

Reconciling Determinism with an Interventionist God

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Abstract: In this paper, I argue that if determinism is true, an interventionist god is neither logically nor physically possible. Overall, I defend that conception of a determinism as given by Peter van Inwagen in the Consequence Argument against Scott Sehon's objection to this notion of determinism. Sehon objects to van Inwagen's conception of determinism as it seems to entail that an interventionist god is a logical impossibility. I argue that Sehon commits a sort of category-mistake in this consideration of determinism as the notion of logical possibility of an interventionist god under determinism necessarily includes an appeal to physical possibility. I draw distinctions between the logical and physical possibility of such a god then show how these notions are dependent upon each other when considering determinism. First, I argue that the logical possibility of an interventionist god hinges upon its physical possibility to intervene when considering van Inwagen's conception of determinism to be true. Then, I argue that under this conception of determinism an interventionist god is not able to intervene, which is a clear contradiction. I conclude that an interventionist god is therefore impossible under this sense of determinism. As such, the notion of an interventionist god does not present a problem for the conception of determinism used in the Consequence Argument.