

My Way



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著者:John Martin Fischer

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This is a selection of essays on moral responsibility that represent the major components of John Martin Fischer's overall approach to freedom of the will and moral responsibility. The collection exhibits the overall structure of Fischer's view and shows how the various elements fit together to form a comprehensive framework for analyzing free will and moral responsibility.

The topics include deliberation and practical reasoning, freedom of the will, freedom of action, various notions of control, and moral accountability. The essays seek to provide a foundation for our practices of holding each other (and ourselves) morally and legally accountable for our behavior. A crucial move is the distinction between two kinds of control. According to Fischer, "regulative control" involves freedom to choose and do otherwise ("alternative possibilities"), whereas "guidance control" does not. Fischer contends that guidance control is all the freedom we need to be morally responsible agents. Further, he contends that such control is fully compatible with causal determinism. Additionally, Fischer argues that we do not need genuine access to alternative possibilities in order for there to be a legitimate point to practical reasoning.

Fischer's overall framework contains an argument for the contention that guidance control, and not regulative control, is associated with moral responsibility, a sketch of a comprehensive theory of moral responsibility (that ties together responsibility for actions, omissions, consequences, and character), and an account of the value of moral responsibility. On this account, the value of exhibiting freedom (of the relevant sort) and thus being morally responsible for one's behavior is a species of the value of artistic self-expression.

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