true and yet we have some form of free will, position 3. Alex Rosenberg makes an extrapolation of physical determinism as inferred on the macroscopic scale by the behaviour of a set of dominoes to neural activity in the brain where; "If the brain is nothing but a complex physical object whose states are as much governed by physical laws as any other physical object, then what goes on in our heads is as fixed and determined by prior events as what goes on when one domino topples another in a long row of them. Hard determinism A simplified taxonomy of philosophical positions regarding free will and determinism. Determinism can be divided into causal, logical and theological determinism. Although hard determinism generally refers to nomological determinism see causal determinism below , it can include all forms of determinism that necessitate the future in its entirety. Causal determinism The idea that everything is caused by prior conditions, making it impossible for anything else to happen. Imagine an entity that knows all facts about the past and the present, and knows all natural laws that govern the universe. If the laws of nature were determinate, then such an entity would be able to use this knowledge to foresee the future, down to the smallest detail. The problem of free will, in this context, is the problem of how choices can be free, given that what one does in the future is already determined as true or false in the present. Other forms of determinism are more relevant to compatibilism, such as biological determinism , the idea that all behaviors, beliefs, and desires are fixed by our genetic endowment and our biochemical makeup, the latter of which is affected by both genes and environment, cultural determinism and psychological determinism. Suggestions have been made that hard determinism need not maintain strict determinism, where something near to, like that informally known as adequate determinism , is perhaps more relevant. Red circles represent mental states; blue circles represent physical states; arrows describe causal interaction. Metaphysical libertarianism is one philosophical view point under that of incompatibilism. Libertarianism holds onto a concept of free will that requires that the agent be able to take more than one possible course of action under a given set of circumstances. Accounts of libertarianism subdivide into non-physical theories and physical or naturalistic theories. Non-physical theories hold that the events in the brain that lead to the performance of actions do not have an entirely physical explanation, which requires that the world is not closed under physics. This includes interactionist dualism , which claims that some non-physical mind , will, or soul overrides physical causality. Physical determinism implies there is only one possible future and is therefore not compatible with libertarian free will. They either rely upon a world that is not causally closed, or physical indeterminism. It has been suggested, however, that such acting cannot be said to exercise control over anything in particular. According to non-causal accounts, the causation by the agent cannot be analysed in terms of causation by mental states or events, including desire, belief, intention of something in particular, but rather is considered a matter of spontaneity and creativity. Some non-causal explanations involve invoking panpsychism , the theory that a quality of mind is associated with all particles, and pervades the entire universe, in both animate and inanimate entities. Event-causal theories[edit] Event-causal accounts of incompatibilist free will typically rely upon physicalist models of mind like those of the compatibilist , yet they presuppose physical indeterminism, in which certain indeterministic events are said to be caused by the agent. A number of event-causal accounts of free will have been created, referenced here as deliberative indeterminism, centred accounts, and efforts of will theory. Ordinary randomness is appealed to

as supplying the "elbow room" that libertarians believe necessary. A first common objection to event-causal accounts is that the indeterminism could be destructive and could therefore diminish control by the agent rather than provide it related to the problem of origination. A second common objection to these models is that it is questionable whether such indeterminism could add any value to deliberation over that which is already present in a deterministic world. Deliberative indeterminism asserts that the indeterminism is confined to an earlier stage in the decision process. The selection process is deterministic, although it may be based on earlier preferences established by the same process. Centred accounts propose that for any given decision between two possibilities, the strength of reason will be considered for each option, yet there is still a probability the weaker candidate will be chosen. Efforts of will theory is related to the role of will power in decision making. Models of volition have been constructed in which it is seen as a particular kind of complex, high-level process with an element of physical indeterminism. Although at the time quantum mechanics and physical indeterminism was only in the initial stages of acceptance, in his book *Miracles: A preliminary study* C. Lewis stated the logical possibility that if the physical world were proved indeterministic this would provide an entry point to describe an action of a non-physical entity on physical reality. These events might affect brain activity, and could seemingly allow incompatibilist free will if the apparent indeterminacy of some mental processes for instance, subjective perceptions of control in conscious volition map to the underlying indeterminacy of the physical construct. This relationship, however, requires a causative role over probabilities that is questionable, [76] and it is far from established that brain activity responsible for human action can be affected by such events. Secondly, these incompatibilist models are dependent upon the relationship between action and conscious volition, as studied in the neuroscience of free will. It is evident that observation may disturb the outcome of the observation itself, rendering limited our ability to identify causality. The agent is assumed power to intervene in the physical world. A number of problems have been identified with this view. Firstly, it is difficult to establish the reason for any given choice by the agent, which suggests they may be random or determined by luck without an underlying basis for the free will decision. Hard incompatibilism[edit] Hard incompatibilism is the idea that free will cannot exist, whether the world is deterministic or not. Determinism D is true, D does not imply we lack free will F , but in fact we do lack F. D is true, and we do have F. D is true, we have F, and F implies D. D is unproven, but we have F. Derk Pereboom, *Living without Free Will*, [33] p. Pereboom calls positions 3 and 4 soft determinism, position 1 a form of hard determinism, position 6 a form of classical libertarianism, and any position that includes having F as compatibilism. John Locke denied that the phrase "free will" made any sense compare with theological noncognitivism , a similar stance on the existence of God. He also took the view that the truth of determinism was irrelevant. He believed that the defining feature of voluntary behavior was that individuals have the ability to postpone a decision long enough to reflect or deliberate upon the consequences of a choice: According to Strawson, if one is responsible for what one does in a given situation, then one must be responsible for the way one is in certain mental respects. But it is impossible for one to be responsible for the way one is in any respect. At some point in the chain, there must have been an act of origination of a new causal chain. But this is impossible. Man cannot create himself or his mental states ex nihilo. This argument entails that free will itself is absurd, but not that it is incompatible with determinism. Strawson calls his own view "pessimism" but it can be classified as hard incompatibilism.

Chapter 3 : A Philosophy of Freedom by Lars Svendsen | Issue | Philosophy Now

The Philosophy of Freedom describes Rudolf Steiner's path to freedom. It contains the nonconformist ideals of his youth that result from his study of mathematics, science, and philosophy culminating in a philosophy of life founded upon individualistic truth and ethical individualism.

Click badge to download our APP. Sat Mar 24 , at 1: This ensures that all information you send to us via the World Wide Web is safe and secure. Please click on the Comodo Secure Site Seal which will verify the validity of our Comodo Certificate, and our commitment to your security. Together with Truth and Science and The Riddles of Philosophy it might be considered as one third of a philosophical trilogy. This freeness is a self-starting, self-directing activity of a spiritual sort. We offer the original work, in German, and selected translations for the reader to experience. Our original German edition was donated by Lorenzo Ravagli. Philosophy of Freedom Selections Die Philosophie der Freiheit beweist, da? Die Philosophie der Freiheit ist mehr als ein philosophisches Buch: Aus der Selbsterkenntnis des menschlichen Geistes geht eine Erneuerung des Handelns und damit der Welt hervor. Die deutsche Ausgabe wurde gestiftet von: The Philosophy of Freedom This is the first English translation and the only one sanctioned by Rudolf Steiner himself. First published in , it is based on the original German Die Philosophie der Freiheit Other translations have been based on the revised German edition. It includes inspiring passages about individualism that were removed from the book in and are missing in later translations: Nothing is accepted as valid, unless it springs from the roots of individuality. If only we probe deep enough into the very heart of our being, there dwells something noble, something worthy of development. This edition was published by Rudolf Steiner Press, London, , , , , with pp. This seventh English edition, was translated from the 12th German edition of , and with an Introduction by Michael Wilson. Antonio Aretxabala aretxaba unav. . , - - . , , : , , . The books in this area can be compared side by side in the same browser window. Select any combination of chapters, prefaces, appendixes, etc.

Chapter 4 : The Philosophy of Freedom (Wilson)

Freedom is traditionally understood as independence of the arbitrary will of another. [1] Such a state is contrasted with slavery. [2] A slave is constantly subject to the will of another. By contrast a free person can do whatever he chooses as long as he does not break the law and infringe on the.

Historical context[edit] Steiner had wanted to write a philosophy of freedom since at least A revised version of the thesis was published a year later in book form as Truth and Knowledge: Introduction to a Philosophy of Freedom. This claim is important to freedom, because for Steiner freedom involves knowing the real basis of our actions. If this basis cannot be known, then freedom is not possible. Steiner finds the activity of thinking to be something much greater and more real than the concepts which crystallize out of thinking. He proposes 1 that through introspective observation we can become conscious of the motivations of our actions, and 2 that the sole possibility of human freedom , if it exists at all, must be sought in an awareness of the motives of our actions. In Chapter 3, "Thinking in the Service of Knowledge," Steiner observes that when confronted with percepts, we feel obliged to think about and add concepts to these: Steiner seeks to demonstrate that what he considers the primary antithesis between observation and thinking underlies all other related antitheses and philosophical distinctions, such as subject vs. For most objects of observation, he points out, we cannot observe both the percept and our thinking about this percept simultaneously, for a tree and thinking about a tree are fundamentally different; we can only attend to one at a time. In contrast, we can simultaneously observe thinking and observe our thoughts about thinking, for here the percept thinking and our thinking about the percept consist of the same element thought: Just thinking and thinking about thinking are the same process; observing the latter, we are simultaneously observing the former. Normally, however, for just that reason we do not pay attention to the process of thinking, only its results, the thoughts themselves: It does not appear before us unless we ourselves produce it. Nevertheless, when I apprehend the content of thinking, a concept, this is self-justifying, in the sense that it can be asked why I feel this or that way about something, but not why it produces in me this or that concept. Such a question would be "simply meaningless". Furthermore, when observing my thinking, it is always a past instance of thinking that I observe, not a present one. That the thinker and the observer of the thinker are one and the same explains why I can know thinking "more intimately and immediately than any other process in the world" [24] This is what Steiner calls the transparency of our thinking process. If we are unable to do this, and we think of thinking as a brain-process, it is because we do not see thinking, because we are unable to take up the exceptional position needed to do so. Thinking lies beyond subject and object. It produces these two concepts just as it produces all others. When, therefore, I, as thinking subject, refer a concept to an object, we must not regard this reference as something purely subjective. It is not the subject that makes the reference, but thinking. The subject does not think because it is a subject; rather it appears to itself as a subject because it can think. The activity exercised by thinking beings is thus not merely subjective. Rather is it something neither subjective nor objective, that transcends both these concepts. I ought never to say that my individual subject thinks, but much more that my individual subject lives by the grace of thinking. The Chapter on thinking is followed by a shorter one on perception, Chapter 4. It contains two main and very important points. Steiner points out the inconsistency of treating all our perceptions as mere subjective mental images inside the brain. If that were true, the perception of the brain itself would have to be a mere subjective mental image inside the brain! In that case the basis for our knowledge of the brain would be completely undermined. The scientific claim is made, on the basis of physiology and psychology, that our percepts are produced by a causal process within the organism and hence are subjective. This is called "critical idealism" But physiology and psychology are based on these percepts. So our knowledge of physiology and psychology is subjective. But then it cannot validate the claim that percepts are subjective. Furthermore, critical idealism leaves unaccounted for the passage from the brain process to the sensation. What are the consequences of such a view of perception for the concept of knowledge? In Chapter 5 Steiner presents his concept of knowledge. Human beings are two-sided, as they both think and also perceive. The two activities together give a complete view of the world. Knowledge is the

union of what is produced in thinking, the concept, and what is produced in perceiving, the percept. Steiner argues that there can be no relationship among the objects of perception other than what is revealed in the ideal element produced by thinking, the concept. Accordingly, the relation between some perceived object and ourselves is also an ideal one. An important passage analyzes the view that we cannot experience the world itself but only subjective images somewhere inside the brain, or in the soul inside the brain. This view is based on treating the perceptual relationship between self and world as other than ideal, as naively real, just as we perceive it, as a process derived in its content from perception itself. At the end of Chapter 5 Steiner completes the view of perception begun in Chapter 4. What is the percept that perceiving produces? Steiner rejects this question. We can become conscious of our thought processes in a way that we cannot be of our feelings, will or sense perceptions. We know that what we experience in thinking is exactly what it seems, so that appearance and reality become one. Mathematics is an example of thinking in which thought itself forms the perceptions; no sense-perceptions are needed to form a basis for mathematical principles. In this sense mathematics could be said to be one discipline that studies the inner aspect of reality. Steiner proposes that the apparent dualism of experience can be overcome by discovering the inner and initially hidden unity of perception and thinking. By the same token, a clear-eyed study of what is revealed in observation can lead to appropriate concepts - thinking. Steiner argues that thinking is more pervasive in our ordinary perceiving than we often recognize. If that conclusion seems surprising, that is because the thinking-in-perceiving learned in childhood becomes habitual and automatic long before we attain fully consciousness, so we rarely become aware of the key role cognition plays in even the simplest perceptions. Similarly, we are unconscious of the ways we perceive our thinking. With this concept we arrive at the relation of knowledge to the individual, and to life, and feeling. After an interesting refutation of the subjectivity of percepts, Steiner describes a mental picture as an intuition or thought related to an individual percept. And so the mental picture is defined as an individualized concept. Experience is the "sum total" of mental pictures of the individual. There is the relation of these things to the Ego; and this is feeling. Feeling gives our personal relation to the world, and we oscillate between it and the "universal world process" given in thinking. The mental pictures we form gives our mental life an individual stamp, and relates it to our own life. Chapter 7 takes up the consequences of the view that knowledge consists of the restoration of the unity of the content of the percept and the concept. Steiner calls those who make the epistemological distinction into a permanent metaphysical one dualists. The metaphysical realist, however, is left with the unanswerable question how the metaphysically real objects are converted into subjective percepts. Here Steiner can be read as giving his account of the structure and basis of what is today called the mind-body problem. The world comes to meet me as a multiplicity, a sum of separate details. As a human being, I am myself one of these details, an entity among other entities. We call this form of the world simply the given and "insofar as we do not develop it through conscious activity but find it ready-made" we call it percept. Within the world of percepts, we perceive ourselves. But if something did not emerge out of this self-percept that proved capable of linking both percepts in general and also the sum of all other percepts with the percept of our self, our self-percept would remain simply one among many. This emerging something, however, is no longer a mere percept; nor is it, like percepts, simply present. It is produced through activity and initially appears linked to what we perceive as our self, but its inner meaning reaches beyond the self. It adds conceptual determinates to individual percepts, but these conceptual determinates relate to one another and are grounded in a whole. It determines conceptually what is achieved through self-perception conceptually, just as it determines all other percepts. Here he modifies the usual description of inner and outer experience by pointing out that our feelings, for example, are given to us as naively as outer perceptions. Both of these, feelings and perceptions, tell about objects we are interested in: Both require the help of thinking to penetrate the reasons that they arise, to comprehend their inner message. The same is true of our will. Whereas our feelings tell how the world affects us, our will tells how we would affect the world. Steiner emphasizes that we experience our feelings and will - and our perceptions as well - as being more essentially part of us than our thinking; the former are more basic, more natural. He celebrates this gift of natural, direct experience, but points out that this experience is still dualistic in the sense that it only encompasses one side of the world. With regard to freedom of the will, Steiner observes that a key question is

how the will to action arises in the first place. Steiner describes to begin with two sources for human action: In this way, both nature and culture bring forces to bear on our will and soul life. Overcoming these two elements, neither of which is individualized, we can achieve genuinely individualized intuitions that speak to the particular situation at hand. Freedom for Steiner does not consist in acting out everything subjective within us, but in acting out of love, thoughtfully and creatively. In this way we can love our own actions, which are unique and individual to us, rather than stemming from obedience to external moral codes or compulsive physical drives. Both of the latter constitute limitations on freedom: Whether his unfreedom is forced on him by physical means or by moral laws, whether man is unfree because he follows his unlimited sexual desire or because he is bound by the fetters of conventional morality, is quite immaterial from a certain point of view. Steiner differentiates pure thinking into "moral intuition" formulation of individual purposes, "moral imagination" creative strategies for realizing these larger purposes in the concrete situation, and "moral technique" the practical capacity to accomplish what was intended. He suggests that we only achieve free deeds when we find an ethically impelled but particularized response to the immediacy of a given situation. Such a response will always be radically individual; it cannot be predicted or prescribed. For Steiner, the highest morality exists when a person acts in the world through deeds of love realized by means of individually developed and contextually-sensitive moral imaginations, [20] This of course raises the difficulty of the one who loves evil and acts on the basis of this love. Are his actions of "the highest morality"? This all is by way of introduction and recapitulation.

Chapter 5 : The Philosophy of Freedom - Wikipedia

The Philosophy of Freedom demonstrates the fact of freedom "the ability to think and act independently" as a possibility for modern consciousness. Read properly, it leads the reader to the experience of presence or living thinking "new thinking" by which all human activity may be renewed.

Following an operation to remove part of his temporal lobe, and further temporal lobe surgery to control seizures, Walter B. A ravenous appetite and long rages became the norm. Both starting and stopping activities became difficult. Sometimes he was easily distracted, and sometimes he got stuck in a simple activity for eight or nine hours. Deeply ashamed, he kept some of his behaviors secret "until they led to his arrest for violating the law. He felt relieved to no longer keep them secret, and now reached out to his doctor for medication that would allow him to stop his compulsive actions, and he consequently returned to his old loving, compassionate self. However, Walter still faced prosecution for the unlawful behavior. The prosecution claimed in response that since Walter did not engage in illegal activity at work, he therefore had some control over his condition, and during such a period of self-control could have asked his doctors for help in stopping his compulsive behaviors. Judged as culpable for failing to do that, Walter was sentenced to prison for twenty-six months, subsequent home confinement for twenty-five months, and five years of supervision after that. Such is the case of Walter B. In *A Philosophy of Freedom*, Lars Svendsen, a professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Bergen, Norway, is concerned with understanding the notion of freedom as it applies to autonomy, or free will, and in explaining its role in shaping a society loyal to protecting freedom. For Svendsen this means that given that particular set of prior causes, one could not have done otherwise. Few people would hold an individual morally or legally responsible if his psychotic personality and actions were caused by a large brain tumor that prevented him from thinking and acting otherwise p. In other words, for us to be moral agents as traditionally understood, we must apparently believe in some indeterministic variety of choice, where we have a real ability to choose in one or another way. In a deterministic universe, an alternative reason for acting could have come up only if there had been different conditions up to the moment of choice. But according to indeterminism, when exercising our choice, we might have chosen differently even under those same conditions. With indeterminism we are not completely restricted to what we actually chose to think or do by external factors "by neurological damage, for instance. Svendsen is an indeterminist. That is to say, an autonomous agent is responsible for their ongoing choices, character, and actions, because their reasons, and eventually their character traits, reflect what that agent authentically endorses by their choices. Moreover, the agent has the ability to reflect upon their reasons and character traits, and by exercising their choice, change them p. Svendsen agrees that free choice might be undermined by a pathological condition p. But Walter is charged with failing to manage his pathological condition by not accessing a doctor when that was possible for him. Should he be judged as culpable? We might think that his shame was more than he could manage, even to the extent of not allowing him to consult a doctor, and that the shame is part of his having become mentally ill because of the brain surgery. Svendsen tells us that he had a bad temper until he no longer wished to be like that, and changed that character trait after he began to work on himself p. Since, like him, people can reflect on their behavior, know what they are doing, think of better alternatives, and change not only what they were doing, but their character, then arguably Walter should similarly have worked on himself by getting the appropriate help. So what about the political conditions necessary for the exercise of our autonomy? For Svendsen, protecting autonomy and our morality-based way of life depends on the implementation and maintenance of institutional conditions that support a liberal democracy "in other words, on political liberalism p. What then are these basic freedom-supporting universal rights? In summary, they consist of rights to: For example, we can say that it was only by chance, or perhaps by bad luck, that Walter never experienced the processes or influences that would have provided him with what he would have needed to manifest his preferred values, until it was too late. However, this factor of chance or luck means that we cannot simply or blithely assess Walter as a morally deficient criminal, rather than, say, an unlucky person of good character unfortunately unable to effectively

control himself. The factor of chance or luck obscures the moral situation of human beings who are subject to the vagaries of the universe, despite their goodness. Consequently, extreme inequality can result, with no moral objection being presented to people increasing their advantages. So although Svendsen has given us a wealth of useful distinctions, arguments, and challenges to philosophical positions that anyone interested in free will would do well to grapple with, his philosophy of freedom has also given us a moral and political system whose intricate philosophical components can be used to build a compassion extractor, in the name of morality.

Chapter 6 : Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path: A Philosophy of Freedom by Rudolf Steiner

That Rudolf Steiner's authorized English translation, by the Hoernle's, of the original version of his monumental book, The Philosophy of Freedom is now readily available as an extreme gift, not only to those of us who treasure and appreciate this great book, but to all.

Major Historical Contributions 1. Indeed, on this matter, as with so many other major philosophical issues, Plato and Aristotle give importantly different emphases that inform much subsequent thought. In the absence of justice, the individual is enslaved to the passions. While Aristotle shares with Plato a concern for cultivating virtues, he gives greater theoretical attention to the role of choice in initiating individual actions which, over time, result in habits, for good or ill. Furthermore, mature humans make choices after deliberating about different available means to our ends, drawing on rational principles of action. Choose consistently well poorly, and a virtuous vicious character will form over time, and it is in our power to be either virtuous or vicious. A question that Aristotle seems to recognize, while not satisfactorily answering, is whether the choice an individual makes on any given occasion is wholly determined by his internal state—perception of his circumstances and his relevant beliefs, desires, and general character dispositions wherever on the continuum between virtue and vice he may be—and external circumstances. One might worry that this seems to entail that the person could not have done otherwise—at the moment of choice, she has no control over what her present character is—and so she is not responsible for choosing as she does. Aristotle responds by contending that her present character is partly a result of previous choices she made. We note just a few contributions of the subsequent centuries of the Hellenistic era. This period was dominated by debates between Epicureans, Stoics, and the Academic Sceptics, and as it concerned freedom of the will, the debate centered on the place of determinism or of fate in governing human actions and lives. The Stoics and the Epicureans believed that all ordinary things, human souls included, are corporeal and governed by natural laws or principles. Epicurus and his followers had a more mechanistic conception of bodily action than the Stoics. They held that all things human soul included are constituted by atoms, whose law-governed behavior fixes the behavior of everything made of such atoms. Epicurus has often been understood as seeking to ground the freedom of human willings in such indeterministic swerves, but this is a matter of controversy. If this understanding of his aim is correct, how he thought that this scheme might work in detail is not known. A final notable figure of this period was Alexander of Aphrodisias, the most important Peripatetic commentator on Aristotle. In his *On Fate*, Alexander sharply criticizes the positions of the Stoics. He goes on to resolve the ambiguity in Aristotle on the question of the determining nature of character on individual choices by maintaining that, given all such shaping factors, it remains open to the person when she acts freely to do or not to do what she in fact does. Augustine is the central bridge between the ancient and medieval eras of philosophy. His mature thinking about the will was influenced by his early encounter with late classical Neoplatonist thought, which is then transformed by the theological views he embraces in his adult Christian conversion, famously recounted in his *Confessions*. He clearly affirms that the will is by its nature a self-determining power—no powers external to it determine its choice—and that this feature is the basis of its freedom. Scholars divide on whether Augustine was a libertarian or instead a kind of compatibilist with respect to metaphysical freedom. It is clear, however, that Augustine thought that we are powerfully shaped by wrongly-ordered desires that can make it impossible for us to wholeheartedly will ends contrary to those desires, for a sustained period of time. Will is rational desire: Freedom enters the picture when we consider various means to these ends and move ourselves to activity in pursuit of certain of them. Our will is free in that it is not fixed by nature on any particular means, and they generally do not appear to us either as unqualifiedly good or as uniquely satisfying the end we wish to fulfill. Furthermore, what appears to us to be good can vary widely—even, over time, intra-personally. For this reason, some commentators have taken Aquinas to be a kind of compatibilist concerning freedom and causal or theological determinism. The first consideration is clearly consistent with compatibilism. The second at best points to a kind of contingency that is not grounded in the activity of the will itself. And one wanting to read Aquinas as a libertarian might worry that his third consideration just

passes the buck: Those who read Aquinas as a libertarian point to the following further remark in this text: In opposition to Aquinas and other medieval Aristotelians, Scotus maintained that a precondition of our freedom is that there are two fundamentally distinct ways things can seem good to us: Contrary to some popular accounts, however, Scotus allowed that the scope of available alternatives for a person will be more or less constricted. He grants that we are not capable of willing something in which we see no good whatsoever, nor of positively repudiating something which appears to us as unqualifiedly good. However, in accordance with his uncompromising position that nothing can be the total cause of the will other than itself, he held that where something does appear to us as unqualifiedly good perfectly suited both to our advantage and justice – viz. The centrality of the problem of free will to the various projects of early modern philosophers can be traced to two widely, though not universally, shared assumptions. The first is that without belief in free will, there would be little reason for us to act morally. More carefully, it was widely assumed that belief in an afterlife in which a just God rewards and punishes us according to our right or wrong use of free will was key to motivating us to be moral Russell, chs. Life before death affords us many examples in which vice is better rewarded than virtue and so without knowledge of a final judgment in the afterlife, we would have little reason to pursue virtue and justice when they depart from self-interest. And without free will there can be no final judgement. The second widely shared assumption is that free will seems difficult to reconcile with what we know about the world. While this assumption is shared by the majority of early modern philosophers, what specifically it is about the world that seems to conflict with freedom differs from philosopher to philosopher. For some, the worry is primarily theological. How can we make sense of contingency and freedom in a world determined by a God who must choose the best possible world to create? For some, the worry was primarily metaphysical. How does contingency and freedom fit into such a world? For some, the worry was primarily scientific. Given that a proper understanding of the physical world is one in which all physical objects are governed by deterministic laws of nature, how does contingency and freedom fit into such a world? Of course, for some, all three worries were in play in their work this is true especially of Descartes and Leibniz. Despite many disagreements about how best to solve these worries, there were three claims that were widely, although not universally, agreed upon. The first was that free will has two aspects: Ideas about moral responsibility were often a yard stick by which analyses of free will were measured, with critics objecting to an analysis of free will by arguing that agents who satisfied the analysis would not, intuitively, be morally responsible for their actions. The third is that compatibilism – the thesis that free will is compatible with determinism – is true. Spinoza, Reid, and Kant are the clear exceptions to this, though some also see Descartes as an incompatibilist [Ragland]. The first step was to argue that the contrary of freedom is not determinism but external constraint on doing what one wants to do. Hume [] VIII. This idea led many compatibilists, especially the more empiricist-inclined, to develop desire- or preference-based analyses of both the freedom to do otherwise and self-determination. The freedom to do otherwise does not require that you are able to act contrary to your strongest motivation but simply that your action be dependent on your strongest motivation in the sense that had you desired something else more strongly, then you would have pursued that alternative end. We will discuss this analysis in more detail below in section 2. Given these analyses, determinism seems innocuous to freedom. The second step was to argue that any attempt to analyze free will in a way that putatively captures a deeper or more robust sense of freedom leads to intractable conundrums. The most important examples of this attempt to capture a deeper sense of freedom in the modern period are Immanuel Kant [], [], [] and Thomas Reid [] and in the early twentieth century C. These philosophers argued that the above compatibilist analyses of the freedom to do otherwise and self-determination are, at best, insufficient for free will, and, at worst, incompatible with it. With respect to the classical compatibilist analysis of the freedom to do otherwise, these critics argued that the freedom to do otherwise requires not just that an agent could have acted differently if he had willed differently, but also that he could have willed differently. Free will requires more than free action. I consider the determination of the will as an effect. This effect must have a cause which had the power to produce it; and the cause must be either the person himself, whose will it is, or some other being – €. If the person was the cause of that determination of his own will, he was free in that action, and it is justly imputed to him, whether it be good or bad. But, if another being was the cause of this

determination, either producing it immediately, or by means and instruments under his direction, then the determination is the act and deed of that being, and is solely imputed to him. While it is intelligible to ask whether a man willed to do what he did, it is incoherent to ask whether a man willed to will what he did: For to ask whether a man is at liberty to will either motion or rest, speaking or silence, which he pleases, is to ask whether a man can will what he wills, or be pleased with what he is pleased with? A question which, I think, needs no answer; and they who make a question of it must suppose one will to determine the acts of another, and another to determine that, and so on in infinitum. Locke [] II. It is important to recognize that an implication of the second step of the strategy is that free will is not only compatible with determinism but actually requires determinism cf. This was a widely shared assumption among compatibilists up through the mid-twentieth century. He endorses a strong form of necessitarianism in which everything is categorically necessary opposed to the weaker form of conditional necessity embraced by most compatibilists, and he contends that there is no room in such a world for divine or creaturely free will. Thus, Spinoza is a free will skeptic. Interestingly, Spinoza is also keen to deny that the nonexistence of free will has the dire implications often assumed. As noted above, many in the modern period saw belief in free will and an afterlife in which God rewards the just and punishes the wicked as necessary to motivate us to act morally. According to Spinoza, so far from this being necessary to motivate us to be moral, it actually distorts our pursuit of morality. True moral living, Spinoza thinks, sees virtue as its own reward Part V, Prop. Moreover, while free will is a chimera, humans are still capable of freedom or self-determination. Spinoza is an important forerunner to the many free will skeptics in the twentieth century, a position that continues to attract strong support see Strawson ; Double ; Smilansky ; Pereboom , ; Levy ; Waller ; Caruso ; Vilhauer For further discussion see the entry skepticism about moral responsibility. It is worth observing that in many of these disputes about the nature of free will there is an underlying dispute about the nature of moral responsibility. Underlying the belief that free will is incompatible with determinism is the thought that no one would be morally responsible for any actions in a deterministic world in the sense that no one would deserve blame or punishment. Hobbes responded to this charge in part by endorsing broadly consequentialist justifications of blame and punishment: Schlick ; Nowell-Smith ; Smart While many, perhaps even most, compatibilists have come to reject this consequentialist approach to moral responsibility in the wake of P. The Nature of Free Will 2. When an agent exercises free will over her choices and actions, her choices and actions are up to her. But up to her in what sense? As should be clear from our historical survey, two common and compatible answers are: However, there is widespread controversy both over whether each of these conditions is required for free will and if so, how to understand the kind or sense of freedom to do otherwise or sourcehood that is required. While some seek to resolve these controversies in part by careful articulation of our experiences of deliberation, choice, and action Nozick , ch. The idea is that the kind of control or sense of up-to-meness involved in free will is the kind of control or sense of up-to-meness relevant to moral responsibility Double , 12; Ekstrom , 7â€”8; Smilansky , 16; Widerker and McKenna , 2; Vargas , ; Nelkin , â€”52; Levy , 1; Pereboom , 1â€”2. Given this connection, we can determine whether the freedom to do otherwise and the power of self-determination are constitutive of free will and, if so, in what sense, by considering what it takes to be a morally responsible agent.

Chapter 7 : Free Will (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

The Philosophy of Freedom is the fundamental philosophical work of the philosopher and esotericist Rudolf Steiner (). It addresses the questions whether and in what sense man can be said to be free.

Nikolai Alexandrovich Berdyaev was born on March 6, in Kiev¹. By birth and upbringing he was an aristocrat. His father, Alexander Mikhailovich Berdyaev, came from a long line of nobility from Kiev and Kharkov. Almost all of his ancestors were high-ranking military officers, but he himself resigned from the army quite early and became active in the social life of Kiev aristocracy. He considered himself a free thinker and was very skeptical toward religion. This could be one of the reasons why Berdyaev, a very religious man and a religious philosopher, despised the official Orthodox Church. He spent his childhood at home, without any friends his own age. From this early time on he always felt hostility and alienation toward the outside world, for which this solitude could be responsible, at least partly. This had a heavy influence on his philosophy, which is very subjective and very idealistic. He was constantly creating his own inner world to counterpose it to the material world outside, in which he saw so many injustices and imperfections. His parents did not impose many restraints on him, and as a result, he could never accept any kind of authority. When later he went to a military school, this hatred of any suppression of personal freedom grew even stronger. Throughout all his life and in all aspects of it, Berdyaev disliked uniforms, ranks and formalism. Berdyaev read a lot from a very early age, a habit which he kept till the day he died. However, the only area of traditional systematic learning that Berdyaev was good at were the languages. Like most of aristocrats at the time he was fluent in French and German, because he was exposed to them from the early childhood. A couple decades before his time French was the spoken language of Russian nobles, some of whom actually had trouble speaking Russian. Berdyaev decided to devote his life to philosophy, and, breaking an old tradition of his family, left military school to apply to a university. In he passed the entrance examinations to the University of Kiev, and started studying natural sciences. A year later he changed his area of study to jurisprudence. The end of nineteenth century was the time of great revolutionary activity among the Russian intelligentsia, especially college students. Berdyaev, like many educated people of that period, became a Marxist and took part in the political processes. In Berdyaev was arrested in a student demonstration, and was expelled from the university. He was released with a warning, but later his involvement in illegal press was discovered and he was sentenced to three years of exile in Vologda province in central Russia. During the three years in Vologda Berdyaev experienced no physical and hardly any moral discomfort. In Berdyaev was back in Kiev, where he met and married Lydia Trusheff, who was the daughter of a prominent attorney. He was deeply in love with Lydia, who shared all the difficulties of his life. This same year Berdyaev and his wife moved to St. Petersburg, the capital of the country. It was the center of intellectual, philosophical, literary, and revolutionary activity. Berdyaev became an important part of this rich and eventful life of the city. He also participated in many spiritual, religious, and mystical discussion of different sects and other groups. During this period of his life Berdyaev completely moved away from the radical Marxists, who aimed towards an armed revolt against the regime. His attention focused on the metaphysical and spiritual development, rather than political struggle. It was during this time, when the Orthodox Church became an important part of his life. This turn toward the church is sometimes called conversion, but this term is not really appropriate in this case. Berdyaev had been an Orthodox Christian and sincerely believed in God all his life, but at this point religion and religious philosophy became a major part of his work. In Berdyaev with his family traveled to Italy. In Florence, under the influence of the wonders of the Italian Renaissance, Berdyaev wrote one of his most important books, *The Meaning of the Creative Act*. Being in the country that practically gave birth to the human creativity, it would have been strange if he had not written this book. This book made its author widely known in philosophical circles. Back in Russia Berdyaev continued to participate in the religious activities. He even dared to publish an article criticizing the Holy Synod of the Russian Church for ordering a group of monks to abandon their set of teachings that did not fit the official church doctrine. He was arrested on the charge of blasphemy, the punishment for which was a life-long exile to Siberia. The verdict was prevented

from being carried out by the Revolution of 1917. Although a revolutionary himself, Berdyaev could not accept the Bolshevik regime, because of its suppression of personal freedom, and its main principle of domination of the society over the individual. However, he was allowed to continue to lecture and write. It was the time of the Revolution and the Civil War, with its hardships that affected the entire country. Rationed food and unheated rooms endured by the residents of St. Petersburg were by far not the worst of them. Interestingly, when Berdyaev was ordered to do "community work", namely cleaning of the streets, which was a clear violation of his personal freedom, he did not perceive it as such. The most important for him was the fact that he could think freely, and continue his work. This lasted for almost five years, until Berdyaev was arrested, and charged with treason. He was interrogated by Dzerzhinsky, the head of the CheKa, the secret police. After that he was released, and ordered to leave the city. In after being arrested one more time, he was ordered to leave the country, as an alternative for being shot. The Soviet government arranged for Berdyaev and about seventy other emigres a passage to Berlin, where he stayed for about a year. There he organized the Religious-Philosophical Academy. In harsh economic and political conditions in Germany forced him to move to Paris. In Paris there was a large population of Russian emigres, mostly aristocrats, in which Berdyaev did not really fit in, because of his views. He continued the activities of his Academy. He taught, lectured, and wrote books. His work was only partially interrupted by the Second World War and the occupation of France. During the quarter of a century that he spent in France, Berdyaev wrote fifteen books, his most important works. He died on March 23, 1948. He has often been called the philosopher of freedom, and once, a s paradoxically as it may sound, even "the prisoner of freedom"². Berdyaev never in his life experienced any kind of authority, not in his family, not in school, not even in religious life. He always fought for his independence, which to him meant independence of the spirit and thought. Berdyaev dedicated all his life to creating and perfecting the philosophy of freedom. His fundamental idea is that freedom precedes existence, which puts the concept of freedom on the highest metaphysical level. He states that God is present only in freedom and acts only through freedom. Berdyaev makes a clear distinction between his concept of freedom and the traditional philosophical and theological idea of free will. His freedom has a much more general meaning. The situation of choice itself can cause the feeling of oppression, indecisiveness, or even the feeling of absence of freedom. The liberation comes, when the choice is made, and I move along my creative path. Once again the idea of creativity has a much broader meaning for him. It is an attempt to reach something higher than our material everyday reality, to exceed the limitations that the material world imposes on us. It is a way to express the freedom, a way to make the material world more like the spiritual world within us. This concept requires special attention, and it will be discussed later, in further detail. Because of this obsession with personal freedom Berdyaev was often called an individualist. He, on the other hand, called himself a personalist. That is a superstition. Freedom is outside the idea of individualism. Freedom is not turning inward and isolation, freedom is turning outward and creativity, a way to discover the universe inside oneself. He radically rejected the truth that is imposed on him as an object, or as "reality". He only accepted truth that is known through freedom. In this case he talks about two freedoms, the freedom through which the truth is known, and the freedom which is brought by the truth. Knowing the truth through freedom means that it is not accepted as something that exists separately from the mind, but rather freely absorbing it and making it a part of the mind. This absorbed truth, in turn, expands the horizons of the mind or, in other words, brings new freedom. In this notion Berdyaev fought against any kind of dogma or orthodoxy, whether political, or religious, or any other. He saw orthodoxy as an authority of an organized society over a free individual, over the free spirit of a person, something that he could never accept. This idea of freedom was the reason for the fact that Berdyaev moved away from Marxism, and was opposed to communism. He understood that there were tendencies to reject freedom among the revolutionary intelligentsia. Berdyaev saw that socialism could develop into different forms. It could bring liberation, but it could also create a totalitarian society. These tendencies were actually a logical development. Revolutionaries wanted to overthrow the existing regime, and take control of the country. This was impossible without an organization with strong leadership, every member of which would fight for the common goal.

Chapter 8 : Project MUSE - Aristotle's Conception of Freedom

The "Philosophy of Freedom", also titled in other translations as "Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path" and "The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity", is Rudolf Steiner's.

Freedom Rudolf Steiner was an advocate of freedom. Later, when he became a mystic, Steiner continued to stress freedom, although his occult teachings tended to drain the concept of its meaning. Anthroposophy is sometimes described as a spiritual discipline that leads to spiritual freedom. Waldorf education is likewise often described as emphasizing freedom. Waldorf freedom is not license for young students to do or think what they want; it is a goal for which Waldorf claims to equip students, a goal to be attained when the students reach maturity. In essence, Waldorf schools have the same ultimate conception of freedom as does Anthroposophy; the schools aim to enable students, after they mature to adulthood, to achieve the same "freedom" that Anthroposophy claims to offer. But there is a deep flaw in this paradigm. Anthroposophy actually countermands freedom. In the Anthroposophical view, individuals must choose between Truth and Falsehood. Falsehood is just about everything else. The gods have created a divine cosmic plan. Humans must live in accordance with this plan if they want to move forward in spiritual evolution that is, if they want to save their souls. Anyone who fails to live properly will suffer, being sent downward to lower evolutionary levels, and perhaps even losing the ability to reincarnate, thus cutting off further evolution altogether. You may choose this option, if you like. But it means, ultimately, losing your soul. Steiner tried to build scope for freedom into his system by teaching that Lucifer and Ahriman rebelled against the divine cosmic plan. This rebellion redounded to our benefit, creating the possibility of freedom – we can choose among differing paths. However, Steiner also taught that the rebellion was actually part of the plan! Thus, the wiggle room disappears. Except within very narrow limits, Anthroposophy does not allow such freedom. There is the planned way upward and there is the downward way to evolutionary backwardness. We must choose between these and only between these. Steiner, of course, claimed to reconcile many irreconcilables in his teachings. But the truth is that opposites are not reconcilable. They are as polar extremes. Anthroposophy is not the only system that founders on the contradictions between freedom and necessity – but founder it does. According to various Eastern traditions, we may create our own karma, for instance – but this does not make us free. The universe ordains the rule of karma, and we are subject to it: Our hands, in this larger sense, are tied. Likewise, Steiner may claim that humans were not free in prior evolutionary stages but we are free now – but these stages have themselves been ordained, they are not a system we have freely chosen. Similarly, Steiner said that we will be far freer in the future, when – transcending karma – we rise to higher and higher levels of spiritual consciousness. Yet those levels are already mapped out; the stages of our future evolution are already ordained; Steiner himself has described them. In sum, the worldview on which Waldorf schools stand is highly deterministic. The future is not absolutely written in stone, Steiner said. Things can go wrong, surprises may crop up. But, for the most part, he laid out a highly deterministic schema in which the scope for free choice is extremely limited. The limitations of this vision shape the lessons and activities conducted in Waldorf schools. This is not genuine preparation for free choice; it is induction into an occult worldview. The kids are led to this path long before they develop any mature capacity to make profound life choices. Theoretically, when they become adults, Waldorf graduates can freely choose to leave the correct path. But if Waldorf education works as Steiner intended – if the children have been molded and conditioned as the Waldorf curriculum is designed to do – making such a choice will be extremely difficult if not utterly unthinkable. The following quotations include some that lay out the Anthroposophical vision and some that undermine it. All the quotations are from Anthroposophical texts. Man had to be predestined for such an activity. Only the predetermination is spiritual there. We must try to create communities in which the factor of blood no longer has a voice. Naturally, the factor of blood will continue, it will live itself out in family relationships, for what must remain will not be eradicated. But something new must arise! What is significant in the child will be retained in the forces of old age, but in his later years the human being must receive new forces. If not, something must be done. We should always remember that when we do something,

we are actually carrying out the intentions of the gods. And its future development is connected with what arises from the deeds. This connection of a being with the results of its deeds is the law of karma which rules the whole world. Activity that has become destiny is karma [emphasis by Steiner]. On the other hand, Venus, Mercury and the Moon may be called the destiny-determining planets. The human being is Beings that stay behind at such stages appear in a later epoch as subordinate nature spirits. Steiner taught that we humans are exceptional beings. Someday, far, far in the future "having spent millennia under the tutelage of the gods" we will become the free product of our own free actions. More than any other beings, we will have autonomy. This is a high, wonderful promise. And note that the "nothingness" out of which we will create ourselves is actually a tremendously long, carefully orchestrated divine cosmic plan executed by the gods. In other words, we will have been conditioned to be what the gods want us to be "which, paradoxically or, worse, impossibly, means being free of the gods and their plan. We will take charge; we will beget ourselves; we will be the creators. But in the meantime, most of our actions have been directed by hidden beings "they, not we, have pulled the strings. Here is a little statement on the matter by historian Peter Staudenmaier: The German Idea of Freedom German thinkers extolled their notion of moral freedom as far superior to the French definition of freedom in merely political terms. The German idea of freedom was to be free from the animalistic and materialistic weaknesses of human nature while the French only sought to gain freedom from the oppressive state. To be truly free in the German sense meant to be liberated from the internal bonds that prevented the full development of moral character. This idealist and apolitical conception of freedom, so characteristic of German thought, was in fact the only kind of freedom compatible with the absolutist and hierarchical systems that prevailed in most German states. A strong state may even be congenial to such a conception of freedom, for authoritarianism imposes the discipline that enables people to gain freedom from materialistic desire and temptation. If freedom to walk on the grass, for example, illustrates the Western conception of freedom from government regulation or control, then not wanting to walk on the grass epitomized the German notion of what it means to be truly free. The Lutheran notions of inner freedom and subjection to moral law or self-induced subjection to external law perfectly complement the Lutheran requirement of absolute obedience to secular authority. There is an undeniably heroic quality in this conception of freedom as internalization of the law, which helps to explain the great creativity of German culture. The equation of heroic self-discipline with the highest form of freedom provided the ideological medium in which both high culture and militant destructiveness could flourish. But there are a couple of hitches. If we are free or capable of becoming free, then the future cannot be predicted. All of us, freely exercising our own volition, may at any moment do something wholly unpredictable. And what is true of each individual holds for the human race as a whole. And yet Rudolf Steiner claimed to know the future. Only when he looked as far out as our Vulcan lives yes, Vulcan did he clam up. But if we are free! And bear in mind, he said he was not making predictions "he KNEW whereof he spoke, due to his extraordinary psychic powers. This is both logically and factually impossible. If we are free! There is another, smaller hitch. Waldorf schools and Anthroposophists often attribute the quotation, above, to Rudolf Steiner. But the words are hers, not his. This is just another, small indication of the care you must take when hearing or reading statements made by Anthroposophists. Far too often, in large ways and small, Anthroposophists do not tell the truth. Then, at the right age, they will awaken their own free religious and moral sense, which becomes part of their very being. They feel that only this can make them fully human. The real aim at Waldorf schools is to raise free human beings who can direct their own lives. Still, a statement made by Marie should be attributed to Marie, not to Rudolf. When spokespeople for Waldorf schools say that their schools aim to foster human freedom, they are probably telling the truth as they understand it. What they may not understand is that their own beliefs and practices militate against the fostering of freedom. Note that Rudolf Steiner says that children will be harmed if they are not led to "moral and religious ideals" through "the life of feeling. For children to become "skeptics" would be a sad, even disastrous fate, according to the Waldorf view. So, far from seeking to give students true freedom "which would include the freedom to become skeptics, or agnostics, or even atheists "Waldorf schools try to steer their students into a religious frame of mind.

Chapter 9 : Rudolf Steiner Archive: Books GA TPoF

I think freedom of speech is the most important part when we try to see what the meaning behind freedom is. As we know, out there is a lot of people that are convicted because of their creative mind and even, some of them are buried just because the society cannot accept their way of expressing their feelings.