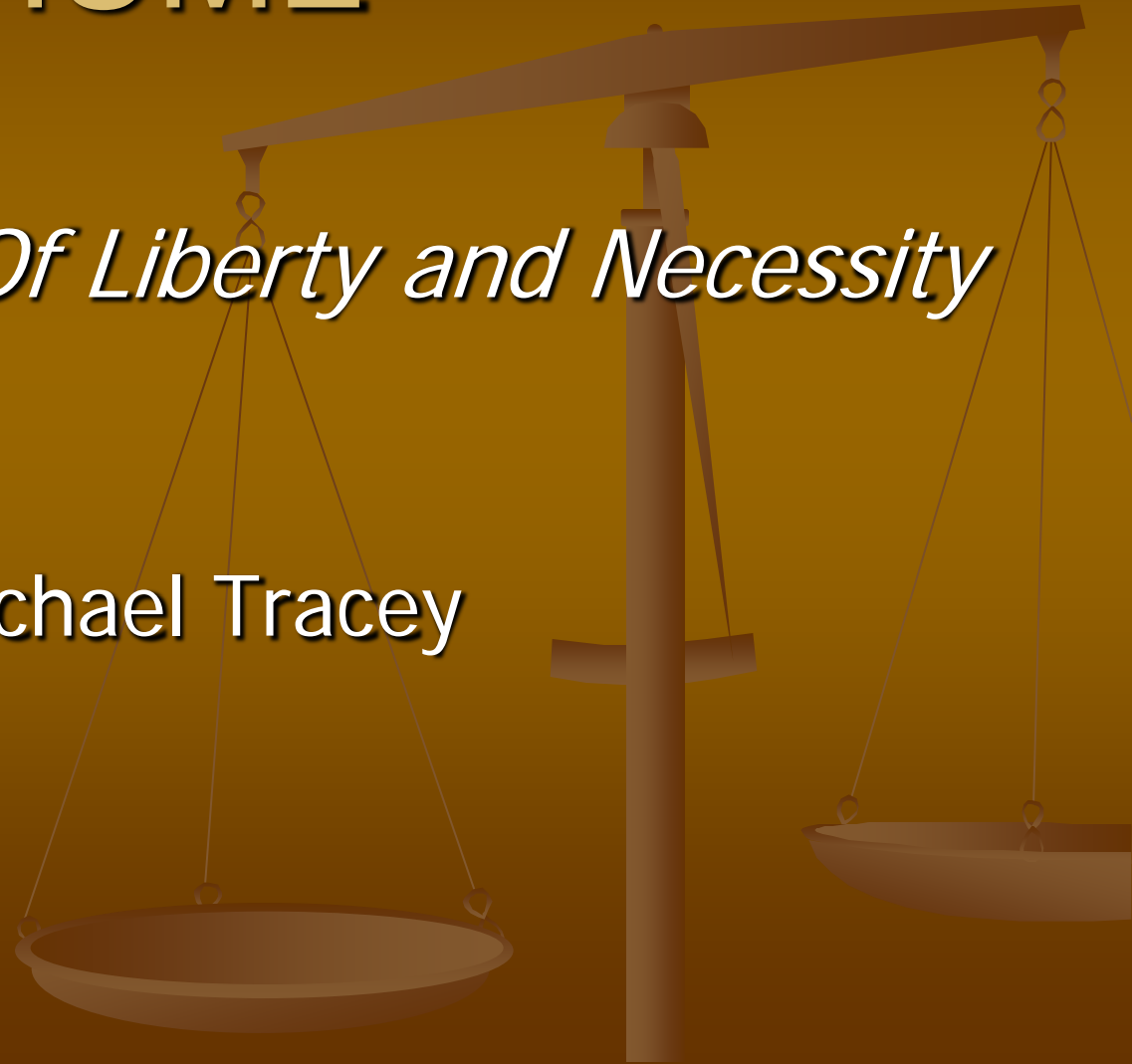


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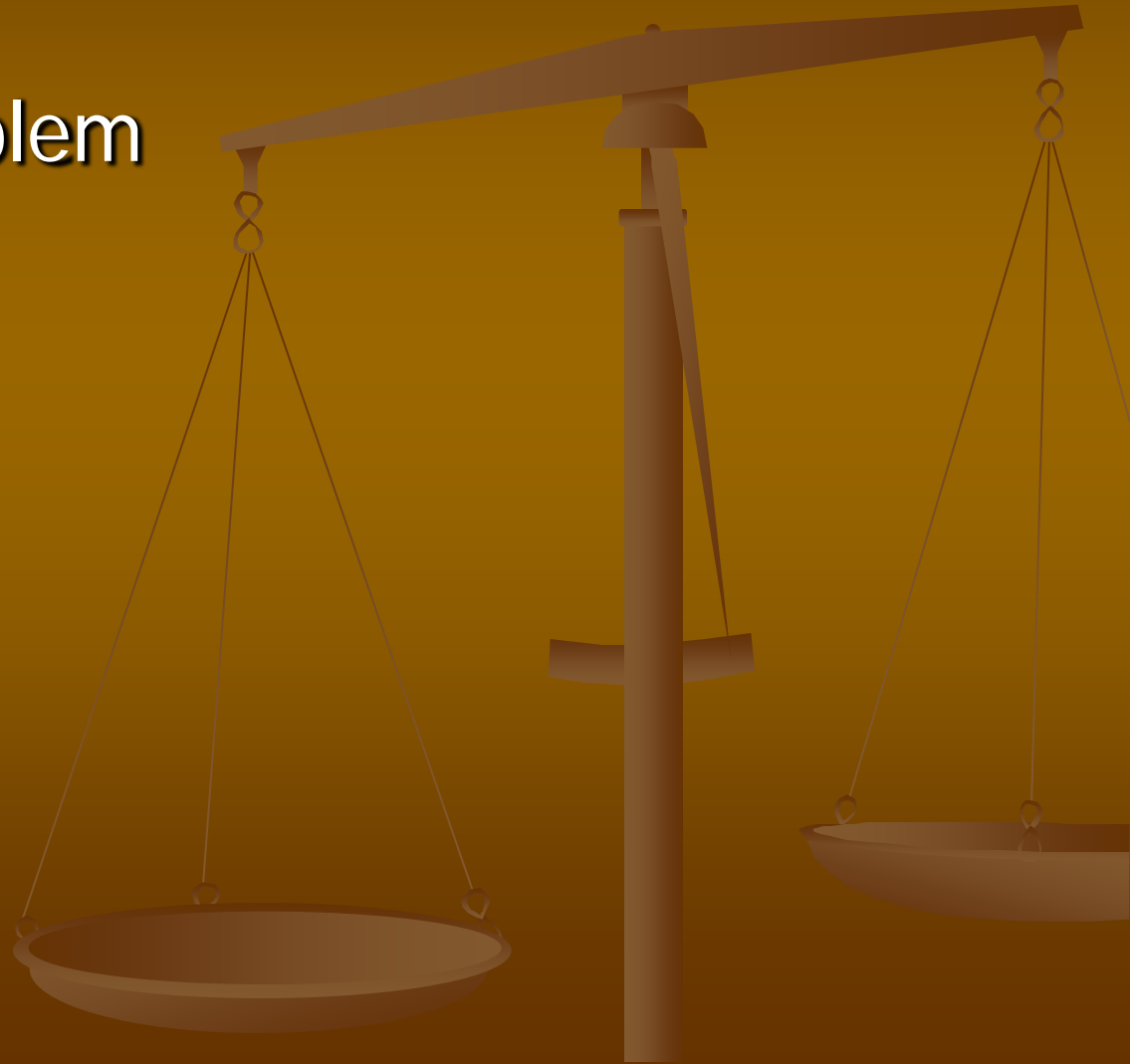
Section VIII: *Of Liberty and Necessity*

Michael Tracey



Overview

- The Verbal Problem
- Definitions
- Compatibility
- Responsibility

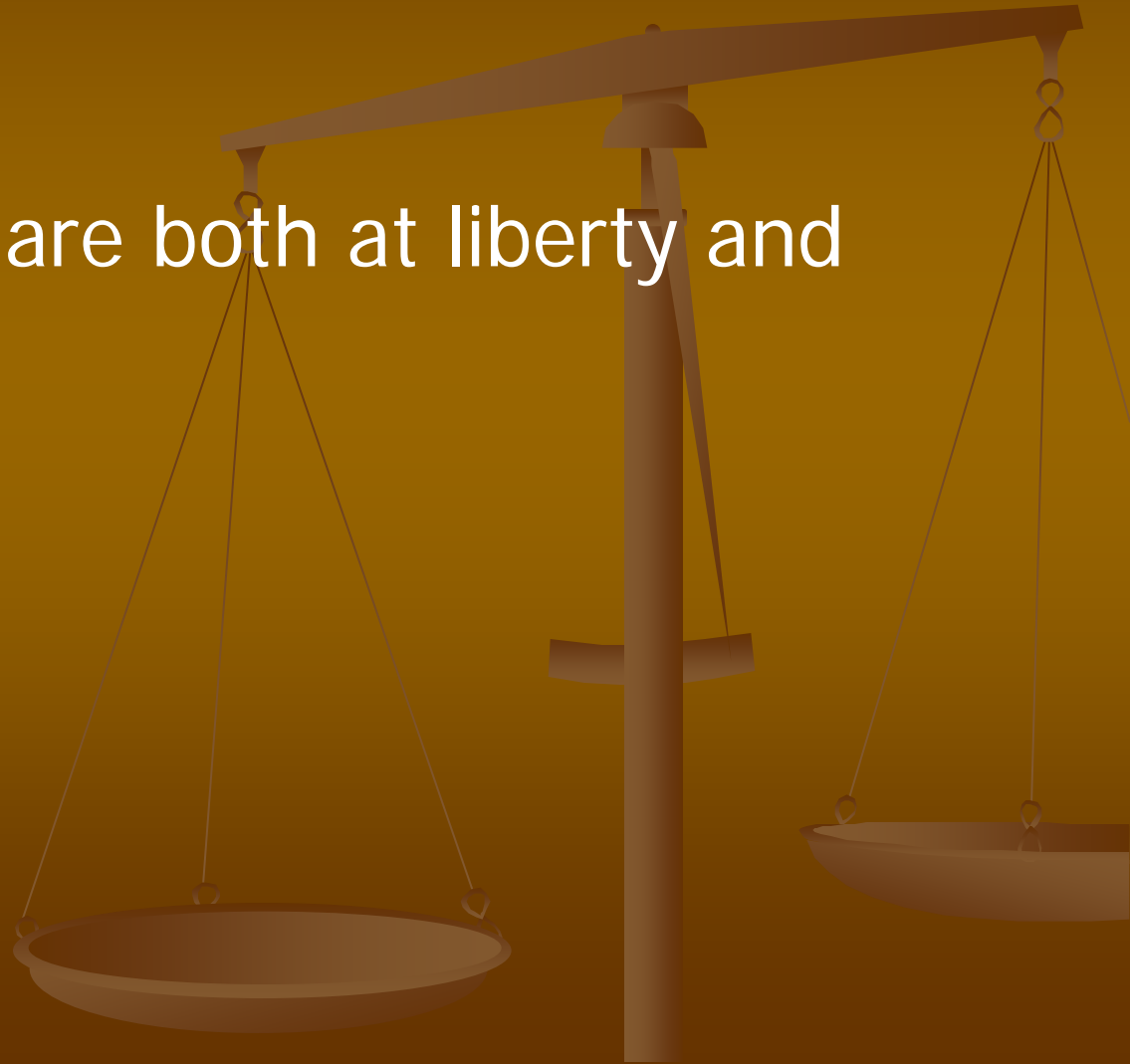


Verbal Problem

- “It might reasonably be expected...that disputants would at least have agreed on the meanings of all the terms, so that in the course of two thousand years we could get away from verbal disputes and come to the true and real subject of the controversy. For how easy may it seem to give exact definitions of the terms employed in reasoning, and make these definitions, not the mere sounds of words, the object of future scrutiny and examination?” (§ VIII 564b-565a)
- “we may presume that there is some ambiguity in how the disputants express themselves, and that they assign different ideas to the words used in the controversy...a few intelligible definitions would immediately put an end to the whole controversy” (§ VIII 565a)

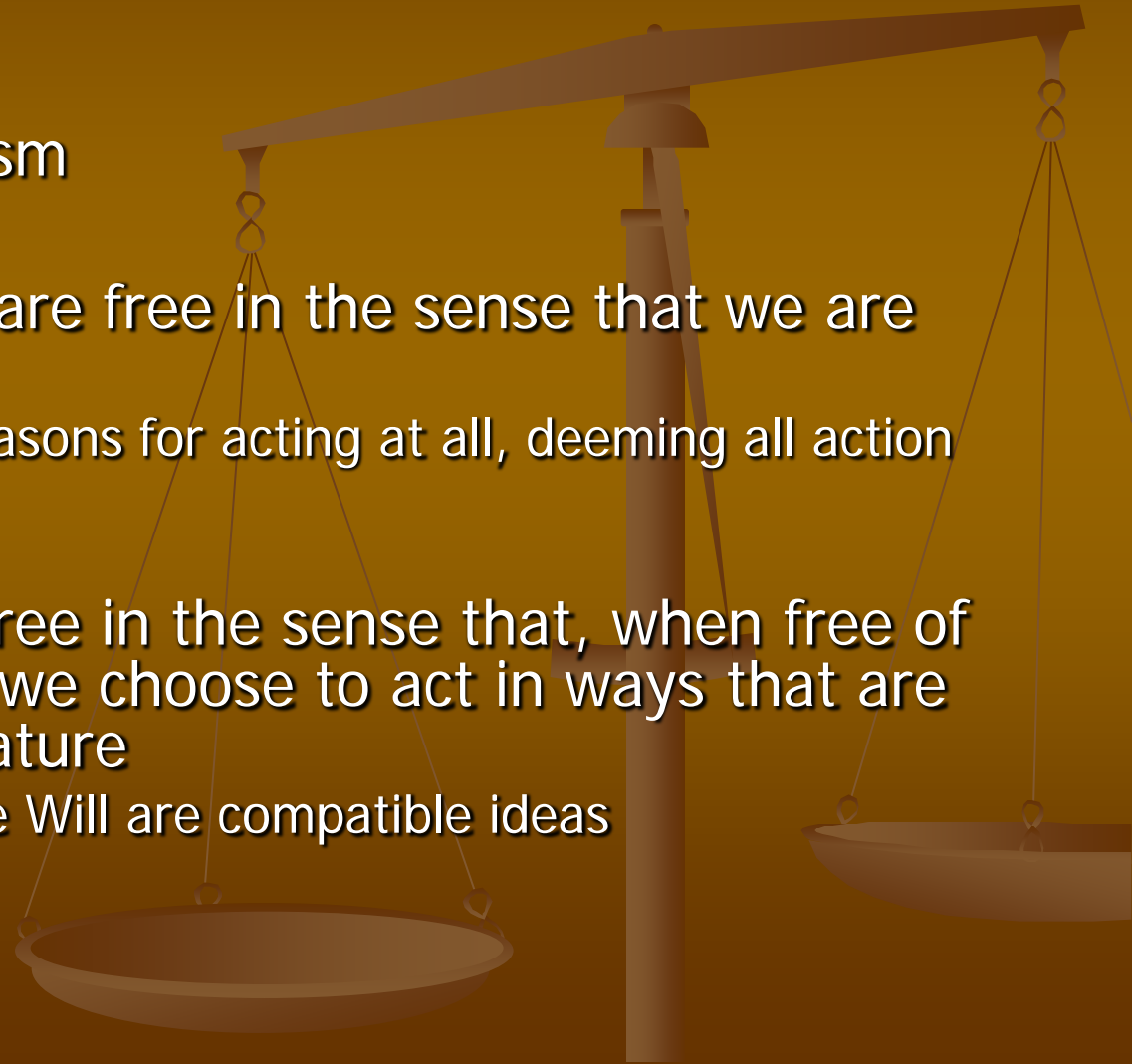
Claim

- Human actions are both at liberty and necessitated

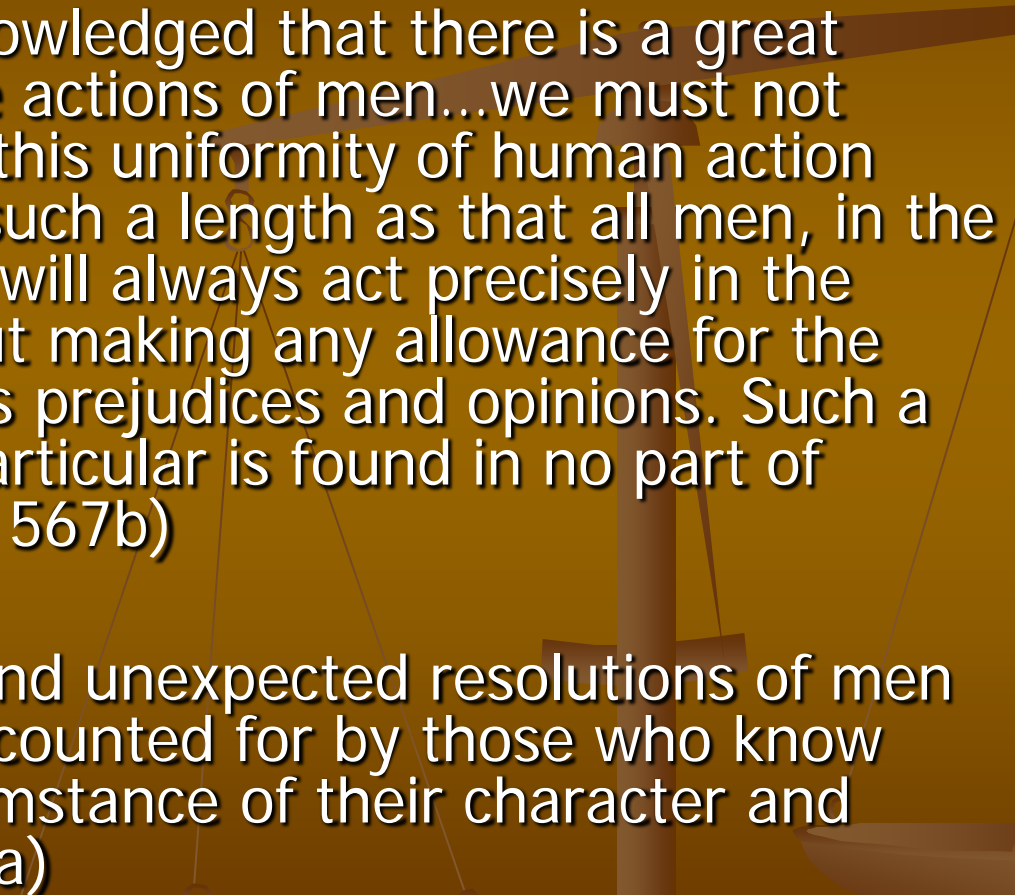


Definitions

- Liberty: Free Will
- Necessity: Determinism
- Freedom 1: $\sim D$: We are free in the sense that we are not determined
 - We would have no reasons for acting at all, deeming all action chaotic
- Freedom 2: We are free in the sense that, when free of external constraints, we choose to act in ways that are determined by our nature
 - Determinism and Free Will are compatible ideas

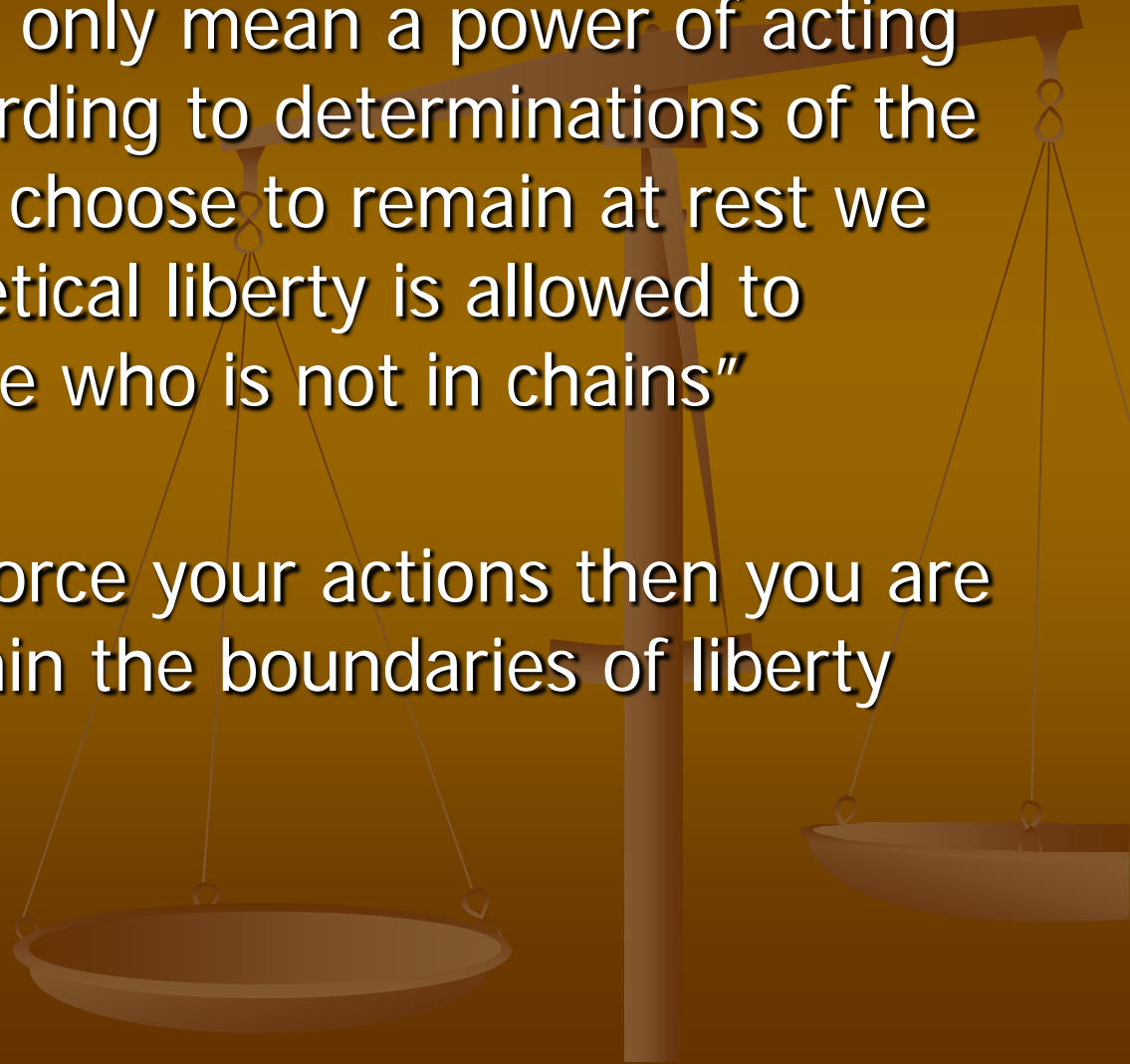


Trends in Human Nature

- "it is universally acknowledged that there is a great uniformity among the actions of men...we must not however expect that this uniformity of human action should be carried to such a length as that all men, in the same circumstances, will always act precisely in the same manner, without making any allowance for the diversity of characters prejudices and opinions. Such a uniformity in every particular is found in no part of nature" (§ VIII 565a, 567b)
 - "The most irregular and unexpected resolutions of men may frequently be accounted for by those who know every particular circumstance of their character and situation" (§ VIII 568a)
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External Constraints

- "By liberty we can only mean a power of acting or not acting according to determinations of the will—that is, if we choose to remain at rest we may...this hypothetical liberty is allowed to belong to everyone who is not in chains" (§ VIII 571a)
- If circumstances force your actions then you are not operating within the boundaries of liberty



The Problem of Responsibility



- Freedom 1: If there is not reason behind your actions then there is no intention. If you do not act upon intention then you are not responsible for your actions.
- Freedom 2: If your actions are not of your own free will, that is they are preformed under external constraints i.e. with a gun to your head, then you are not responsible for your actions
- What of the instance where you are unaware that you have no choice in your actions?
- You are only responsible for that that which you choose to do.