

Causality and Determinism: Tension, or Outright Conflict?

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Abstract

In the philosophical tradition, the notions of determinism and causality are strongly linked: it is assumed that in a world of deterministic laws, causality may be said to reign supreme; and in any world where the causality is strong enough, determinism must hold. I will show that these alleged linkages are based on mistakes, and in fact get things almost completely wrong. In a deterministic world that is anything like ours, there is no room for genuine causation. Though there may be stable enough macro-level regularities to serve the purposes of human agents, the sense of "causality" that can be maintained is one that will at best satisfy Humeans and pragmatists, not causal fundamentalists.

Keywords: causation, causality, probabilistic causality, determinism

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