

to do so, then my desires to act fairly or to avoid acting shamefully may motivate me to do my bit. But if I believe the fund drive is doomed to failure whether or not I contribute and believe it would be pointless for me to make a contribution under these conditions, then my desires to act fairly or not to act shamefully may not move me to contribute. So my belief that the fund drive will succeed is, intuitively speaking, logically relevant to my making a contribution. And this example seems to be typical of a large class of cases in which one can make a contribution to the success of a collective enterprise but one's contribution is not essential to its success.

The upshot is this. Both Gale's argument from universalizability and his argument from personhood fail. Neither of them succeeds in showing that *A*'s prima facie moral permission to take the belief-in-*R* inducing pill is defeated. They are his only arguments for this conclusion. Hence *A*'s prima facie moral permission emerges from Gale's assault triumphantly undefeated. That being so, one question remains to be answered. Will Gale now come to believe that, by constructing a sophisticated Jamesian moral argument for religious belief, he has, like Dr. Frankenstein, inadvertently created a monster?

University of Notre Dame

NOTES

1. Richard M. Gale, *On the Nature and Existence of God* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Citations in the text refer to this book.

2. I presented a version of this material at a meeting of the Society of Humanist Philosophers devoted to Richard Gale's Philosophy of Religion in Philadelphia on December 28, 2002. Richard Gale was the respondent on that occasion. I am grateful to him and to members of the audience for stimulating discussion.

DOES PLANTINGA'S GOD HAVE FREEDOM-CANCELING CONTROL OVER HIS CREATURES? A RESPONSE TO RICHARD GALE

Wes Morrison

Abstract: According to Alvin Plantinga and his followers, there is a complete set of truths about what any possible person would freely do in any possible situation. Richard Gale offers two arguments for saying that this doctrine entails that God exercises "freedom-canceling" control over his creatures. Gale's first argument claims that Plantinga's God controls our behavior by determining our psychological makeup. The second claims that God causes (in the "forensic" sense) all of our behavior. The present paper critically examines and rejects both of these arguments. The second of Gale's arguments blurs the distinction between causal laws and the conditionals of freedom, whereas the first fails to appreciate the force of the libertarian claim that our psychological makeup may "incline" us in a certain direction without determining our behavior. It also fails to acknowledge the way in which a libertarian like Plantinga might think we contribute to shaping our own characters.

I used to wonder how Plantinga's free will defense could be combined with a strong Calvinist belief in Providence. The free will defense says that God *allows* his creatures to do evil, even though the world would be better overall if they didn't exercise their freedom in that way. There are better possible worlds, but God cannot actualize them without the cooperation of the free persons who exist in those worlds.

In contrast to this, Calvinist theology insists that God runs the whole show, down to the smallest detail. Even the sinful choices of human beings serve God's purposes. God doesn't merely *let* Adam sin. On the contrary, Calvin says that the "first man fell because the Lord had determined that it was expedient."¹ Similarly, he insists that God did not merely *allow* the Pharaoh to harden his own heart—God himself hardened it. Nor are these exceptions to the general rule. Calvin insists that "whatever conceptions we form in our minds . . . are directed by the secret inspiration of God."²

Obviously, Calvin's claim that God *causes* our choices is not consistent with any sort of free will defense. But what view of Providence is compatible with the free will defense? Can a free will defender believe that our actions take place in accordance with a very detailed Divine Plan? That God allows the sinful choices of human beings because he anticipates the particular way in which they will contribute to the realization of his larger design?

In the context of Plantinga's free will defense, at least, the answer can be yes. According to Plantinga and his followers, there is a complete set of truths about what that any possible person *would* freely do in any possible situation. Following Richard Gale, I'll call them the "conditionals of freedom," or "F-conditionals" for short.³ The idea is that God, being omniscient, knows the F-conditionals and takes them all into account in deciding whom to create and what situations to place them in. Everything any possible person would ever have done is thus taken fully into account when God decides which possible world to actualize.

This isn't consistent with Calvin's extreme form of theological determinism, of course, but it does enable the free will defender to accept a fairly robust view of Providence. Thanks to God's knowledge of the F-conditionals, much, if not all, of what we do—including some of our very worst actions (such as Judas's betrayal of Christ)—can be guaranteed in advance to contribute in a definite way to the Master Plan that is unfolding. As Joseph says to his estranged brothers, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

However, Richard Gale has—with great wit and dialectical skill—endeavored to show that such an appeal to the F-conditionals is deeply incoherent.⁴ If God relies on his knowledge of the F-conditionals in deciding what to create, Gale thinks he would exercise "freedom-canceling control" over his creatures. If Gale is right about this, then Plantinga's F-conditionals are not genuine conditionals of *freedom* and cannot be deployed in a free will defense.

Now I must confess that I am not a fan of the F-conditionals. I find it extremely hard to believe that there is a fact of the matter about what merely possible persons *would* freely do if created in possible situations that will never in fact obtain. Nor do I have much use for the idea of a Master Plan that takes absolutely everything into account.⁵ In my opinion, the only real hope for theodicy is to show that it's somehow *good* that everything isn't fixed in advance or guaranteed to serve some larger end.⁶

So, I would not be dismayed—or forced to revise my opinion about anything that is important to me—if Gale's claims about the F-conditionals turned out to be correct. Unfortunately, I do not think Gale's argument is successful. The remainder of this paper will be devoted to a critical examination of his attack on Plantinga's free will defense, and on the F-conditionals in particular. Somewhat against my will, I shall be defending them against Gale's objections.

Throughout I shall be assuming a libertarian view of freedom and responsibility, according to which a person acts freely (and is responsible for

what he does) only if he "agent causes" of his own basic action, and nothing else makes him act as he does. His desires and beliefs may incline him in one direction or another, but they do not causally determine the outcome. As things were at the time of action, the agent could have done otherwise. All of this is highly controversial, to say the least, but it is the appropriate thing to assume in the present context, since incompatibilist freedom is the sort of freedom asserted in the "would *freely* do" clause of an F-conditional. What Gale's argument tries to do is to meet the free will defender on his own turf, so to speak. Even when a libertarian view of freedom is assumed, Gale thinks he can show that God's knowledge of the F-conditionals would give him freedom-canceling control over his creatures.

Gale's argument proceeds in two stages. First he tries to establish that on Plantinga's view God *causes*—indeed, that God "sufficiently causes"—the actions of his supposedly free creatures. Second, Gale tries to show that this way of doing things is "freedom-canceling."

The first of these claims is quite surprising. Isn't the whole point of the free will defense that even God cannot cause another person to act *freely*? Of course, God knows what his free creatures *would* freely do in any possible situation, and he creates them knowing what they *will* freely do. But he doesn't *make* them do it.

However, Gale argues that under certain circumstances, "a sufficient cause can reach through the interposition of a relation of subjunctive-conditional sufficiency of an *indeterministic* sort" (154, my italics). He asks us to imagine a "stochastic machine" that goes through an indeterministic internal process when its button is pushed. Depending on the outcome of that process, the machine may—or may not—release a poison gas into a crowded stadium. Gale asks us to consider two cases.

- Case 1. You accidentally push the button on the machine, and the machine releases the gas.
- Case 2. You have something analogous to God's knowledge of the F-conditionals—you know that if the button were pushed it *would* release the poison gas. Knowing this, you push the button, and the machine releases the gas.

In the first case, Gale thinks you are not the cause of the disaster, whereas in the second case, he thinks you are. But how, you may ask, could the mere presence or absence of a certain psychological state make a difference to whether you are the cause of all those deaths. Gale explains that the relevant sense of "cause" is the *forensic* one, and in this sense the person's knowledge and intentions make a crucial difference.⁷ In the second case, you are responsible because you knew what *would* happen, however indeterministically, if you pushed the button.

Gale is now in a position to draw the conclusion that Plantinga's God is the *cause* of all our actions. The reason is that Plantinga's God supplies antecedent conditions that are "subjunctive conditionally" sufficient for everything that anyone ever does. God may or may not have good reasons for "causing" us to do evil, and he may or may not be blameworthy, but his

activity is a sufficient cause—in the forensic sense of “cause”—of everything that that anyone ever does. If God does *A*, knowing that if he were to do *A*, I would do *B*, then he is responsible for the fact that I do *B*.

With this understood, we can proceed to the second stage of Gale’s argument. He thinks that the relation between Plantinga’s God and his creatures is relevantly analogous to various cases in which one man has “freedom-canceling” control over another. Gale first asks us to imagine a cyberneticist who manipulates his wife’s brain in such a way that she is “always amorous” and always eager to cook and clean. In such a case, he thinks, we should say that the wife’s actions are not free because they flow from a personality that has been imposed on her by her husband. Gale thinks this points to the following “freedom-canceling” condition.

- C₁. If *M*₁’s actions and choices result from psychological conditions that are intentionally determined by another man *M*₂, then these actions and choices are not free. (158)

Gale argues that Plantinga’s God is related to all of us in much the same way that *M*₂ is related to *M*₁, on the ground that God causes all of our “freedom-neutral” properties, which include our “psychological makeup.” Given C₁, then, Gale thinks it follows that none of our actions or choices are free.⁸

Now a libertarian might be expected to object that our God-given personalities only “incline,” without “determining.” But Gale replies that this fails to mark a pertinent distinction between what Plantinga’s God does to all of us, and what our imaginary cyberneticist does to his wife. Even if controllers like the cyberneticist “could render it only probable according to various statistical laws that their victims would behave in certain characteristic ways, they still would exercise a global freedom-canceling control in which the person is rendered nonfree due to her not having a mind of her own” (160).

It seems to me that Gale has missed something important here. If the cyberneticist only makes it “probable” that his wife will cook his dinner, then it is at least possible that she will decide not to do so. So, suppose that—against the odds—she decides *not* to cook the dinner. Surely in *that* case, there would be no reason to think he is responsible for her choice or that she is not responsible for it. But if she *can* refuse to cook, surely we must say that her freedom has not been *wholly* canceled by what her husband has done to her. So, even if she does do what he wants, her behavior does not “result from” his intervention in a way that completely removes responsibility. Since the motivational structure installed by the cyberneticist is not sufficient to prevent her from refusing, we have no reason to think either that *she* is not the agent cause of her action or that she is not free to do otherwise. Obviously she isn’t responsible for the psychological dispositions her husband has given her—but unless something further is said about the way in which her behavior “results from” those dispositions, we are not entitled to conclude that she is not responsible for *it*.

Now suppose that Plantinga’s God creates an individual with a personality that *inclines* him in the direction of a certain course of action. It is con-

sistent with this to say that the creature remains free not to go that way. It may even be the case that his *conditionals of freedom* are such that God knows that he will *not* do what he is thus inclined to do. In such a case, it would be decidedly odd to say that his actual behavior “results from” his personality, habits, and values in a way that is “freedom-canceling.”

There is also a highly significant disanalogy between the case of the cyberneticist and that of Plantinga’s God. God does not implant personalities in the manner of the cyberneticist. Whether or not our first ancestors were created as adults by God, all subsequent members of the human race have begun life as immature creatures, who contribute to the shaping of their own personalities through their own free choices. A person’s overall personality and motivational structure is not therefore “freedom-neutral,” and as far as I can see, there is nothing in Plantinga’s free will defense to suggest otherwise.

It is true, of course, that Plantinga’s God instantiates the “creaturely essences” of persons. But one’s creaturely essence need not include everything in one’s adult personality. In particular, it need not include all of one’s mature values and motivational structure. A person’s essence, after all, is merely the set of properties which she has in every possible world in which she exists, and there is no reason to think that she has exactly the same personality and values in every possible world in which she exists. There is therefore nothing to prevent Plantinga from holding that we are, to a large degree, responsible for who and what we are, and that each of us has a “a mind of his or her own”—a mind that is, to a large degree, of one’s own making.

So, this line of argument for thinking that Plantinga’s God exercises freedom canceling control over his creatures seems to me to be quite inconclusive. The cases are not analogous, and even if they were, the connection between the motivational structure and the behavior that “results from” it is not tight enough to be completely “freedom-canceling.”

However, Gale offers another argument for his conclusion—one that focuses on God’s knowledge of the F-conditionals. He suggests that such a God would control us in something like the way that Stromboli, the puppet master, controls the movements of poor Pinocchio. Of course the cases are not exactly the same. Stromboli pulls the wires connected to Pinocchio’s limbs. Plantinga’s God doesn’t do anything as crude as that—he controls his creatures via the conditionals of freedom. But Gale thinks he can appeal to his earlier conclusion that God is the *cause* of our behavior—that Plantinga’s God is just as responsible for what we do as Stromboli is for Pinocchio’s movements. As long as God causes our behavior, freedom is canceled.

This brings us to a second freedom-canceling condition that Gale believes would be satisfied by Plantinga’s God.

- C₂. *M*₂ has a freedom-canceling control over *M*₁ if *M*₂ causes most of *M*₁’s behavior. (159)

Putting C₂ together with Gale’s earlier contention that Plantinga’s God is the cause of *all* of our behavior, it follows that such a God would exercise free-

dom-canceling control over us.

To evaluate this argument, we need to ask what Gale means by "cause" in C_2 . It can't be ordinary physical causation of the sort that is involved in Stromboli's manipulation of Pinnochio, since God's causation of our behavior is not of that sort. In Gale's earlier discussion of the person who pushes the button on the "stochastic machine" that releases the poison gas, he says it is only the "forensic" concept of cause that he has in view here.⁹ So, it seems that Gale's C_2 must be equivalent to:

C_2 . M_2 has a freedom-canceling control over M_1 if M_2 is *accountable* for most of M_1 's behavior.

Let's suppose, at least for the sake of argument, that Gale is right in thinking that Plantinga's God is accountable for our behavior, since he knowingly produces states of affairs that subjunctively imply that we will act just as we in fact do. We still have to ask whether C_2 is true when interpreted along the lines of C_2 . If God is accountable for our behavior, does it follow that we are not *also* accountable for we do? That our control over our own behavior is canceled by God's control?

We cannot settle the issue by appealing to our intuitions about Stromboli and Pinnochio. Stromboli is accountable, all right. But that's not the only sense in which he causes Pinnochio's movements. He *physically causes* them by pulling the wires to which the poor wooden boy is attached. He doesn't rely on what he knows about what Pinnochio *would freely do* if various wires were pulled. Might this not be a relevant difference between Stromboli and Plantinga's God?

We can put this point in terms of Plantinga's well known distinction between "strong" and "weak" actualization. Stromboli *strongly* actualizes Pinnochio's behavior, whereas God *only weakly* actualizes ours. But Gale claims that this doesn't help. Why not? Because, he says, "whatever God weakly actualizes he *sufficiently causes* to be actual" (160, my italics).

I am not sure what "sufficiently causes" can mean here. If we stick with the "forensic" concept of cause, it must mean something like "is sufficiently accountable for." But that has no clear or obvious meaning, or at least none that is relevant. It's true, of course, that God does something that is, together with the conditionals of freedom, *logically* sufficient for our behavior. From the fact that God actualizes a state of affairs S in which I exist and am free to do A , together with the fact that if I were free in S I would do A , it logically follows that I will in fact do A . But the conditionals of freedom are not causal laws—so in the *metaphysical* sense of cause, God's action is *not* the "sufficient cause" of my doing A .

To back up his claim that the strong/weak actualization distinction won't help us here, Gale quotes one of Plantinga's formulations of that distinction—a formulation that, Gale assures us, "does not rest on the cause—not cause distinction" (160).

Let us say that God strongly actualizes a state of affairs S if and only if he causes S to be actual and causes to be actual every contingent state of affairs

S^* such that S includes S^* ; and let's say that God weakly actualizes a state of affairs S if and only if he strongly actualizes a state of affairs S^* that subjunctive-conditionally implies S . (161)¹⁰

From this, Gale concludes:

The basis of the distinction between strong and weak actualization now is between God's act of will being the (sole) sufficient cause of an event and its being only a sufficient cause due to there being a free middleman whose will is also a sufficient cause of it. (161)

I think Gale has misinterpreted Plantinga here. In the passage Gale quotes, Plantinga distinguishes between a wider and a narrower concept of actualization. Weak actualization is the more general category. All cases of strong actualization are cases of weak actualization, but not vice versa. However, Plantinga obviously means to leave open the possibility that there are states of affairs that God *only* weakly actualizes. On this definition, any state of affairs that God *only* weakly actualizes would include others that God does *not* cause, much less "sufficiently cause."

To see how Plantinga's definition is supposed to work, let S^* be a state of affairs that God strongly actualizes, and let S be a state of affairs that he weakly actualizes by actualizing S^* . Then on Plantinga's definition, it is true that S^* *subjunctively implies* S . But there are at least two very different ways in which this can be so. (1) S^* could be a sufficient cause of S . But then, assuming that God is causally responsible for the causal laws that obtain in the actual world, it follows that he causes it to be the case that S^* *subjunctively implies* S . And in that case, it also follows that God *strongly* (and *not only* weakly) actualizes S . (2) The other possibility is that S^* *subjunctively implies* S is one of the contingently true conditionals of freedom. But God has no control over the conditionals of freedom. So, in this case, he *only* weakly actualizes S .

On Plantinga's definition, then, there can be states of affairs that God only weakly actualizes. And in such cases, God obviously does not do anything that is *causally sufficient* (in the metaphysical sense of causation) for actualization.

In light of the distinction between strong and weak actualization, let us revisit C_2 . Plantinga says that "If God causes them always to do only what is right, then they don't do what is right freely" (161). From this Gale infers that Plantinga is committed to something like C_2 . Whether Gale is right about this depends entirely on whether C_2 is interpreted in terms of strong or weak actualization. Does it mean this?

M_2 has a freedom-canceling control over M_1 if M_2 strongly actualizes most of M_1 's behavior.

If C_2 is interpreted this way, then doubtless Plantinga would have to accept it. But that would not be a problem for him, since he does not think that God strongly actualizes our free actions. So, suppose we interpret C_2 in this way instead.

M_2 has a freedom-canceling control over M_1 , if M_2 weakly (but not strongly) actualizes most of M_1 's behavior.

Then, for the reasons already given, I see no reason why Plantinga should accept C_2 .

Of course, Gale thinks God sufficiently causes—in the forensic sense of “causes”—whatever he weakly actualizes. This leads back to C_2 :

C_2 . M_2 has a freedom-canceling control over M_1 , if M_2 is accountable for most of M_1 's behavior.

But surely it would again be open to Plantinga simply to deny C_2 . Let me explain.

Suppose that God places me in a situation, knowing exactly what I would do in that situation, and suppose further that God is accountable for what I do in that situation. How is it supposed to follow that I am not also accountable for it? As Gale himself points out, I can cause someone to do something just by giving him a relevant piece of information without “usurping his free will” (161). For example, if I tell Tom that Alice wants to go out with him, knowing that he is eager to be with her, then I have a share of the responsibility for their subsequent date. But it hardly follows that they are not—also, and even primarily—responsible for what they do.

But Gale is quick with a response to this objection:

Be this as it may, God's way of causing our actions in Plantinga's FWD is less benign than is M_2 's, for God's instantiating a diminished person [i.e., a creaturely essence] alone sufficiently causes all of the instantiator's actions. (The truth of the relevant F-conditional is not among the causes of these acts, since a proposition cannot cause anything.) To be on the safe side, C_2 might be narrowed so that it is required that M_2 sufficiently cause most of M_1 's behavior. (162, my italics)

Thus we come full circle. God's control is supposed to be “freedom-canceling” because he “sufficiently causes” all of our actions. But in the present context, “sufficiently causing” an act can only mean being sufficiently accountable for the other person's doing that act, where “being sufficiently accountable” does not entail being the cause of that person's act in any other sense. As far as this kind of “sufficient causation” goes, the other person may still be the agent-cause of her own act, she may still have been able to refrain from doing it, and she may have done it for reasons of her own. So, why isn't she also accountable?

Gale does acknowledge one salient difference between the God/man case and the Stromboli/Pinnochio case. Stromboli has counterfactual control over Pinnochio's behavior. Whatever he makes Pinnochio do, he could just as easily have made him do the opposite. God, by contrast, must rely on the conditionals of freedom, over which he has no control. He can place Paul in a situation of temptation. If Paul's conditionals of freedom are such that he would freely do the wrong thing in that situation, then God can “cause” Paul to go wrong in that situation. (That is, God can weakly actualize Paul's lapse.) But God cannot ensure that Paul will freely do the opposite. His “control” is not therefore counterfactual control.

Should C_2 be reformulated to require counterfactual control? Gale rejects this suggestion, on the ground that if counterfactual control were necessary for freedom-canceling control, then “ C_1 is unacceptable and Sinister Cyberneticist and the like do not have freedom canceling control, and this is not what we want to say” (163). Furthermore, Gale continues, God “determines the psychological makeup of his ‘victims’,” and this makes up for any lack of counterfactual control.

This response seems quite inadequate to me. For one thing, I have real doubts about C_1 . I want to know more about what “results from” means in C_1 , before I conclude that Sinister Cyberneticist's “victim” has been completely deprived of freedom and responsibility. But in the present context, the issue concerns C_2 , not C_1 . Does C_2 succeed in articulating a sufficient condition for freedom-cancellation? Or should it be rewritten to include something about counterfactual control?

Again, Gale seems to anticipate the objection. Stromboli is not excused from being the cause of his victim's behavior because “he did only half the job,” determining which wires are pulled but not which causal laws will hold. The fact that Stromboli relies on causal laws over which he has no control to get Pinnochio to do his bidding neither diminishes his responsibility for Pinnochio's behavior nor makes Pinnochio any more free. Similarly, Gale argues, “God is not excused from being the cause of the free acts of created persons because he did only half the job—determined which diminished possible persons [which creaturely essences] get instantiated but not the truth-values of the relevant F-conditionals” (163–4).

I'm not convinced. The laws on which Stromboli relies are causal laws. So, of course he doesn't need to determine what they are in order to cause (in the metaphysical sense of “cause”) Pinnochio's behavior. Pinnochio is not free to do anything other than what the antecedent conditions (introduced by Stromboli) and the causal laws (on which Stromboli relies) determine that he will do. That is because he has control neither over which wires are pulled, nor over which causal laws obtain. The conditionals of freedom, by contrast, are not causal laws, and one is free to do the opposite of what they imply that one will do.

Perhaps I can put my point this way. Stromboli does half the job, and the causal laws “do the other half.” God does half the job, but the conditionals of freedom cannot “do the other half” precisely because they are conditionals of freedom. We are the ones who do “the other half of the job.”

However, Gale continues his attack:

If this does not convince you, try these counterfactual thought experiments. Our finite controllers do only half the job by determining which causal laws hold after they come upon their victim in some instancial state, and God does only half the job by determining the truth-values of the F-conditionals after he comes upon concrete instantiations of various diminished possible persons. Certainly, we want to say of both God and the finite controllers in these thought experiments that they cause their victim's behavior and have a freedom-canceling control in virtue of C_2 alone. (162)

I am afraid that I am still not convinced. It seems to me that this entire line of argument rests on a blurring of the distinction between causal laws and the conditionals of freedom. When it is remembered that God does not and cannot determine the truth values of the F-conditionals, we see that there is no reason why Plantinga should be worried by the fact that if God *did* fix their truth values, we wouldn't be free.

There may, of course, be other reasons to think that Plantinga's F-conditionals could not be genuine conditionals of *freedom*. Since they are true prior to and independently of our existence—it might seem that we have no more control over them than we have over the laws of nature. Obviously, we have no control over what God does or does not strongly actualize. And yet the conditionals of freedom together with the states of affairs God strongly actualizes *logically entail* everything we ever do. On standard libertarian assumptions, it might seem to follow that none of our actions are free."

Call this the *Quick Argument* against the conditionals of freedom. I don't have the space to evaluate it here. I mention it only because I want to point out the way in which it differs from Gale's argument. It doesn't matter to the *Quick Argument* whether or not God exists, whether he knows all the F-conditionals, or whether he decides what to actualize in light of his knowledge of them. All that matters is that the truth values of one's F-conditionals are completely outside one's control.

Gale's argument, by contrast, supposes that it is the presence and activity of God that makes all the difference. But a consistent libertarian could hardly be expected to go along with this. Libertarians don't think that *causal* determinism is incompatible with free will only if there is a Grand Manipulator who is responsible either for the causal laws or for the antecedent conditions or for both. If our actions are logically entailed by factors that are completely outside our control, then we couldn't have done otherwise and we aren't free. Period. It doesn't matter in the slightest whether or not a God or a Cartesian demon or a mad scientist with middle knowledge is operating behind the scenes.

But if the *Quick Argument* against the conditionals of freedom fails—perhaps because the conditionals of freedom are not, in the relevant sense, outside our control—then no libertarian should be bothered by the fact that God knows about them and takes them into account when he decides which world to actualize.

University of Colorado, Boulder

NOTES

1. John Calvin, *On God and Man: Selections from Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. F.W. Strothman (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1956), 54.

2. *Ibid.*, 21. Here are some other characteristic statements. "Not a drop of rain falls but at the express command of God" (17). "No wind ever rises or blows but by the special command of God" (17-18).

3. These truths are often referred to as the "counterfactuals of freedom," which

isn't quite accurate since some of them have true antecedents.

4. Richard Gale, *On the Nature and Existence of God* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 110-178. Page citations in the text refer to this book.

5. Belief in a highly particularized divine providence seems about as plausible to me as the massive conspiracy theories that so many people find irresistible. As Molly Ivins cleverly put it, "Stuff happens on the off chance, and then more stuff happens." Our natural longing for "deeper meaning" should not blind us to the reality of coincidence and chance.

6. A free will defense *not* involving the conditionals of freedom or a highly detailed Master Plan might conceivably make a contribution to that project. However, Richard Gale has argued that the free will defense cannot survive the demise of the F-conditionals. I am inclined to think that he is wrong about this, but lack of space prevents me from taking the issue up here.

7. Gale puts the point this way: "If what was at issue was the physicist's concept of cause, this would be a powerful objection. But this is not the concept of causation in question. Rather it is the forensic one that concerns moral and legal responsibility and blame, which is the very concept that figures in the FWD, since it is concerned with the assignment of responsibility and blame to God and man" (155-6).

8. This part of Gale's argument does not directly support his claim that God's knowledge of the F-conditionals would give him freedom-canceling control over his creatures. But as we shall see shortly, Gale does appeal to C_i in his response to an objection to an argument that is explicitly concerned with God's knowledge of the F-conditionals.

9. See note 7 above, where I quote the passage in which Gale introduces the idea of "forensic" causation into the discussion.

10. Alvin Plantinga, "Self Profile," James Tomberlin and Peter Van Inwagen, eds. (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1985), 49. Cited in Gale, 161.

11. I have expounded and criticized this argument in "Explanatory Priority and the Counterfactuals of Freedom," *Faith and Philosophy*, vol. 18, no. 1 (January 2001): 21-35.