

FRANKFURT-TYPE EXAMPLES
FLICKERS AND
THE GUIDANCE CONTROL

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Abstract

This thesis critically investigates the so-called Frankfurt-type examples. Harry Frankfurt dramatically shaped the debates over freedom and responsibility. Frankfurt's 1969 paper "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility" purports to refute the principle that a person is morally responsible for what he has done only if he could have done otherwise. It offers a case in which, Frankfurt claims, the agent is morally responsible for an action even though he could not have done otherwise. One possible way to refute Frankfurt's approach is to argue that the prior sign of a decision (often called flicker) present in many Frankfurt-type examples demonstrates that there are alternatives in such cases and thus, Frankfurt fails to present the irrelevance of the principle of alternative possibilities. In contrast with this argument, a defender of the Frankfurt-type examples may argue that the prior sign (or the flicker) is insufficiently robust to constitute evidence for the possibility of an alternate decision, and therefore inadequate as a means of determining moral responsibility. Nevertheless, an independent objection against the Frankfurt-type compatibilism was developed by Michael Della Rocca by claiming that "the flicker thus guarantees that the action was not determined by external factors." (Della Rocca 1998) In order to evaluate Della Rocca's argument I present John Martin Fischer's view on controls. He thinks that the so-called *guidance control* is the kind of control needed to initiate or originate an action which explain the agent's responsibility in a Frankfurt-type example. By examining Della Rocca and Fischer's view I argue for two claims. First, I claim – according to the guidance control – that the agent has the possibility to (omit the action) not participate in action in a Frankfurt-type example, therefore he or she necessarily has the flicker of freedom. Second, I claim that the guidance control is not compatible with the concept of determinism.

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Introduction

There are various versions of determinism which hold that each event in the history of the universe is inevitable and *determined* either by the divine foreknowledge, causation or the laws of nature. The traditional debate about free will and determinism presupposes that moral responsibility, for what one does, requires the ability to do otherwise. However, many philosophers agree that if determinism is true, then no one ever could avoid acting otherwise than he or she in fact acts. Incompatibilists argue that in case of determinism, the free will is not possible. In contrast with this approach some compatibilists think that the ability to do otherwise is not required for moral responsibility. Intuitively, it does appear to be true that if an agent deserves credit or blame for his or her action, i.e. is morally responsible for it, then he or she could have done otherwise. A libertarian would say that I deserve blame for the fact that I did not send my paper on time, only if I could have sent it. Suppose that due to some external factors, which were not up to me, I did not send my paper because a storm damaged the Internet lines and I could not reach my e-mail box. One could argue for the claim that an alternative must be given in order to ascribe moral blame or credit. Therefore, in this case it is not reasonable to blame myself for not sending my paper.

It seems very natural to think that alternatives must be given in order to ascribe responsibility. In other words, how could anyone be morally responsible for an act that was not up to him or her? This intuition is expressed by a principle which is called *the principle of alternative possibilities* (sometimes PAP for short) formed by Harry G. Frankfurt (1969):

The principle of alternative possibilities:

A person is morally responsible for performing a given act A only if he could have done otherwise. (Frankfurt 1969: pp.)

Nevertheless, Frankfurt's central aim is to support compatibilism and challenge the relevance of this principle. If the principle of alternative possibilities turned out to be unnecessary for moral responsibility, then compatibilism would gain serious advantage against incompatibilism. So, Frankfurt introduced the so-called Frankfurt type-examples to undermine the principle of alternative possibilities and hence, incompatibilism.

In the following thesis I shall investigate the so-called *flicker of freedom* strategy. First, I will present the Frankfurt-type examples and second the flicker of freedom strategy will be considered. Then, I will examine two arguments for supporting the flicker-style criticism of the Frankfurt-type examples. While Kane and Widerker's objection, I think, can be solved, Della Rocca develops a very powerful objection against the Frankfurt-type compatibilism. Then, a few compatibilist's views will be demonstrated, which attempt to describe a Frankfurt case, in which there is no room for flickers. I will find that Hunt's example is the best candidate for challenging Della Rocca's criticism. However, I think neither Della Rocca nor Hunt can support his intuition beyond a reasonable doubt. In order to survey the problematic intuitions found in the Frankfurt cases I will present John Martin Fischer's analysis on controls. Fischer thinks that the so-called *guidance control* describes the notion that we apply in the Frankfurt cases. By examining the kind of control found in the Frankfurt cases, I claim that the guidance control is incompatible with determinism. Finally, I will argue for the claim that the flicker plays a serious role in ascribing moral responsibility in such examples.

Frankfurt Type-Examples

Frankfurt develops his attack against the principle of alternative possibilities by arguing for the irrelevance of the principle in term of responsibility. He concludes this principle plays no role in our moral assessments. Then in his argument Frankfurt proceeds further and he assumes that

determinism does not allow possibilities. However, it does not matter, since the principle of alternative possibilities is irrelevant for ascribing moral responsibility. Therefore, even if determinism is true, agents can be targets of responsibility.

Frankfurt's starting point is the following:

There may be circumstances in which a person performs some action which although they make it impossible for him to avoid performing that action, they in no way bring it about that he performs it. (Frankfurt 1969: pp. 830)

In the cases described above Frankfurt claims that agents are responsible, indeed. There are circumstances, by hypothesis, that had nothing to do with what one did, but ensured a certain consequence. Thus, agents would have acted in the same way even if those cases had not been obtained. Therefore, if there are such cases, the principle of alternative possibilities is not necessary for moral responsibility. The success of Frankfurt's approach depends on the establishment of such cases. Frankfurt presents the following example for his approach.

Suppose someone – Black, let us say – wants Jones to perform a certain action [kill a person]. Black is prepared to go to considerable length to get his way. But he prefers to avoid showing his hand unnecessarily. So he waits until Jones is about to make up his mind what to do, and he does nothing unless it is clear to him (Black is an excellent judge of such things) that Jones is going to decide to do something *other* than what he wants to do [kill White]. If it does become clear that Jones is going to decide something else, Black takes effective steps to ensure that Jones decides to do, and he does do, what he wants to do. Whatever Jones's initial preferences and inclinations, then, Black will have his way... [However] Now suppose that Black never has to show his hand because Jones, for reasons of his own, decides to perform and does perform the very action Black wants him to perform. (Frankfurt 1969: pp. 835)

Now, Frankfurt asks whether Jones is responsible for his act – even if he could not have avoided performing this action –namely to kill White for reasons of his own or not. There is

a strong intuitive appeal here to be inclined to blame Jones for his despicable act. Compatibilists argue that the reason why we do think that Jones is responsible in such Frankfurt cases is because, being the one who performed the action, Jones became a murderer by his own will and reasons. We blame someone because of his or her character. The fact that he or she is a kind of person who can perform despicable things, makes that person morally subject of judgement. Similarly, if someone is told to be a virtuous person, then it is his or her character, that motivates him or her to do virtuous acts. This line of thought can give an account for the intuition found in the Frankfurt cases. Accordingly, even if Jones was not in the position to avoid his act, he deserves moral blame since he is such an evil person who is able to kill. We judge his character in this case and take no relevance to the question whether there were alternatives open to him or not.

Let me present my Frankfurt type-example which simplifies the main idea of these cases. I prefer this one since, it does not require a foggy description of a scenario in which unknown psycho-physical events play a serious role, but my case suggests the main character of the Frankfurt type-examples in an easily graspable way. Imagine a corridor (after this call this we can call this example *corridor example*) in which there *are several open doors*. Along the corridor, there are three doors on the right and the left and there is another door at the end of the corridor. Now, suppose that Jones knows that the doors represent different consequences. By choosing a door, Jones makes a decision that some people outside of the corridor can realize and, according to Jones' choice, perform an action. For example, if he chooses the second door at the right then, by stepping through the door, he gives a sign to behead White. However, if Jones chooses the first door on the left, White will be shot by several guns. Furthermore, Jones knows that if he chooses the door at the end of the corridor, then White survives and in this way he can let White remain alive (only this door represents White's survival). Nevertheless, unbeknownst to Jones, Black is in a position to close the open doors anytime, if Jones shows a sign of making a murderous decision. So, if Jones tried to step to the direction of the second door on the right, then Black would close it

suddenly. Jones, nonetheless, chose the door at the end of the corridor for his own reasons, and thereby allowed White remain alive. He walked through the corridor confidently and he never gave any sign of doubt.

Is Jones responsible for White's survival? Most probably we would say that Jones deserves moral credit in this situation. Although there is a strong pressure to say that it was Jones' virtue that rescued White's life.

It is said that in the Frankfurt type-examples there are no alternatives, nevertheless an agent is responsible in such cases, according to our intuition. If it is so and the world is deterministic, which does not leave open alternatives for us, we may be still moral agents. If the principle of alternative possibilities is false, determinism does not undermine our responsibility and (semi) compatibilism achieves its goal (at least in terms of morality but not in the sense of *freedom*).

1. The Flicker of Freedom Strategy

1.1. Flickers as prior signs of the decision

Nonetheless, things are not as so easy as they seem. One possible incompatibilist answer to Frankfurt's strategy is to show that the example, by Frankfurt, fails to show the absolute lack of alternatives. A few incompatibilists claim that in the Frankfurt cases there are alternatives that are responsible for ascribing responsibility to Jones. This way of responding to Frankfurt's compatibilism is called the *flicker of freedom* strategy, and philosophers who argue in this way are called "flickerists."

In order to see the point of the *flicker strategy*, let us describe a Frankfurt scenario in a more precise way. I will mainly follow Eleonora Stump's example (1996: pp. 76-7.). Let us suppose that Jones is deliberating about whether to kill a certain person White at time t_3 . Suppose that a neurosurgeon Black again wants his patient Jones to kill White. Black has a certain neuro-

chip, let us describe it as the *neuroscope*, which correlates with acts of will on Jones' part. Through his neuroscope, Black ascertains that every time Jones wants to kill White, that act of his will correlates with the completion of a sequence of neural firings in Jones' brain; that always includes, near its beginning, the firing of neurons a, b, c (call this sequence 'K') at t2. On the other hand, Jones' willingness to let White remain alive is correlated with the completion of a different neural sequence that always includes, near its beginning, the firings of neurons x, y, z, none of which is the same as those in neural sequence K. (Call this neural sequence 'L') at t2. Moreover, suppose that Jones' only relevant options are an act of will to kill White or an act of letting alive. Then Black can tune his neuroscope accordingly. Whenever the neuroscope detects the firing of x, y and z, at t2, the initial neurons of sequence L, the neuroscope immediately interrupts the neural sequence so that it is not brought to completion. The neuroscope then activates the coercive neurological mechanism which fires the neurons of neural sequence K, which is correlated with the act of will to kill White. But if the neuroscope detects the firings of neurons a, b, and c, at t2, the initial neurons of sequence K, then the neuroscope does not interrupt and remain inactive in that sequence. Suppose Grey does not act to bring about the neural sequence L, but rather Jones wills to kill White by his own reasons without Black coercing him to do so.

In order to see the *flicker of freedom* strategy, first we have to note how the Frankfurt cases work. The action that the agent performs is not determined by anything external from the agent in the actual scenario. In the example, the fact that deprives Jones of his alternatives does not play any role in the current situation but it does in a counterfactual. Namely, if Jones had not willed to kill White, then the neuroscope would have intervened and brought about the intention to kill White. So, we can note that Frankfurt cases are examples of pre-emptive overdetermination.

Noting this makes it easy to see Fischer's (1994: pp. 159.) remark. Since Jones' choice is pre-emptively overdetermined, the neuroscope has to detect a prior sign that shows Jones' divergent initial intention to not kill White. In our previous example, the L – let White remain alive – sequence was the x, y and z pattern. Thus, the neuroscope can intervene when it detects the starting

“x” neural pattern. So, if the neuroscope would have detected the “x” neural pattern, then it would have overwritten “x” to the “a” pattern; subsequently bringing about “b”, and “c” brain states. Nevertheless, here is the knotty problem of the Frankfurt-type strategy, namely *the possibility of the “x” neural pattern seems not eliminable*. The possibility of the „x” pattern cannot be eliminated because the neuroscope may be able to intervene only after the presence of „x”. In other words, the neuroscope can act only if „x” appears, thus „x” is not eliminable.

This is exactly what the *flicker of freedom strategy* emphasizes; that in every Frankfurt example the alternative possibilities are not eliminated. Therefore, a flickerist argues that the example fails to show the irrelevance of the principle of alternative possibilities. So, a friend of the Frankfurt examples cannot maintain his or her central claim about responsibility and determinism. But a flickerist's argument does not stop here. He or she also assumes that we hold agents morally responsible in the Frankfurt examples, but not because of his or her reasons or character, as Frankfurt points out, but because of the very fact that Jones was in the position to try (to will to) not kill White; at least by actualizing the “x” brain state. The reason why we hold Jones responsible is because of the fact that he could have tried not to kill White, but he did not do so. It is argued that in every case in which we ascribe moral responsibility, alternatives must be given.

As I mentioned, the *flicker of freedom strategy* was labelled by Fischer. However, by basically assuming the success of the Frankfurt examples, he therefore attempts to answer his challenge. He realizes that even if the *flicker of freedom strategy* points out something interesting and surprising in the Frankfurt type examples, it does not mean that flickerists can undermine Frankfurt-type compatibilism. Fischer's (1994: pp. 134-47) main point is that the kind of alternatives found in the Frankfurt type examples are not robust enough to give an account for responsibility. How could such a tiny alternative be responsible for Jones' being blameworthy? It would be highly counterintuitive to say that some unconsciously firing nerves can ground the base of our moral assessments. When in Jones' brain the thought of not killing White was forming, was realized by some sort of neural pattern (“x”). The neuroscope could intervene in this level and

change the unconscious pattern of nerves (to "a" pattern). Thus, the unconscious "x" pattern can be identified as a preconscious pre-thought. This could be a bad feeling about the killing of White such as the blushing of his face. If we take this description about the flicker phenomena, then Fischer's point seems acceptable. Indeed, it would be strange to think that some unconscious neural event in Jones's brain makes him responsible for his act. Generally, we think that an agent is responsible for his or her act if he or she considers it carefully and makes a mental plan about it before it is performed. An agent can be morally responsible for this mental plan, but some random preconscious thought hardly can explain responsibility. The *flicker of freedom* strategy, Fischer says, does not account for this mental plan, but emphasizes a tiny alternative. Since the flicker is not sufficiently robust, it is too "flimsy and exiguous" to play a part in grounding moral responsibility.

1.2. Della Rocca's flicker type objection

As opposed to Fischer, Della Rocca defends the *flicker strategy*. He considers that Fischer's point is that the flickerist (for Frankfurt) needs to explain how the presence of the flickers (together, perhaps, with certain other features) can suffice for an agent's moral responsibility. From the presence of the *flicker of freedom* (the fact that Jones could have been about to decide not to kill White), Della Rocca claims that we can conclude that Jones' action was not determined by external factors. Thus Della Rocca draws the conclusion that „the flicker thus guarantees that the action was not determined by external factors.” (Della Rocca 1998: pp. 102)

I think Fischer nonetheless would not argue against the relevance of the lack of external determination, since he thinks the agent must act by his or her own reasons in order to ascribe him or her moral responsibility. Now, the question is whether the lack of external determination is possible in a flickerless case (if a flickerless case is possible at all) or not. I think Della Rocca advances too quickly here, when he claims that the – contingent – presence of a flicker establishes

the lack of the external determination and responsibility. I think it is not obvious at all. The fact that Jones could have at least tried to think in a different way in spite of the actual does not support undoubtedly that Jones was not determined externally. Since, a compatibilist, I think, may argue that an agent can be not determined by external factors in some hypothetical cases in which flickers are impossible and he or she acts by his or her own reasons. Nevertheless, if Della Rocca is right, and the lack of external determination requires flickers, then the Frankfurt type compatibilism is in trouble. Della Rocca's argument continues: An incompatibilist would certainly claim that this lack of external determination established by flickers is relevant to ascriptions of moral responsibility, no matter how robust a flicker is. Since a flickerist would claim that the lack of external determination logically depends on the flicker, the quantitative aspect of it does not count. If in these cases alternatives – flickers – need to be found, then the Frankfurt-type cases are not deterministic. If it is true and the Frankfurt-types examples are not deterministic, then there is a genuine asymmetry between the supposed deterministic world, in which there are no alternatives and the Frankfurt cases. As we mentioned above, Frankfurt first argues for the irrelevance of the principle of alternative possibilities and then he wishes to show responsibility in a deterministic world. However, if the Frankfurt cases are not deterministic, then they fail to show responsibility in deterministic circumstances – and the whole project seems to collapse (Remember, if we accept Fischer's robustness claim, then the relevance of the flicker is ruled out and flickers are considered not role playing factors in the Frankfurt type cases).

Della Rocca continues with that “since the incompatibilist denies the compatibility of moral responsibility and determinism, she would hold that the lack of external determination present in the flicker of freedom cases is relevant to, can help ground ascriptions of, moral responsibility.” (Della Rocca 1998: pp. 102.) Then, he thinks this line of thought begins with the assumption that moral responsibility and determinism are incompatible. Della Rocca assumes it is a question begging argument. Although it may seem useless against compatibilism, Della Rocca also claims that, this answer to the flickerist's challenge can be applied against Fischer, as well. Since,

Fischer would need to provide an independent reason for denying that the lack of external determination can help ground moral responsibility. “Fischer cannot simply deny without argument that the lack of external determination is a ground for the ascription of moral responsibility, for he would then be denying without argument what we have seen to be a key aspect of the incompatibilist’s position” (Della Rocca 1998: pp. 103)

I think Della Rocca is wrong here since, according to my reading of the Frankfurt cases, Fischer and any Frankfurt-type compatibilist would agree with the claim that the lack of external determinism plays a role in the Frankfurt cases. Note that Frankfurt himself writes “[cases] make it impossible for him to avoid performing that action, *they [cases] in no way bring it about that he performs it.*” [italic added] (Frankfurt 1969, 830, 837) Because of this character of the Frankfurt type examples one can say that an agent is responsible for his or her action because he or she did it by his or her own reasons and was not externally determined. The main idea of this type of compatibilism relies on the acceptance of the lack of external determination, because with this in his or her mind, a friend of the Frankfurt type compatibilism can emphasize the so-called *sourcehood* in the Frankfurt examples rather than the relevance of the alternatives. However, as I noted earlier, a flickerist can argue that the lack of external determination requires flickers, and hereby, he can maintain that the Frankfurt cases are not deterministic. Therefore, the Frankfurt cases do not fit to the picture of a completely determined universe.

1.3 Kane and Widerker’s flicker type objection

Let me present another criticism of the Frankfurt examples based on the flicker phenomena. First Robert Kane (1996: pp. 142–4, 191–2.), then David Widerker (1995: pp. 247–61;) raised an interesting kind of objection against Frankfurt type of arguments (A close relative has been advanced by Carl Ginet, which we will consider later). The general form of the Kane/Widerker objection is the following: the world in which a Frankfurt scenario is set up is either deterministic or

indeterministic. Thus, in any Frankfurt-style case if on the one hand one assumes causal determinism, the libertarian (unsurprisingly) will deny that the agent is responsible by saying that the presence of – let us say Black – does not make the decision of not killing White impossible, since the alternative of letting White remain alive has been ruled out by determinism. If, on the other hand, we take the second option and claim that libertarian indeterminism is presupposed, an effective Frankfurt-style scenario cannot be conceived. In Frankfurt-type cases, the actual situation always features a prior sign (the flicker) by which the intervener can know that the agent will perform the action he does, it signals the fact that intervention is not necessary. If we assume that a Frankfurt scenario happens in an indeterministic world, then the sign cannot causally determine the action and the intervener's predictive ability cannot be explained. A libertarian can say that in an indeterministic world after the intervention, Black cannot ensure that Jones will not change the decision of killing White. If the world is indeterministic, then the presence of an intervener does not make any action unavoidable. If the relationship between the sign and the action is not causally deterministic in such ways, then the libertarian can claim that the agent could have done otherwise despite the occurrence of the prior sign. Therefore, whether the world is deterministic or indeterministic, the Frankfurt type-examples do not reach their goals.

This line of thought seems to provide a very powerful objection against the Frankfurt type-strategy. However, I think some room can be made for the Frankfurt type-examples. If I were a friend of the Frankfurt cases, then I would say that it is a mistake to put these cases either in a deterministic or indeterministic world; since Frankfurt argues in two steps in short. First, he argues against the relevance of the principle of alternative possibilities. Second, after his conclusion of the irrelevance of the principle, he applies his account of responsibility (which does not require the principle of alternative possibilities) to a deterministic world. According to my reading, at the first step he tests our everyday notion of responsibility. In this first stage of the argument he does not appeal to any well-established philosophical description of the world. Simply, Frankfurt only assumes the agent is *free* in our very ordinary and not philosophically developed sense without any

consideration of the metaphysical structure of the world in which the case happens. (Note that I do not claim that Frankfurt's conclusion is the agent's arbitrary freedom. I only intend to say – according to my reading – Frankfurt assumes the agent's freedom when he considers his examples) Frankfurt does it so since he wants to tell something about our moral intuition. According to him, moral agency does not require the ability to do anything, contrary to the actual, otherwise conceived a circumstance, in which the agent enjoys arbitrary freedom. Since, Frankfurt thinks the principle of alternative possibilities is not connected to our everyday moral practice, he can claim that – and it is the second step – moral responsibility is compatible with determinism. After these two steps he can conclude that “It seems conceivable that it should be causally determined that a person is *free* [italic added] to want what he wants to want. If this is conceivable, then it might be causally determined that a person enjoys a free will” (Frankfurt 1971: pp. 20.) Kane and Widerker's critique, then, fails to recognize these two independent steps in his argument and they confuse them.

Let me introduce a Frankfurt type-example that stands the proof of Kane and Widerker's challenge; call this example the Cartesian Frankfurt-example. Let us consider the following case: Imagine a world, which is built up by *Res Cogitans* and *Res Extensa*, according to Descartes' picture about the universe. Now, in this case Black also implants a neuroscope in Jones' brain, but this time his brain is just a corporal substance, which works deterministically. Nevertheless, Jones' brain is governed by his *Res Cogitnas* through his *pineal gland* found in his brain. The *Res Cognitas* is free in its pure sense. After this, our case is a regular Frankfurt example. Accordingly, if it does become clear that Jones is going to decide something else, Black takes effective steps to ensure that Jones decides to do by his neuroscope, and he does do, what he wants to do. Now suppose that Black never has to show his hand because Jones, for reasons of his own, decides to perform and does the very action Black wants him to perform. Is Jones responsible in this Cartesian Frankfurt-example? Many of us would say yes, he is!

There are two advantages in this example. First, no one can deny the agent's freedom in this case. Kane and Widerker claimed that if the world in which the Frankfurt scenario takes place is

deterministic, then the agent cannot be responsible. However, this kind of objection cannot be taken into account this case since the *Res Cognitas* is genuinely *free*. Second, Black's power to ensure the killing of White cannot be questioned either. Kane and Widerker think that even if Black had intervened, then he could not have ensured Jones' decision of killing White in an indeterministic world. But now, since the corporal segment of the world is deterministic, this is not a problem anymore. Bear in mind that all I need is a conceptually possible scenario (accepting Descartes' consistency here), in which Frankfurt's aim can be presented, while Kane and Widerker's objection does not hold. And this, certainly looks like one. So, I think the sort of criticism they propose can be bypassed.

Even if the Kane and Widerker's objection does not stand, Della Rocca's criticism appears to provide a very powerful counterargument against the Frankfurt type-examples. In order to avoid this difficulty, some compatibilist philosophers have attempted to present Frankfurt type-examples in which the contingent presence of the flicker is eliminated but the presence of the external determination is presented. In the following part I will present a few Frankfurt-type cases for this project.

2. Eliminating Flickers

Before I present the new type of Frankfurt example it is important to highlight the conditions that are supposed to be satisfied. First and foremost, (i.) the agent needs to be morally responsible in the revised Frankfurt type-examples, as well. Second, (ii.) the agent needs to perform his or her act by his or her own reasons. Third, (iii.) he or she is not supposed to be externally forced to act – the lack of external determination. Then, (iv.) his or her action needs to be unavoidable for him or her. Finally, (v.) the possibility of flickers needs to be eliminated.

2.1. Hunt's strategy

Now, let us consider our first example for eliminating flickers. David Hunt (2000. pp. 207-8.) presented a scenario, that is constructed in a way so that the presence of flickers are impossible. This strategy of answering to the flickerists' challenge is often called the „blockage”. Let us imagine two situations.

Situation A. Ms Scarlet deliberately chooses to kill Colonel Mustard at t_1 , and there are no factors beyond her control that deterministically produce her choice. When she chooses to kill the Colonel, she could have chosen not to kill him. There are no causal factors that would prevent her from not making the choice to kill Colonel Mustard. In these circumstances, Ms Scarlet could be morally responsible for her choice. But then, against an alternative possibilities principle, one might employ a counterfactual version of this situation:

Situation B. Ms Scarlet's choice to kill Colonel Mustard has precisely the same actual causal history as in A. But before she even started to think about killing Colonel Mustard, a neurophysiologist had blocked all the neural pathways not used in Situation A; so *that no neural pathway other than the one employed in that situation could be used* [italics added]. Let us suppose that it is causally determined that she remains a living agent, and if she remains a living agent, some neural pathway has to be used. Thus every alternative for Ms Scarlet is blocked except the one that realizes her choice to kill the Colonel. But the blockage does not affect the actual causal history of Ms Scarlet's choice, because the blocked pathways would have remained dormant. (Pereboom 2001: pp.16.)

Now, let us consider the given conditions mentioned above. This example is designed for the purpose of eliminating flickers and it certainly satisfies the condition (v.). But, Fischer asks: "Could neural events bump up against, so to speak, the blockage?" (Fischer 1999: pp. 119.) It can be shown that this question is meaningless, since on the neural level there is nothing amongst nerves that could run against this blockage nor it does seem plausible to say that there is. A question however arises: If Ms Scarlet cannot bump up against the blockage (since there is nothing that could

run against it), does it seem as though the neural events are causally determined by virtue of the blockage? If it is true that the blockage constrains Ms Scarlet to kill Colonel Mustard, then (conditions (ii.) and (iii.) are false and) she was forced to act and she is not responsible.

However, one could say that in this case Ms Scarlet was situated in the very same way as Jones by saying that in the actual scenario neither of them was in fact influenced or constrained. Ms Scarlet killed the Colonel by her own reasons. Even if she could not even think of not killing Colonel, she was the one who had the reasons to kill and she was the one who performed the action by her own reasons. This, then would satisfy the condition (ii.). A compatibilist would say Ms Scarlet had her own reasons to kill Colonel Mustard as Jones had in his case. If the condition (ii.) is satisfied in this example, it follows that Ms Scarlet was not externally determined to kill. The condition (v.) is also satisfied, since this state of affair left her no alternatives except to kill, (since the action is not pre-emptively overdetermined, flickers are not possible in this situation).

Nonetheless, the cogency of this example may be less convincing than it was in the original Frankfurt type-case. Some libertarians can find this example not intuitive at all by saying that in a way Ms Scarlet was forced to kill. Indeed, it is a question whether Ms Scarlet was forced to kill Colonel Mustard or not. On the one hand, she killed him by her own reasons on the other hand, she could not even think about anything else except for the killing. The (iii.) condition is still the matter at hand. In this blockage case, the question is whether we can talk about the lack of external determination or not. Is Ms Scarlet externally determined? Bear in mind Della Rocca's point which says that we cannot give an account for the lack of external determination which plays a crucial role in the Frankfurt type-cases without referring to flickers. I do not claim he is right, but certainly it is a question whether we can talk about the lack of external determination in a flickerless case or not. At this point, it is difficult to evaluate this example. But let me translate Hunt's example to my corridor example.

Suppose Ms Scarlet is standing in a corridor, but in this case there is only one door at the end of the corridor, that represents her intention to kill Colonel Mustard. Nevertheless, she is going

through the corridor and hereby she is killing him. She is doing so by her own reasons. Is she responsible for killing? Maybe for some it is intuitive to say that she is responsible but certainly not for everyone. A compatibilist would stress the claim that Ms Scarlet was the one who went through the corridor and nothing forced her to do so. She performed this action, and hereby she is responsible. Moreover, a compatibilist would argue that Ms Scarlet had no any (flicker-type) alternative possibility in this case, but she is responsible for performing her action by her own reasons. Therefore, he or she may conclude that the flicker fails to establish the lack of external determination. Nevertheless, I think both Della Rocca's and the just presented arguments are compelling ones and have some intuitive appeal indeed. But, in order to judge this case we need to take the question whether Ms Scarlet had any (kind of) control over this action or not. If she had, then the condition (iii.) is satisfied and, she was not forced to kill, hereby she is responsible. However, if she had no control over this event, then she is not responsible obviously.

But, put this control issue aside, we are going to talk about it more in detail a bit later. Now, let us consider an other way of solving the flicker problem.

2.2. Pereboom's strategy

Derek Pereboom argues against the relevance of the flicker by saying that even if the flicker is given, it does not help to avoid responsibility.

Joe is considering whether to claim a tax deduction for the substantial local registration fee that he paid when he bought a house. He knows that claiming the deduction is illegal, that he probably won't be caught, and that if he is, he can convincingly plead ignorance. Suppose he has a very powerful but not always overriding desire to advance his self-interest no matter what the cost to others, and no matter whether advancing his self-interest involves illegal activity.

Furthermore, he is a *libertarian free agent*. [italic added¹] Crucially, his psychology is such that

¹ Note that Pereboom assumes the agent's freedom in his example. He argues for this move in his book (2001) because of the same reason described in my Cartesian Frankfurt-example, namely, in order to avoid the Kane and Widerker type objection.

the only way that in this situation he could fail to choose to evade taxes is for moral reasons. His psychology is not, for example, such that he could fail to choose to evade taxes for no reason or simply on a whim. In fact, it is causally necessary for his failing to choose to evade taxes in this situation that a moral reason occur to him with a certain force. A moral reason can occur to him with that force either involuntarily or as a result of his voluntary activity. *However, a moral reason occurring to him with such force is not causally sufficient for his failing to choose to evade taxes. If a moral reason were to occur to him with that force, Joe could, with the his **libertarian free will** [bold added], either choose to act on it or refrain from doing so [italic added] (without the intervener's device in place).* But to ensure that he chooses to evade taxes, a neuroscientist now implants a device which, were it to sense a moral reason occurring with the specified force, would electronically stimulate his brain so that he would choose to evade taxes. In actual fact, no moral reason occurs to him with such force, and he chooses to evade taxes while the device remains idle. (Pereboom 2001: pp. 19)

First this example seems a regular Frankfurt type-case in which (i.) the agent is responsible. (ii.) Joe performed his action according to his psychology or in other words by his own reasons. (iii.) He is not forced to evade the tax in the actual scenario. (iv.) the presence of a neuroscope makes it impossible for him to fail to choose to evade taxes. Nevertheless, Pereboom's example does not try to eliminate the possible presence of flickers, but he argues for the irrelevance of the flicker for ascribing responsibility in the Frankfurt cases. Hereby, Pereboom's argument wishes to support Fischer's robustness claim. A flickerist usually emphasizes that, in a Frankfurt example, the agent is responsible since he or she did not even try to avoid the action in question; however, he or she was in the position to attempt it, at least. In other words, if an agent had tried to avoid his or her actual action, a flickerist argues, he or she would have been exempted from responsibility. In a regular Frankfurt case in which the flicker could be placed, a flickerist usually argues that the agent is responsible for his or her act because he or she did not even try not to perform the despicable action. Pereboom's example allows the presence of flickers (contrary to Hunt's example), but the prior sign in this case is not sufficiently robust for his failing to choose to evade taxes. This Frankfurt type-case allows for the flickerist to say that the agent could try to

avoid to evade taxes. But even if Joe makes a reason to pay the tax, it does not imply that he will fail to choose to evade taxes. In case a flickerist is right and some contingent flickers were to play a role in explaining an agent's moral responsibility, then Joe would have avoided the responsibility he has for his evading taxes, if he had attempted to make moral reasons to pay. Nonetheless, we know, according to the design of this example, that it is possible that Joe makes his moral reasons to pay taxes – it is the flicker in this case –, but finally he evades taxes. Therefore, even if Joe had made a reason, for paying the tax occurs to him with a certain force, he would have been responsible for evading taxes. Pereboom's example, then, shows that even if a flicker is given in the counterfactual scenario, it does not exempt the agent from responsibility. The flicker, then cannot explain the agent's responsibility by saying that he or she is responsible because he or she did not even try to avoid the action in question. Thus, this analysis of the Frankfurt example certainly supports Fischer's robustness objection and emphasizes Joe's despicable psychological character as the ground of responsibility.

However, I think Pereboom's example cannot handle Della Rocca's objection. Recall Della Rocca's argument which states in short that the lack of external determination requires the possible presence of flickers. The agent may be responsible because of the lack of external determination in the Frankfurt type-cases, which is ensured by the possibility of the flicker. It is quite clear that flickers are impossible in a deterministic universe. Therefore, in a deterministic universe the lack of external determination is not possible; thus there is no responsibility there. Pereboom's example allows the possible presence of flickers and hereby he argued, I think successfully, against their robustness. However, Pereboom did not argue for the claim that without flickers a compatibilist can maintain the lack of external determination in the Frankfurt type-examples. I think Della Rocca may be able to criticize Pereboom's example by saying that flickers may not allow for the flickerist to say that the agent is responsible, if he or she did not even try to avoid his or her action in question, but flickers do ensure the lack of external determination, which is crucial for the cogency of the Frankfurt cases. Pereboom's example, I think, cannot answer the difficulty, which was raised

by Della Rocca, since Pereboom's examples assume the possible presence of the flicker. A flickerist can maintain that the reason why the agent is responsible in Pereboom's example is due to of the lack of external determination, which is given by the flicker. So, even if the robustness claim is supported by Pereboom's example, Della Rocca's objection still holds.

2.3. Ginet's objection

Ginet thinks that if a defender of Frankfurt's argument wishes to answer to the *flicker of freedom* strategy, then he or she needs to modify the cases in the following way: Black sets the neuroscope up again that works almost similarly as I described above, but now it would cause Jones's doing B by t3 if Jones has not already done B by some deadline t2. Thus we know that if the neuroscope had been triggered at t2, it would have causally necessitated Jones' doing B by t3 in such a way as to render Jones unable to avoid doing B by t3, unbeknownst to Jones. Of course, if Jones does B at t1 before t2, the neuroscope is not triggered. In some respects, there are (flicker-type) alternatives in this case, but only between t0 and t2. But, Jones cannot avoid doing B by t3 in this example either. Suppose, moreover, that Jones did B at t1. Is Jones responsible for doing B at t1? Now, consider our conditions in this case. Well, (i.) the agent seems responsible. Second, (ii.) Jones performed it by his own reasons. Third, (iii.) he was not forced to do B at t1, and (iv.) doing B was unavoidable for Jones. Let us consider on flickers. At t1 Jones has many alternatives to do A, B, C etc., so at that time he had, so to speak, flickers. However, looking to the overall scenario it is certain that he had no other alternatives because of (iv.).

Ginet constructs this example in order to emphasize that Jones is certainly responsible for doing B at the precise time at which he did it (t1) when he had alternatives (and hereby, flickers), but not for doing B by t3. Ginet thinks the reason why we do think Jones is responsible in this case is because at t1 he had alternatives in that time. Thus, he comes up with three statements accordingly, (1.) even though Jones did B at t1 in the actual way of events, he cannot be morally

responsible for doing B after t_2 because of the unavoidable intervention of Black. Thus between t_2 and t_3 he is not responsible.(2.) In a case like this, he thinks Jones can have responsibility only between t_0 and t_2 . (3.) Ginet, moreover, denies Jones' responsibility for its being the case that he does B by t_3 . Frankfurt's intuition would be now that Jones is responsible for it, since Jones does B by t_3 on his own without intervention of Black's neuroscope and would have done B by t_3 in the same way for the same reason, even if the neuro-chip had not been there. However, according to Ginet, since Jones is without alternatives during the whole process between t_0 and t_3 , Jones cannot be responsible. Now, (1.) and (3.) seem contradictory. The root of the difficulty lies in the fact that t_1 is part of the interval between t_1 and t_3 . One might ask how it is possible that Jones is responsible for doing B at t_1 , but not by t_3 ? Ginet, however, has an answer to this question: "My intuition is that Jones is not responsible for the obtaining of the temporally less specific state of affairs, because, owing to the presence of Black's mechanism [neuroscope], Jones could not have avoided it [doing B by t_3], but he may be responsible for the obtaining of the temporally more specific state of affairs, which he could have avoided." (Ginet 1996: pp. 406.) Then, he explains this by an analogy, "I am, for example, for I am being now in the particular room I'm in but I am not responsible for my being now in within a one-million-mile radius of the center of the world." (Ginet 1996: pp. 406.) He has no alternative for his being out of a one-million-mile radius of the center of the world, thus he is not responsible for his being within it. But, he has an alternative for being out of the room, thus he can be responsible for staying in it. So, an agent may be responsible for obtaining spatiotemporally more specific situations, over which he or she has alternatives. In other words, If I killed a person yesterday, I am responsible for killing him tomorrow (and today as well), but I am not responsible for his being dead hundred years after his death, since he would be dead unavoidably in 2111, (since I have no alternative to the fact that he is dead in 2111).

I think I have a good reason why I do not find Ginet's argument convincing. According to my intuitions, I am not convinced at all that between t_0 and t_3 Jones is not responsible. In the actual scenario Jones killed White at t_1 , and after the murder (t_1) it was necessary for Jones to be a

murderer (in both the actual and the counterfactual stories, as well) from t_2 to t_3 . But, why would we think that he is not responsible between t_2 and t_3 , if at t_1 he was the one who killed White by his own reasons? Perhaps, we do have reasons to blame Jones between t_0 and t_3 . Consider the following example to see this. Suppose there is a person Bill, who suffers from a fatal disease and his doctors give him maximum five days so they predict Bill will be dead on Friday certainly (They are excellent judges of such things). Now on Monday, Carl, the greatest enemy of Bill, kills Bill with a gun. Within these 5 days Carl is certainly responsible. But, do we think that Carl is not responsible after Friday? (Note that after Friday Bill is dead anyway) Ginet would deny Carl's responsibility after Friday. Nonetheless, I think, many of us would blame Carl if we consider the following. Suppose, moreover, that Carl's action was revealed and he was kept by a detective on Sunday. Now he is before² a trial at the courthouse. Carl's lawyer builds the defense of Carl on Ginet's way of thought by saying that Bill would be dead after Friday anyway. Since the legal action is now a week after Bill's death, Jones cannot be responsible for Bill being dead according to the defense. However, the crown lawyer argues that no matter whether Bill would be alive in this moment or not if Carl had not killed him, but Carl is a person who is able to kill. The crown lawyer builds her argument on Carl's psychological character and emphasizes that Carl needs to be imprisoned and separated from society. Here is my question, which argument seems to be more convincing, the lawyer's defense or the crown lawyer's accusation? Well, as far as I am concerned, my intuitions would be on the side of the crown lawyer. If we accept the crown lawyer's argument, then Ginet's case and hereby, his argument can be bypassed.

2.4. Mele and Rob's strategy

Now, let us consider the next example, which attempts to reply to *the flicker of freedom strategy* as well. Mele and Rob (1998: pp. 101-2.) offer an other alternative Frankfurt type-case.

² If you wish to morally specify this example instead of a trial, imagine God as the judge of this situation.

At t1, Black initiates a certain deterministic process P in Bob's brain with the intention of thereby causing Bob to decide at t2 (an hour later, say) to steal Ann's car. The process, which is screened off from Bob's consciousness, will deterministically culminate in Bob's deciding at t2 to steal Ann's car unless he decides on his own to steal it or is incapable at t2 of making a decision (because, e.g., he is dead at t2). (Black is unaware that it is open to Bob to decide on his own at t2 to steal the car; he is confident that P will cause Bob to decide as he wants Bob to decide.) The process is in no way sensitive to any "sign" [flicker] of what Bob will decide. As it happens, at t2 *Bob decides on his own to steal the car, on the basis of his own indeterministic deliberation about whether to steal it, and his decision has no deterministic cause.* [italic added] But if he had not just then decided on his own to steal it, P would have deterministically issued, at t2, in his deciding to steal it. Rest assured that P in no way influences the indeterministic decision-making process that actually issues in Bob's decision. (Mele and Rob 1998: pp. 101-2.)

Bob seems morally responsible (i.) for his decision to steal Ann's car. The reason why we do think Bob is responsible is because he decided to steal by his own reasons with no interference from P. So, (ii.) condition is satisfied. Black's presence ensures that (iv.) Bob had no other alternative and could not have done otherwise, than decide to steal Ann's car. Nevertheless, Bob's decision to steal Ann's car is not pre-emptively overdetermined, therefore (v.) the contingent presence of the flicker is eliminated in this example. (So we can say that Mele and Rob's example resembles Hunt's case.) Nevertheless, as we noted earlier, in Hunt's example the third condition (iii.) namely, the agent is not supposed to be externally forced to act – the lack of external determination, caused the problem. But, if the condition (iii.) is not satisfied, then the condition (ii.) is neither. Thus, one can ask how it can happen that Bob decides on his own at t2 to steal the car, and that P does not produce the decision, given what we said about P. Mele and Rob reply to this by saying that according to this state of affairs, Bob is physically and psychologically so constituted that if an unconscious deterministic process in his brain and an indeterministic decision-making process of his were to "coincide" at the moment of decision, he would indeterministically decide on his own and thus the deterministic process would have no effect on his decision. In other words, the neuroscope in his brain and his reasons overdetermine his

decision to steal Ann's car at the very moment of t_2 in the actual scenario. If it is so, then both the (ii.) and the (iii.) conditions are satisfied.

Let me translate Mele and Rob's example to my corridor example again. Imagine a corridor with several doors on the right and the left and there is another door at the end of the corridor. As I described earlier, different doors represent different outcomes known by Bob. Now, there are two differences in this example. First of all, we know that at the very moment of t_2 Bob will go through one of the doors. The second difference is that Black, who hides from Bob, has a teleportation device. Black sets up this fanciful machine to teleport Bob, no matter where he is located in the corridor, just before t_2 to that door which represents the intention of stealing Ann's car at the very moment of t_2 anyway (Thus, for Bob it is unavoidable to be at the 'stealing door' at t_2). Nevertheless, Bob is going through the corridor and choosing the car stealing door by his own reasons. Moreover, when he arrives to the door close in time to t_2 the teleportation machine, simultaneously with his step to the car stealing door, teleports him to the door in question at t_2 .

Certainly, Mele and Rob's case seems a tempting one for challenging Della Rocca's argument, which holds the lack of external determination requires the contingent presence of the flicker. They claim that in their example, the contingent presence of the flicker is not possible. They describe the counterfactual story in which Bob's indeterministic deliberative process – „process x” – was to „diverge” from the intention of not stealing Ann's car;

... if, at t_2 , P were to hit N1 [the intention of stealing] and x [the indeterministic deliberating process] were to hit N2 [the intention of not stealing], P would prevail [and] ... P would light up N1 and the indeterministic process would not light up N2. ... By t_2 P has neutralized all of the nodes in Bob for decisions that are contrary to a decision at t_2 to steal Ann's car (for example, a decision at t_2 not to steal anyone's car and a decision at t_2 never to steal anything). In convenient shorthand, by t_2 P has neutralized N2 and all its 'cognate decision nodes.' [italic added] (Mele and Rob 1998: pp. 104-5.)

So then, if we take the counterfactual scenario, in which Bob has a divergent intention, Mele and

Rob's example transforms to Hunt's example. As I emphasized earlier, Hunt's Frankfurt case may be right and may prove an example in which an agent is not determined externally without any reference to the flicker. However, it does not support the Frankfurt type compatibilism undoubtedly, since an incompatibilist can maintain his position by claiming that if the deterministic process P in Mele and Rob's example (or the neuroscope found in Hunt's case) neutralizes all of the nodes in Bob, then Bob is simply externally overdetermined. Thus, an agent lacks his or her external determination if he or she possesses the *flicker of freedom*. As I noted above, a compatibilist may disagree with this by stressing the fact that the agent was the one, who performed the action in question. In order for a compatibilist to be able to argue for this line of thought, he or she has the burden of the proof of a (notion of) control found in the Frankfurt type-examples. Namely, if the agent has some sort of control over his or her actions (even if he or she has no flickers to try to start decide differently), then he or she is responsible even in a flickerless example. John M. Fischer developed a theory for describing the notion of control, which plays a key role in the Frankfurt type-examples.

Before I would examine Fischer's account of controls, let us summarize what has been discussed in the last two chapters. First we have seen that the *flicker of freedom* strategy argue for the claim that the presence of a counterfactual intervener does not rule out all of the alternatives. Opponents of the Frankfurt type-examples can argue for two claims against this version of compatibilism. Accordingly, on the one hand, the mere – contingent – presence of the flicker undermines the analogy between the Frankfurt cases and a completely determined universe. Fischer, nevertheless, replies to this objection by saying that the flicker may appear in these cases, but it is not sufficiently *robust* and too “flimsy and exiguous” to play a part in grounding moral responsibility. I think the robustness reply is successful and was also supported by Pereboom's example as we have seen it before. On the other hand, Della Rocca weighed in with an argument by claiming that the flicker ensures the lack of external determination; the agent would be

determined externally without the – contingent – presence of the flicker. First Hunt and finally Mele and Rob presented examples to demonstrate a case in which the agent is not externally determined rather with any possible alternative of any size (including flickers) being perfectly excluded. Nevertheless, I think only Hunt's (and similarly with Mele and Rob's) example can be a candidate for describing such a flickerless scenario. Unfortunately, Hunt's example cannot convince everyone about the success of the Frankfurt strategy. Hereby, we arrived to the puzzling question whether an agent for a Hunt type Frankfurt case is responsible or not. If an agent has some sort of control in this Hunt type case, then he or she is not determined externally to kill Colonel Mustard. Thus not being externally determined does not require flickers. A certain kind of control needs to be applied here. This would explain how an act can be up to the agent and nonetheless, he or she is not determined by external factors.

3. The Regulative and The Guidance Control

All of us would agree with the claim that if one has some control over an action or an event, then it is up to him or her. He or she, then, is in the position to exercise some sort of influence over the action or event in question. Furthermore, we also share the idea that moral responsibility requires the ability to have some sort of control. Thus, an agent is morally responsible if and only if the action or event is up to him or her. So, a friend of the Frankfurt type-cases needs to give an account for a concept of control, which explains why an agent would be morally responsible in these cases. This is very crucial for the success of the Frankfurt type compatibilism, since without no one can be chiefly in the Frankfurt examples. John Martin Fischer developed a case to exemplify a very fundamental difference between two controls that we can have. He differentiates the so-called *regulative-* and *guidance- control* and claims that the regulative control requires alternative possibilities open for the agent, but the guidance control is the kind of control needed to initiate or originate an action. By being “reasons responsive” and

taking ownership of the action, we mean that the agent could say the action was “up to me”.

Fischer presents the difference between these controls by the following example:

Let's say you are driving your car and it is functioning normally. You want to go to the coffee house, so you guide the car to the right (into the parking lot for the coffee house). ... Here you have a certain distinctive kind of control of the car's movements – you have “guidance control” of the car's going to the right. This is more than mere causation or even causal determination. ... I[i]magine that the car's steering apparatus is not broken, you had it in your power (just prior to your actual decision to turn to the right) to continue going straight ahead, ... That is, although you exercise guidance control in turning the car to the right, you presumably possessed freedom to choose and do otherwise: you had “regulative control” over the car's movements. In the normal case, we assume that agents have both guidance and regulative control. Whereas these two sorts of control are typically presumed to go together, they can be prized apart. Suppose that everything is as above, but that the steering apparatus of your car is broken in such a way that, *if you had tried to guide the car in any direction other than the one in which you actually guide it, it would have gone to the right anyway – in just the trajectory it actually travelled* [italic added.]. The defect in the steering apparatus plays no role in the actual sequence of events, but it would have played a role in the alternative. Given this sort of pre-emptive overdetermination, although you exhibit guidance control of the car's going to the right, you do not have regulative control over the car's movements: it would have gone in precisely the same way, no matter what you were to choose or try. (Fischer, Kane Pereboom and Vargas 2007: pp.56)

Now, suppose you chose a one way traffic road to approach the coffee house and thus, a(n other) car suddenly appeared in front of your car, since you were on the wrong track. You, then, unfortunately crashed both cars. Are you responsible for making this accident, even if – let us suppose – the steering apparatus was broken? I think almost all of us would agree with your responsibility. We can blame you by asking why you had this wanton reason to (guide your car to the wrong direction and) push the accelerator pedal. In this case you did not have (action-type) alternative possibilities,

but you are certainly responsible. Nonetheless, we have already assumed that one is morally responsible if and only if he or she has some sort of control over the action or the event in question. Thus, in this example some sort of control had to be presented in order to ascribe responsibility for you. Therefore, there must be a kind of control, which does not require alternatives, according to Fischer's example. Note that, this latter case is a version of a Hunt-type example, since the movement of the car is not pre-emptively overdetermined (The case is not that, if you had not tried to go against the other, then an apparatus in your car would have intervened and brought the accident about by breaking the steering apparatus of your car. But even if it had happened, then you would have started to avoid the accident.) The steering apparatus of the car was wrong all along in this situation. There is no – contingent – place for the flicker in this example. If Fischer is right here, then he could give an account for a control that explains what kind of control we can have in a determined world (without possible alternatives) and how we have responsibility there.

The idea behind the guidance control can be described by a well-known device from western movies. I think the *handcart* best describes the role that the guidance control plays. Since someone rides on a handcart, he or she has no alternatives, because the device is on the track. However, the agent is the one, who pumps it and puts the handcart in motion. In other words, on the handcart the agent is the one who actualizes the movement of the handcart and he or she originates an action, by being "reasons responsive" and taking ownership of the action, meaning the agent can say the action was "up to me". Hereby, we can ask him – as we did in Fischer's case – 'why you had this wanton reason to put your car in motion'. Then, he or she may reply by saying that 'I thought it would be fun to put this device in motion'. In the case of guidance control an agent actively participates in actualizing the action or the event.

I claim – according to the guidance control – that the agent has the possibility to (omit the action) not participate in action in situations like this. In both Fischer's example and in the handcart case, agents had the chance to fail to perform the action in question. Fischer's driver could have failed to push the accelerator pedal even if he could not guide the car to an other direction. The

handcart rider also could fail to pump it, even if she was on the track. I think that we hold them responsible for voluntarily participating in the action. Even if they did not have possible alternatives (because of the broken steering apparatus and the track) in terms of action, they did have the possibility not to perform their actions (if they had had different reasons). The reason why we hold them responsible is for the fact that they could have (done otherwise) failed to have the wrong reason, even if they voluntarily completed the action. The agent can decide whether to participate in the action or not, according to what the guidance control implies. Consequently, the guidance control necessarily allows the possibility of omissions.

Therefore, I can claim that the guidance control is not compatible with the concept of determinism. It is obvious that if determinism is true, then there are no alternatives at all. More precisely, in case of determinism the agent necessarily participates in actions and events necessitated by the past and the laws of nature. However, guidance control allows the possibility of omission. Consequently, agents cannot have guidance control in a deterministic world. Fischer wishes to give an account for a control that establishes moral responsibility in deterministic worlds. However, I do not see how any kind of control can be established if determinism is true and the governing facts, namely the past and the laws of nature, are not up to the agent by definition.

Still, how does it relate to Della Rocca's objection and the Hunt-type examples? To see this, let us specify Hunt's example in the way that eliminates agents from having all flicker-type alternatives including the alternative for omission as well. So, the agent cannot even try to omit the action in this case. (Bear in mind in Hunt's example the agent's action is not pre-emptively overdetermined and the factor that makes the action unavoidable for the agent is playing a role all along.) Take my corridor Hunt-type example to describe this last scenario. The agent is standing in the corridor and there is only one door at the end of the corridor that represents the agent's intention to kill a person. (Until this moment, the present example does not differ from the above described Hunt-type example.) However, in order to eliminate all kinds of flickers, including action-type and omission-type flickers, the agent's possibility (to stop or) to fail to continue her walk through the

corridor needs to be eliminated. Thus, it needs to be supposed that the wall behind the agent is pushing her to the direction of the door. Only by this supposition can flicker type alternatives be eliminated. Nonetheless, if this is supposed, then I do not think the lack of external determination can be maintained. Therefore, I have to draw the conclusion that Della Rocca's intuition is right and the lack of external determination does require the – contingent – presence of the flicker. In other words, if the agent does not have the possibility to omit the action in question, then he or she is externally forced.

Conclusion

In my thesis, my main goal was to examine the so-called *flicker of freedom* strategy. First, I presented the Frankfurt-type examples, second the flicker of freedom strategy was considered. Then, I examined two arguments for supporting this type of criticism of the Frankfurt-type examples. I argued that while Kane and Widerker's objection can be solved, Della Rocca developed a very powerful objection against the Frankfurt-type compatibilism. By claiming that the reason why we do think that an agent is responsible in a Frankfurt case is because he or she was not externally forced to act, Della Rocca emphasizes that the flicker plays a very fundamental role in the Frankfurt examples. Della Rocca's main point is that the lack of external determination is ensured by the contingent presence of the flicker. A deterministic universe does not enable the contingent presence of the flicker. So, If Della Rocca is right by saying the contingent presence of the flicker plays a crucial role in the Frankfurt cases and the actual world is deterministic, then no one can be morally responsible. A few compatibilists' views were demonstrated, which attempt to describe a Frankfurt case, in which there is no room for flickers. I found that Hunt's example is the best candidate for challenging Della Rocca's criticism. Hunt's example eliminates the contingent presence of the flicker indeed, but this kind of Frankfurt case loses its cogency in terms of morality. On the one hand compatibilists still argue that an agent is responsible in a Hunt-type case since he

or she was the one who performed the action by his or her own reasons, on the other hand Della Rocca says that the agent can act by his or her reasons (and hereby, they are responsible) because the Frankfurt cases are constructed in a way that enables flickers. Nonetheless, Della Rocca does not go further and in his conclusion all he writes is that: “Fischer has not shown that lack of external determination cannot ground ascriptions of moral responsibility. Until this is shown, we have no reason to claim, as Fischer does, that the flickers of freedom are irrelevant to ascriptions of moral responsibility...” (Della Rocca 1998: pp. 103.) I am ready to go further. By examining the kind of control found in the Frankfurt cases, I think, no one can maintain the claim that the flicker plays no role in ascribing moral responsibility in such examples. Fischer thinks that the guidance control describes the notion that we apply in the Frankfurt cases. I agree with him and I assume that the guidance control requires only one alternative action in order to hold the agent morally responsible, but I claim that the guidance control requires at least two possibilities, performing or omitting the action in question. Therefore, if we construct a Frankfurt-Hunt type example in which any kind of alternative event is not possible, then the agent gets to be externally determined without any kind of control that could make him or her responsible.

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