

Determinism and free will.

Hmmm. I certainly have very little free will. My size, my self-expression, my natural hair colour, my predilection to certain illnesses, my choice in friends, colours and foods, just about everything is predetermined. Everyday events and predetermined characters manifesting as other people mould me in directions not of my own making. My self-expression elicits predictable responses from others depending on the character of these others and depending also on their circumstances. The weather, the environment, all these and more create a consistent pressure on my being pushing me this way and that.

I was thinking that sometimes I make choices that do not suit myself because of duty, but then I am biased towards that duty so it's also what I would do anyway.

My exalted planets make things easy for me and my planet in fall makes things difficult. Where is my choice?

No I do not believe in free will in relation to character and events. I am on a train and the landscape I pass through is preset. I can't avoid a trip through the mountains or over a river or being stuck in a tunnel for days.

I think I have one freedom and one alone.

My attitude.

It is natural to dislike an uncomfortable, maybe even painful, part of the trip but I don't have to react negatively. I can choose to accept if not enjoy the experience. The trip is fate, but as the I Ching says in line three of eleven, one must learn to rise above fate. And Oppression says that some things must be regarded as fate and 'of what use is it to rail against fate'. It is, it says, this ability that raises character to a higher level. So the I Ching has fate and levels and free will in that we can choose our stand.

BUT

I am wise but I was born to be wise. My experiences have pushed me in the direction of wisdom. I am pretty sure that everything I am was pre-designed.

Many people have suggested that because we cannot view a quantum particle without hitting uncertainty that that points to the idea the cosmos is constructed with open-ended possibilities. The fact is that we are simply too big and our tools too clumsy to see what is going on without interfering either with speed or position of the particle. But that's OK as for us the results are so minute they don't matter. And what is a particle anyway – I have been wondering recently whether a photon is just a sensitive piece of equipment's response to a wave – sort of like ear drums hear a single musical note when what hit them was a sound wave - I know – I do a lot of wondering. A TV screen presents a perfectly acceptable picture although it is built on proton probability and uncertainty. Fractals are fascinating. They appear unstructured, but there is a structure – albeit complex in the extreme. Same goes for chaos. Interactions in our universe are beyond the computing capacity of our puny brains but they are not truly random.

Here I am sitting at this keyboard and writing my thoughts. Did I choose this with free will. No: I suddenly 'felt' like doing this. Now I feel like having a mug of tea so off I go, and Paul and Emmie can distract me at any time and I will let them because I don't feel like being rude and excluding them today – this work does not feel important enough to mess about with demanding special dispensations. There is no external deadline.

I have given up falling in love and I have given up smoking. I had to use my will to do this. I had to fight against my instincts. But was that free will?

No. My sense of duty prevailed in each case. As I said my chart has a strong sense of duty built in and life contrived to manoeuvre me in the way of following this route.

So here I am with my tea and I wonder ... if everything is determined – I deliberately did not say predetermined as I think the mathematics of the cosmos might have a random quality of their own – why am I taking part in this charade?

I haven't got a clue.

Why do I watch movies? Maybe I choose to have this living experience because I am gathering information? The light bulb just came on over the top of my Microsoft paper-clip man when I wrote that. Clearly he thinks that this is a bright idea.