

The Distant Causation Argument

Part A

1. Every action an agent performs is caused by that agent's beliefs, desires, likes, and dislikes.
2. Some, if not all, of the beliefs, desires, likes, and dislikes behind an agent's actions are factors beyond that agent's control.

Therefore:

3. Every action an agent performs is caused by factors at least some of which are beyond that agent's control.

Part B

4. If an agent freely performs an action, then that agent is morally responsible for having performed that action.
5. Agents are not morally responsible for having performed actions caused by factors beyond their control.
6. Every action an agent performs is caused by factors at least some of which are beyond that agent's control. (#3 of Part A.)

Therefore:

7. No action any agent performs is ever performed freely.