

TWO POEMS
Sarah Adams

The Paradox of Free Will

The dilemma of determinism
entails a certain pessimism.
For, (so says this view's adherent,)
free will's just an incoherent
concept that we must reject
when closer we do it inspect.

For, if an action's been dictated
by what's been necessitated,
through antecedent states, plus laws
of nature (a sufficient cause),
for any human act there'll be,
no other possibility.

Meaning that it then does follow,
(something we find hard to swallow,)
every person is un-free
and lacks responsibility.

And yet on the opposing stance
where there is such a thing as chance,
where, (so says this memorandum,)
some things do happen at random,
no-one is responsible
for actions of theirs at all,
for *chance*, does bring our acts about
and not us, so we must doubt,
(from the reasoning we've given thence,)
that, once again, free will makes sense.

And since these options seem complete,
'agency' talk is obsolete.

Therefore, says the foregoing motion,
reject this incoherent notion.

(Well, you might as well; it's not like you have any choice in
the matter...)

**A Poem about John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart (in the
form of a double dactyl)**

Jiggery pokery
J.E. McTaggart thought –
contra appearances –
time was unreal.

Curvature of the spine
made him walk like a crab.
One extra quirk which was
far from ideal.

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