

# Making a Difference in a Deterministic World

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## 1. Introduction: Making a Difference

Determinism precludes moral responsibility, some think, because causally determined agents cannot make a difference in the world. Let's say that I raise my arm at a certain time. If determinism is true, there is nothing I could have done that would have resulted in a different state of affairs, that is, in my not raising my arm at that time. For my raising my arm was bound to happen, given the remote past and the laws of nature. In addition, there is nothing I could have done to make it the case that the remote past or the laws were different. Hence, there is nothing I could have done to make it the case that I didn't raise my arm at the time. It follows that all of our choices and acts are unavoidable, and so is everything that happens in the world (see van Inwagen 1983, chap. 3; and Ginet 1990, chap. 5).

In response, some philosophers have conceded that causally determined agents cannot make a difference in the world, but they have argued that it doesn't follow from this that determinism is incompatible with moral responsibility, for causally determined agents can be respon-

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sible even if they don't make a difference in the world.<sup>1</sup> Responsibility, these compatibilist philosophers have argued, is *not* grounded in the ability to make a difference. John Fischer, in particular, has recently argued against what he called the "make-a-difference" model of the value of freedom and responsibility in favor of a different model, one that emphasizes the value of self-expression and of "making a statement" (see Fischer 1999 and 2006). On his view, when agents act freely and exercise a distinctive kind of control that is relevant to responsibility, that exercise of control is valuable, not because they are making a difference in the world, but, rather, because they are expressing themselves as agents.

Fischer motivates this picture by appeal to an analogy with artistic creativity (see Fischer 1999). Imagine that an artist creates a sculpture using just her imagination and artistic skills. As it so happens, if she hadn't created that sculpture, another artist would have created a sculpture that is exactly alike in all physical respects. Although the artist didn't make a difference in the world, her creation still has value. It has value because it is an expression of the artist's own creativity: the artist has expressed herself in creating that statue and that is what gives value to the sculpture. Similarly, Fischer argues, when agents act freely and exercise the relevant kind of control required for responsibility, that exercise of control has value, not because of the difference that it might make in the world, but because the agents have expressed themselves through their choices and behavior.

I will argue that this compatibilist strategy is wrongheaded. For there are very good reasons to think that responsibility *is* indeed grounded in difference making. This is so even if (as Frankfurt-style cases seem to suggest) responsibility is not grounded in difference making in the sense of access to alternative possibilities, or the ability to do otherwise. I will distinguish two ways in which a relation can be difference making. By appeal to that distinction, I will argue that there is a substantive and illuminating notion of difference making that is compatible with determinism and that *it*—the compatibilist should argue—captures the sense in which responsibility is grounded in difference making.

First, before turning our attention to the problem of determinism and free will, we need to take a brief detour into the nature of causation.

1. Fischer coined the term "semicompatibilism" to refer to this form of compatibilism. For a recent discussion and defense of the semicompatibilist view, see Fischer 2007. Semicompatibilism is motivated by the work of Harry Frankfurt, in particular, by so-called Frankfurt-style cases (originally developed in Frankfurt 1969).

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This will help us get a grasp of the distinction between the two forms of difference making on which we will rely later.

## **2. Making Happen**

Causation is, arguably, a difference-making relation. The thought that causes are difference-makers motivates a popular family of views about causation: counterfactual theories of causation.<sup>2</sup> Such theories attempt to give an account of the causal relation in terms of the relation of counterfactual dependence.

Counterfactual dependence is the relation that obtains between two actual events X and Y just in case, if X hadn't occurred, Y wouldn't have occurred (in that case we say that Y counterfactually depends on X). The starting point of a counterfactual theory of causation is the observation that, at least typically, effects counterfactually depend on their causes. If it hadn't been for the recession, the crime rate wouldn't have gone up; this is supposed to ground the claim that the recession caused the increase in the crime rate. If it hadn't been for the doctor's failure to administer the drug, the patient wouldn't have died; this is supposed to ground the claim that the doctor's failure to administer the drug caused the patient's death. Et cetera. These examples motivate a view of causation according to which causation is a difference-making relation. According to this view, the sense in which causation is difference making is (at least on a first pass) the following:

DMI–CAUSATION: Causes make a difference to their effects in that the effects wouldn't have occurred in the absence of their causes.

There are notorious problems with this idea, though. Imagine that Suzy throws a rock at a window, the rock crashes into it, and the window breaks. This is a paradigmatic case of causation: Suzy's throwing the rock caused the window to shatter. But imagine that Billy had thrown another rock at the window. If Suzy's rock had failed to reach its target, Billy's rock would have done so a second later, and the window would still have shattered as a result. Given the presence of Billy's rock, the window's shattering no longer counterfactually depends on Suzy's throw. But Suzy's throw still clearly caused the shattering. Call this scenario "the Suzy-Billy case."

2. The locus classicus is Lewis 1986.

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There have been several attempts to tweak the simple counterfactual theory to deal with counterexamples such as the Suzy-Billy case.<sup>3</sup> However, the consensus seems to be that none of them succeed. I won't discuss any of those attempts here; for the purposes of this essay, I will assume that causation is indeed not a difference-making relation of this kind (and cannot be spelled out in terms of difference-making relations of this kind). Does this mean that causes are not really difference-makers, after all? Was the appearance that causes are difference-makers a mere appearance?

Elsewhere I have argued that this conclusion is unwarranted (see Sartorio 2005). Compare the Suzy-Billy case with this other scenario: "the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case." Each morning Jimmy flips a coin to decide whether or not to wear his hat that day (heads, he wears it; tails, he doesn't). Jimmy's friends, Suzy and Billy, have come up with the following plan: if Jimmy wears the hat that morning, Suzy will throw her rock at the window, otherwise Billy will. The coin comes up heads, so Jimmy wears the hat that morning, Suzy then throws her rock at the window, and the window breaks. Is Jimmy's wearing the hat that morning a cause of the shattering? It seems not. Intuitively, his wearing the hat that morning didn't cause the shattering, and the reason it didn't cause the shattering is that *it didn't make a difference* to the shattering. Note that we would have said the same thing if he hadn't worn the hat that morning: if he hadn't worn the hat, we would have said that his failing to wear the hat didn't cause the shattering, and that it didn't cause the shattering because it didn't make a difference to the shattering.

Intuitively, then, Suzy's act was a cause of the shattering in the Suzy-Billy case, but Jimmy's act was not a cause of the shattering in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case. Furthermore, it seems that Jimmy didn't cause the shattering *because* his wearing the hat didn't make a difference; however, Suzy caused the shattering apparently *in spite of* the fact that her throw didn't make a difference. In both scenarios, there is a failure of counterfactual dependence: the shattering would still have occurred if Jimmy had not worn his hat in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case, and the shattering would still have occurred if Suzy hadn't thrown her rock in the Suzy-Billy case. So neither act makes a difference to the shattering in the sense captured by counterfactual dependence. Can we then draw a causal distinction between the two scenarios on the basis of difference making?

3. One of them is Lewis's later "influence" account (Lewis 2000).

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We can, by drawing a distinction between two forms of difference making. To motivate the distinction, think about the contribution that Jimmy's wearing his hat makes versus the contribution that his not wearing his hat would have made if he hadn't worn it. They seem to be fundamentally alike: wearing the hat triggers Suzy's throw, but failing to wear it would have equally triggered Billy's throw, and either throw would have resulted in the shattering in a very similar way. By contrast, in the Suzy-Billy case, Suzy's throw makes a contribution to the shattering that is clearly *not* on a par with the contribution that her failure to throw would have made. If Suzy had failed to throw her rock in the Suzy-Billy case, the window would still have shattered, but as a result of Billy's throw, not as a result of Suzy's failure to throw. This suggests that Suzy's throw in the Suzy-Billy case makes a certain difference that Jimmy's wearing his hat in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case doesn't make. This difference doesn't have to do with the fact that the outcome wouldn't have occurred in its absence (since this is false in both cases). Instead, it has to do with the fact that the contribution made by Suzy's throw is more significant than the contribution the failure to throw would have made.

The most natural way to capture the contrast between the two scenarios is to say that causation is a difference-making relation in the following sense:

DM2–CAUSATION: Causes make a difference to their effects in that the effects would not have been caused by the absence of their causes.

Note the difference between DM1–CAUSATION and DM2–CAUSATION: According to DM2–CAUSATION, causes make a difference to their effects, not in the sense that the effects would not have *occurred* in their absence, but in the sense that their effects would not have been *caused* by their absences. DM2–CAUSATION says that it is part of the nature of causation that something is not a cause unless its absence wouldn't have similarly been a cause (of the same thing). For example, in the Suzy-Billy case, Suzy's throw caused the shattering partly because, had she not thrown her rock, the absence of her throw would not have caused the shattering. In contrast, Jimmy's wearing his hat in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case didn't cause the shattering because there isn't the required asymmetry between his wearing the hat and his not wearing it. Any reason to think that his act of wearing the hat is a cause of the shattering would also be a reason to think that his failure to wear a hat would have been a cause of the shattering. However, on this view of how causes are differ-

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ence-makers, the causal relation doesn't leave room for that kind of "indifference" that would allow for both the act of wearing the hat and the omission of that act to be causes of the same effect.

Since my goal in this essay is not to defend this view of causation, I won't elaborate on it much further here.<sup>4</sup> I will just draw attention to four important features of the view. First, DM2–CAUSATION is not an account of the notion of causation but only a nonreductive necessary condition on causation, in particular, one that is designed to capture the difference-making aspect of causation. Second, in proposing this view, I am assuming that causation by absences is possible. Otherwise, if causation by absences were simply impossible, the view would be true, but only trivially so (since then, for any cause, it and its absence could never have the same effects). Third, the view has the consequence that causation is not a transitive relation. For example, in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case, the view entails that Jimmy's wearing his hat doesn't cause the shattering, although it causes something (Suzy's throw) that, in turn, causes the shattering. Finally, although the view entails that Jimmy's wearing the hat didn't cause the shattering, this is consistent with Jimmy's being causally responsible for the shattering in some other way. He would be causally responsible for the shattering if, for example, he had hired Suzy and Billy and had given them instructions to behave in that way. In that case, Jimmy would still not be causally responsible for the shattering in virtue of wearing his hat but only in virtue of having hired Suzy and Billy.

Our discussion of the way in which causes can be said to make a difference to their effects motivates a distinction between two forms of difference making. There is more than one way in which X can make a difference to Y in virtue of some relation R that holds between them. Most obviously, X can make a difference to Y in virtue of relation R by making the difference between Y's obtaining and its failing to obtain. Counterfactual dependence is the DM1–relation par excellence; hence, any relation that entails counterfactual dependence is thereby a DM1–relation. Less obviously, X can make a difference to Y in virtue of relation R, not in that Y wouldn't have occurred in X's absence, but in that X's absence wouldn't have borne relation R to Y. The two forms of difference making can be captured by the following statements:

DM1: R is difference making when, whenever R relates X to Y, if X had been absent, Y would have been absent.

4. For further discussion, see Sartorio 2005.

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DM2: R is difference making when, whenever R relates X to Y, if X had been absent, R would not have related X's absence to Y.

A DM1–relation requires that, when something bears it to another thing, that other thing wouldn't have occurred in its absence. In contrast, a DM2–relation requires that, when something bears it to another thing, its absence would not have borne the same relation to that other thing.

Note that DM1 is a stronger form of difference making than DM2. If R is a DM1–relation, then, if X had been absent, Y would have been absent, and thus it wouldn't have been the relatum of any relation (in particular, R). Therefore, any DM1–relation is a DM2–relation. But a relation can be a DM2–relation without being a DM1–relation. What is required by DM2 is that if X had not occurred, X's absence would not have borne relation R to Y. This is consistent with Y's occurrence, and hence with the failure of DM1.

Now that we have a grasp of the distinction between the two forms of difference making, we may return to the concept of responsibility and the problem of determinism and free will. As anticipated in the introduction, I will argue that compatibilist views can benefit greatly from the distinction. Later in the essay, I will argue that the fact that the distinction is relevant to both causation and responsibility is not a coincidence, for the results about causation and responsibility are connected in an important way.

### **3. Making Responsible**

#### *3.1.*

I started this essay by pointing out that, according to an intuitive picture of responsibility, morally responsible agents are agents that can make a difference in the world. At first sight, this requirement seems to entail, for example, that when Suzy made the choice to throw her rock, she could have chosen not to throw it. On this view of responsibility—commonly referred to as the “alternative-possibilities” model—responsibility requires difference making because it requires the existence of alternative possibilities open to the agent, from which the agent selects the one that will be actualized.<sup>5</sup> As I mentioned in section 1, some incompatibil-

5. The alternative-possibilities model is the view that Fischer (1999) called the “make a difference” model and that I referred to in the introduction. Since I have just argued that there is more than one potentially relevant sense of making a difference, to

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ists have argued that this kind of difference making is inconsistent with the truth of determinism, for determinism rules out the ability to do otherwise.

“Frankfurt-style cases,” on the other hand, are notoriously famous for casting doubt on the alternative-possibilities model of responsibility (see Frankfurt 1969). They seem to show that responsibility doesn’t require the ability to do otherwise. For example, we would still think that Suzy is morally responsible for her choice to throw the rock in the Suzy-Billy case if it turned out that an evil neuroscientist was waiting in the wings, monitoring her brain, and, if Suzy had hesitated in her choice, the scientist would have manipulated her brain in such a way that she would have ended up making that choice all the same. (Call this variation of the case “Suzy and the Neuroscientist.”) Suzy seems to be responsible for her choice in this case even if, given the presence of the neuroscientist, she couldn’t have made a different choice. She is responsible because she made the choice completely on her own; the neuroscientist never had to intervene.

The dialectic gets very complicated at this point: advocates of the alternative-possibilities model have objected to the force of Frankfurt-style scenarios in different ways, and advocates of Frankfurt’s view have in turn come up with different variations of Frankfurt-style cases in order to address those objections.<sup>6</sup> Again, I will bypass this debate here. I will assume that Frankfurt cases succeed in showing that responsibility doesn’t require alternative possibilities. That is to say, I will assume that responsibility doesn’t require difference making in the sense of selecting from a number of open alternative possibilities.

However, even if responsibility doesn’t require access to alternative possibilities, the idea that responsibility requires difference making remains intuitive, despite compatibilist efforts to show otherwise. When Frankfurt presented his criticism of the principle of alternative possibilities, he tried to explain away the intuitive appeal of the principle by arguing that it derives all of its initial plausibility from its association with the principle that coercion excludes responsibility (or similar principles about compulsion; see Frankfurt 1969). If agents acted *because* they

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avoid potential confusion I will stick with the label “the alternative-possibilities model” to refer to the traditional difference-making model.

6. For a detailed discussion of this debate, see the articles in Widerker and McKenna 2003.

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couldn't have done otherwise (or only because they couldn't have done otherwise), then they are not responsible for having acted as they did because they were coerced or compelled to act as they did. But, Frankfurt argued, agents can still be responsible even if they had no alternative possibilities if it is not the case that they acted only because they couldn't have done otherwise.

Peter van Inwagen, among others, rightly complained that the association with the principle about coercion doesn't fully explain away the appeal of the principle of alternative possibilities (see van Inwagen 1983, 162–66). For sometimes the factors in virtue of which an agent couldn't have done otherwise absolve the agent of responsibility even though they don't have the relevant coercive effect; in fact, they exculpate the agent while playing no active causal role at all! For example, the fact that some hungry sharks would have attacked me and prevented me from saving a drowning child absolves me of responsibility for failing to save the child even if the sharks never intervened because I failed to jump in to try to save the child.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the fact that a train would have equally reached the victim standing on the tracks if I hadn't diverted the train to another track (imagine that the tracks reconverge shortly afterward) absolves me of responsibility for the victim's death even if, given that I diverted the train, it never got to run on that other piece of track that it was originally headed for.<sup>8</sup> The agents in these examples fail to be responsible, it seems, because they can't make a difference. This is so even if they did everything in their power to make a difference. Even if I wanted the child to drown and thought that I could have saved him, the presence of the sharks relieves me of responsibility because I couldn't have made a difference, given that they were present. Similarly, even if I wanted the victim on the tracks to die and thought that I was making a difference by flipping the switch and diverting the train (say, because I thought that the other track was disconnected), I am not responsible for the victim's death because I couldn't have made a difference.

The Jimmy-Suzy-Billy scenario (from section 2) is another example that can be used to show that responsibility requires the ability to make a difference. Imagine, this time, that Jimmy is aware of Suzy's and Billy's plan (Suzy will throw her rock at the window if Jimmy wears his hat

7. This is a case by John Fischer and Mark Ravizza (see Fischer and Ravizza 1998, 125).

8. I discuss this example in Sartorio 2011. See also the Ryder and Dobbin case in van Inwagen 1983, 176–77.

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that day; otherwise Billy will). Imagine that Jimmy deliberates about what to do and decides to wear the hat that day. As a result, Suzy throws her rock at the window, and the window shatters. Is Jimmy morally responsible for the window's shattering in this case? Clearly not, at least not in virtue of wearing the hat.<sup>9</sup> Why is Jimmy not responsible in virtue of wearing the hat? It is very tempting to say: because his wearing the hat didn't make a difference. Again, this is so even if he mistakenly thought that it would. Regardless of what he thought, it seems clear that it didn't in fact make a difference and that he is not responsible for this reason.

Hence compatibilists face an important challenge. The challenge is that, although there are scenarios where agents are intuitively responsible for acts they couldn't have avoided (Frankfurt cases), there are other scenarios where agents aren't intuitively responsible for outcomes that are unavoidable; moreover, they seem not to be responsible for those outcomes precisely *because* they are unavoidable. These latter scenarios help reinforce the intuition that responsibility *is* somehow grounded in difference making.

Compatibilists could, of course, try to argue that the kind of difference making that these scenarios suggest that responsibility is grounded in is compatible with determinism. The problem is that it is not at all obvious how they could do that. Imagine, for example, that a compatibilist were to suggest that what is missing in these cases is a simple counterfactual form of difference making (following some ideas in Ayer 1954). According to a view of this kind, agents can be responsible for an act or a choice in virtue of the fact that, *if* the actual sequence of events had been different in some important way (for example, if they had tried to do otherwise), *then* they would have done otherwise. This form of difference making—a counterfactual ability to do otherwise—is clearly compatible with determinism. This view would explain why I am not responsible in, for instance, the sharks case: I am not responsible because it is not the case that, if I had tried to do otherwise, I would have done otherwise (I would still have failed to save the child even if I had tried to save him). The problem with this proposal is that Frankfurt-style cases undermine the idea that responsibility requires this form of difference making in the same way that they undermine the idea that responsibility requires

9. He could still be responsible in virtue of some earlier act, for example, if he had plotted to make the window shatter and had hired Suzy and Billy to carry out his plan. (This mirrors a feature of causation that I mentioned above; see the fourth comment at the end of section 2.)

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alternative possibilities. Agents in Frankfurt-style cases are responsible for their choice even if, had they tried not to make that choice, they would still have made the same choice (due to the neuroscientist's intervention). For example, Suzy is responsible for her choice in the Suzy and the Neuroscientist case even if, had she tried not to make that choice, she would still have ended up making the same choice.

The challenge that the compatibilist faces, then, is this: even if responsibility does not require difference making in the sense captured by access to alternative possibilities, it still seems to require difference making of a certain kind, and it still seems to be grounded in difference making of a certain kind, as the examples we have reviewed illustrate. However, the most obvious compatibilist accounts of difference making plainly fail to capture the sense in which responsibility is grounded in the ability to make a difference. A way of putting this worry to rest is to provide a new account of difference making that can successfully capture the way in which responsibility is grounded in difference making, and then to show that this new form of difference making is compatible with determinism.<sup>10</sup>

I will argue that compatibilists can do this by shifting from DM1-based accounts of difference making to DM2-based accounts. In a nutshell, the proposal will be that a key responsibility-involving relation (the "making-responsible" relation) is a difference-making relation, not in the sense of difference making captured by DM1, but in the sense captured by DM2.

Recall that our focus is on compatibilist views that endorse the Frankfurt-style objection to the alternative-possibilities model of responsibility. Frankfurt-style cases motivate a view of responsibility radically opposed to the alternative-possibilities model. According to this kind of view, moral responsibility is, in some important sense, a function of *actual sequences*. Responsibility for a choice, for example, depends on the actual sequence issuing in the choice. The way in which Suzy came to make her choice in Suzy and the Neuroscientist (the actual sequence of events leading to the choice) makes her responsible for her choice. Since the neuroscientist didn't have to intervene, he is not part of the actual

10. It is not enough, I believe, to give a compatibilist account of responsibility that simply entails that the agent is not responsible in those cases (as, for example, Fischer and Ravizza 1998 try to do). We want an account that entails that the agents in those cases are not responsible *because* they don't make a difference. At the very least, compatibilists would be in a much better dialectical position if they could give such an account.

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sequence leading to her choice, and thus his presence is irrelevant to Suzy's responsibility for her choice. Following common contemporary usage, I will call a view of this kind an "actual sequence view of responsibility" (see, for example, Fischer 2006, 23).<sup>11</sup>

Now consider the following principle:

**DM1–RESPONSIBILITY:** Responsibility requires difference making in that X makes S responsible for Y (or is part of what makes S responsible for Y) only if Y would have been absent if X had been absent.

According to an actual sequence view of responsibility, this principle is false. The actual way in which Suzy made her choice in Suzy and the Neuroscientist makes her responsible for her choice, although, had that actual sequence been absent, Suzy would still have made the same choice (as a result of the neuroscientist's intervention). In contrast, a form of compatibilism that required something like the counterfactual ability to do otherwise discussed above would entail **DM1–RESPONSIBILITY**. According to a view of this kind, the way in which you come to make a choice can make you responsible for that choice only if you would have refrained from making that choice under different circumstances. In other words, according to a view of this kind, the "making-responsible" relation is a **DM1**–relation: X can make S responsible for Y (or be part of what makes S responsible for Y) only if X makes a difference to Y in that Y would have been absent if X had been absent. As we have seen, Frankfurt-style cases seem to show that the making-responsible relation is not, in fact, a **DM1**–relation.

But consider, in contrast, this other principle:

**DM2–RESPONSIBILITY:** Responsibility requires difference making in that X makes S responsible for Y (is part of what makes S responsible for Y) only if X's absence would not have made S responsible for Y (it would not have been part of what makes S responsible for Y).

**DM2–RESPONSIBILITY** is, like **DM1–RESPONSIBILITY**, a compatibilist-friendly principle of responsibility because it postulates only a counterfactual requirement on responsibility, which is compatible with

11. See also Sartorio 2011 for a more precise account of the central thought that these views attempt to capture.

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the truth of determinism.<sup>12</sup> DM2–RESPONSIBILITY states that the making-responsible relation is a DM2–relation. When X makes you responsible for Y, X makes a difference to Y, not in the sense that Y wouldn't have occurred in X's absence, but in the sense that you wouldn't have been responsible for Y *in virtue of* X's absence. (You could still be responsible for Y in virtue of something else, but not in virtue of X.) The intuitive thought that it attempts to capture is that something cannot genuinely contribute to making you responsible for some other thing—in other words, you cannot be responsible for that other thing in virtue of it—unless its absence wouldn't have made you responsible for that same thing.

Note that, just like DM1–RESPONSIBILITY, DM2–RESPONSIBILITY does not intend to be a full-blown view of responsibility but only a necessary condition for responsibility. Unlike DM1–RESPONSIBILITY, the condition that DM2–RESPONSIBILITY sets on responsibility appeals to the concept of responsibility itself; hence, it is a nonreductive condition. Despite this, it is a substantial condition that is designed to capture an important aspect of responsibility: the difference-making aspect of responsibility.

In the next section I argue for DM2–RESPONSIBILITY. My argument will have two parts. I will start by motivating the principle by appeal to some specific cases. In particular, I will use the same examples that seemed to undermine DM1–RESPONSIBILITY: Frankfurt-style cases. I will argue that, while Frankfurt-style cases challenge DM1–RESPONSIBILITY, they don't challenge DM2–RESPONSIBILITY; on the contrary, they seem to support it. Next, I will draw attention to more general considerations that support DM2–RESPONSIBILITY. These considerations help us understand why the principle works in the specific cases we looked at, and they also help us see how the principle flows from the nature of responsibility itself and the way in which responsibility attaches to agents.

12. In particular, note that DM2–RESPONSIBILITY is importantly different from an incompatibilist principle in the neighborhood: the principle according to which responsibility for something requires “the ability to avoid responsibility” for that thing. For a defense of principles along these lines, see McKenna 1997, Otsuka 1998, and Wyma 1997. For criticism of these principles, see Fischer 1999 and Pereboom 2001.

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## 3.2.

Consider, again, our example of a Frankfurt-style case: Suzy and the Neuroscientist. Note that, whereas the events in the actual sequence issuing in Suzy's choice make her responsible for it, the absence of those events wouldn't have made her responsible for it (even if she still would have made that same choice, as a result of the neuroscientist's intervention). For example, imagine that the actual sequence included the event of Suzy's evaluating her reasons to throw the rock and her judging that those reasons are weighty. Call this judgment "J." (Clearly, J is part of what makes Suzy responsible for her choice.) Now imagine that the neuroscientist would have intervened before she could make judgment J, triggered by some relevant sign. Then, in the counterfactual scenario where the neuroscientist intervenes, Suzy doesn't make judgment J. In that counterfactual scenario, Suzy still makes the choice to throw the rock, as a result of the scientist's intervention. But, clearly, in that scenario, her not making judgment J doesn't contribute to making Suzy responsible for her choice. Similarly for any element in the actual sequence leading to her choice: its absence would not have made Suzy responsible for her choice in the counterfactual scenario where the neuroscientist intervenes. The same is true of any Frankfurt-style case since agents in Frankfurt-style cases are not responsible for their choice in the counterfactual scenario where the neuroscientist intervenes. If they are not responsible for their choices, then nothing contributes to making them responsible for those choices, in particular, the absence of certain elements that are present in the actual sequence doesn't contribute to making them responsible.<sup>13</sup>

So far, we have seen that, in a Frankfurt-style case, if something is part of the actual sequence that makes the agent responsible for the choice, its absence in the counterfactual scenario where the neuroscientist intervenes would not have similarly contributed to making the agent

13. It is possible to imagine a different kind of case where Suzy would have been responsible even if the neuroscientist had to intervene. Imagine, for example, that Suzy hired the neuroscientist to guarantee that she would make the choice to throw the rock and then took a pill that erased her memory of having hired the neuroscientist. In this case, Suzy would have been responsible for her choice to throw the rock even if the neuroscientist had to intervene. However, she would be responsible in virtue of having hired the neuroscientist, not in virtue of failing to make judgment J. So it is true even in this case that, if J is part of what actually makes her responsible for her choice, J's absence would not have similarly contributed to making her responsible for her choice.

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responsible for the choice. This is not all that DM2–RESPONSIBILITY attempts to claim, though. We should read DM2–RESPONSIBILITY (and any other substantial principle that postulates a link between responsibility and difference making) as claiming that responsibility requires the relevant kind of difference making in the sense that responsibility is *grounded in* that kind of difference making. In other words, it is partly *because* the agent makes a difference of that kind that the agent is responsible. In what follows, I argue that, in Suzy and the Neuroscientist, the actual sequence makes Suzy responsible for her choice partly because its absence would not have made her responsible for it. In other words, Suzy is responsible for her choice in virtue of the actual sequence partly because the absence of the elements in the actual sequence wouldn't have contributed to making her responsible for that choice.<sup>14</sup>

Contrast the role of Suzy in Suzy and the Neuroscientist with the role of Jimmy in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case.<sup>15</sup> Imagine that we decide to hold Jimmy responsible for the shattering on the basis of the fact that he decided to wear his hat when he knew that this would result in Suzy's throwing her rock at the window, and hence in the shattering. Then we would *also* have to say that, had Jimmy decided *not* to wear his hat, his not wearing the hat would have made him responsible for the shattering, for he also knew that not wearing the hat would result in Billy's throwing his rock, and hence in the shattering. But, intuitively, this cannot be: it cannot be that both wearing the hat and not wearing the hat would have made Jimmy responsible for the same thing. Hence we should conclude that Jimmy is not responsible for the shattering in virtue of wearing his hat.

In other words, in scenarios where there is a certain *symmetry* between the grounds for responsibility provided by an actual sequence

14. I argued for a similar result in Sartorio 2011 (see also Sartorio forthcoming). There I was particularly interested in the role of alternative possibilities in responsibility: I argued that, according to the best version of an actual-sequence view of responsibility, there is a sense in which responsibility is grounded in alternative possibilities. But I didn't then analyze the relation between that claim and the claim that responsibility is grounded in difference making, and I didn't examine the different possible conceptions of difference making captured by DM1 and DM2. The role of difference making in responsibility is my main focus here.

15. Earlier, in section 3.1 above, I motivated the idea that responsibility requires difference making by appeal to three cases (the sharks case, the train case, and the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case). Here I focus exclusively on the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case. I revisit the other two cases in the next section (section 4 below).

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of events and its absence, the agent is not responsible in virtue of that sequence of events. This suggests that, in a Frankfurt-style case, where there *isn't* such a symmetry between the actual sequence and its absence, the fact that there isn't such a symmetry (or the fact that there is the relevant *asymmetry*) partly grounds the agent's responsibility in that case. This is to say, the agent in a Frankfurt-style case is responsible for the choice partly because the actual sequence leading to the choice makes a difference of the DM2-kind.

Now, at this point, the following worry might arise. There is an important difference between the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy scenario and a typical Frankfurt-style scenario: namely, whereas Jimmy was *aware of* the fact that the shattering would take place in either case (if he had worn his hat or if he hadn't), an agent in a typical Frankfurt-style case (such as Suzy in Suzy and the Neuroscientist) is unaware of the presence of the neuroscientist, and thus she is unaware of the fact that she couldn't have made a different choice.<sup>16</sup> So it might be suggested that what accounts for Jimmy's lack of responsibility in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case is not DM2-RESPONSIBILITY but, more simply, the fact that he was aware of the fact that the window would shatter no matter what.

But such a proposal would fail. Imagine a variation on Suzy and the Neuroscientist in which Suzy is aware of the neuroscientist's presence. Although she knows that she cannot avoid making the choice to throw the rock, she is a true vandal and looks forward to being part of the window-shattering process. So she makes the choice to throw the rock completely driven by her own reasons, not at all influenced by her awareness of the neuroscientist's presence and his plans. Intuitively, Suzy is responsible for her choice in this case too. This is so even if she was aware of the fact that she couldn't have made a different choice. Intuitively, merely knowing that something is inevitable doesn't absolve you of responsibility for that thing, if you willingly decided to contribute to its occurrence to satisfy your evil or selfish desires.<sup>17</sup> Unlike Jimmy, Suzy can be responsible, in

16. The assumption that Jimmy is aware of Suzy's and Billy's plan is important given the ultimate point that I want to make with the example. Had Jimmy been unaware of Suzy's and Billy's plan, then his lack of awareness that the window was in any kind of danger would have been sufficient to explain why he is not responsible for the shattering. I want an example where the only explanation available (or the best one) is that Jimmy's actions didn't make a difference.

17. Frankfurt would clearly agree with this (see Frankfurt 1969). Of course, Suzy might not have been blameworthy if the circumstances had been different. Imagine, for example, that Suzy knows that if she makes the choice on her own (without the

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virtue of having made the choice on her own. For, had she *not* made the choice on her own, then her not making the choice on her own clearly *wouldn't* have made her responsible (if she had refused to make the choice on her own, she wouldn't have been responsible for the choice). The fact that Suzy is responsible because she made the choice on her own, even if she knew that she would have made the same choice if she hadn't made it on her own, suggests that what explains why Jimmy is not responsible for the shattering in virtue of wearing the hat cannot be that he knew that the shattering would still have occurred even if he hadn't worn the hat.

I have argued that, in a Frankfurt-style case, where an agent is responsible in virtue of the actual sequence leading to the choice, the absence of the actual sequence wouldn't have made the agent responsible for the choice; moreover, the fact that the absence of the actual sequence wouldn't have made the agent responsible for the choice is part of what makes it the case that the agent *is* responsible for the choice in the actual scenario in virtue of the actual sequence. In other words, the responsibility of an agent in a Frankfurt-style case is partly grounded in the fact that the actual sequence makes a difference of the DM2 kind. This supports DM2-RESPONSIBILITY. In particular, it shows that DM2 RESPONSIBILITY succeeds where DM1-RESPONSIBILITY fails: Frankfurt-style cases do not undermine but support DM2-RESPONSIBILITY.

Why does DM2-RESPONSIBILITY succeed where DM1-RESPONSIBILITY fails? I believe it's because DM2-RESPONSIBILITY captures an important aspect of the concept of responsibility. Let me explain.

Recall that DM2-RESPONSIBILITY states that responsibility is grounded in difference making in that a key responsibility-involving notion, the relation of *making responsible*, is difference making (in the sense of DM2). Now, let us ask: What is the nature of the "making-responsible" relation? What kind of relation is it? Presumably, it is a kind of *grounding*

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neuroscientist's intervention), then this will result in a person's being spared a horrible torture. Presumably, she is not blameworthy for her choice and the shattering in this case, if she makes the choice on her own so that the person will be spared the torture. But, in the original case, where she does it only to cause destruction, she is blameworthy. By contrast, as I have pointed out, even if Jimmy puts on his hat with similarly evil intentions (wishing to contribute to the window shattering), this still doesn't make him responsible for the shattering because he doesn't succeed in making a difference, even if he hopes and tries his best to make one. Thanks to an anonymous referee for pressing me on this point.

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relation. When X makes S responsible for Y (or is part of what makes S responsible for Y), X provides *grounds* for S's responsibility for Y, in other words, S is responsible for Y *in virtue of X*.<sup>18</sup> This is the kind of relation that, according to actual-sequence views of responsibility, obtains between the actual sequence and the agent's responsibility for his or her act: on these views, actual sequences are the ultimate grounds for responsibility.

Now, it is quite plausible to believe that grounding relations are DM2-relations. For a fact F to ground another fact G, it seems to require that the absence of F wouldn't also have grounded G. For imagine that G occurs in virtue of F. Could G have occurred in virtue of F's absence, too? It seems not. If F's absence would have done equally well, then it seems that F itself didn't play any role in grounding G, after all.

Obviously, this is all at a very intuitive level. So I don't want to rest too much weight on the claim that all grounding relations are DM2-relations (although I do believe that it is plausible to think that they are).<sup>19</sup> Fortunately, DM2-RESPONSIBILITY can be motivated by more specific considerations about the *type* of grounding relation that the making-responsible relation is.

The argument goes as follows. A widespread view of responsibility (and one that is particularly common in the literature on free will) takes the concept of responsibility to be intimately tied to the concept of *desert*. According to this view, being responsible for an action is a matter of being related to the action in a way that makes the agent *deserving of* an expression of some appropriate reactive attitude, such as blame or praise.<sup>20</sup> If we understand responsibility in this way, the grounds of responsibility are those facts in virtue of which the agent deserves the expression of such reactive attitudes. Now, it seems clear that, if a fact makes the agent deserve the expression of a certain reactive attitude, say, blame, the absence of that fact *couldn't* also make the agent deserve the expression of the same attitude. Although it certainly could be the case that blame would also be an appropriate reaction toward the agent in

18. For a recent discussion of the grounding relation, see Schaffer 2009.

19. For an argument that a grounding relation in epistemology (the relation of epistemic support between evidence and beliefs) is also a DM2-relation, see Comesaña and Sartorio forthcoming.

20. The relevant kind of desert is sometimes referred to as "basic desert" because the idea is that, when agents are responsible for their acts, they deserve credit or blame *just* by virtue of having performed those acts (and not, for example, by virtue of consequentialist considerations having to do with the value of the consequences of the acts). See, for example, Pereboom 2007, 86.

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different circumstances, it couldn't be the case that a fact and its very absence would make the agent equally deserving of blame.

To illustrate this, imagine that an assassin shot his victim. If he hadn't chosen to shoot her, he would have chosen to stab her (he is completely determined to kill her and has been carrying with him a gun and a knife in order to get the job done). The assassin deserves blame for the choice to shoot his victim. He would also have deserved blame if he hadn't chosen to shoot her, because then he would have chosen to stab her. However, what would have made him deserving of blame in that case is the choice to stab her, not his not choosing to shoot her. A choice and the absence of that very choice couldn't *both* be deserving of blame. This just seems to be a basic fact about desert.

We can use this fact to explain the intuitive reaction we had in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case, discussed above. We can't blame Jimmy for the shattering based on the fact that he decided to wear the hat that day. For, if he deserved blame because he wore the hat, then he would also have deserved blame if he hadn't worn the hat. But this would result in some serious form of injustice where his behavior wouldn't be getting the reaction that it truly deserves. This seems to be the key difference between the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case and scenarios where the agent is responsible, such as the Frankfurt-style case discussed above (Suzy and the Neuroscientist). The difference is a difference in what the agents *deserve* in light of how they came to perform their actions. The way in which Suzy came to act makes Suzy deserving of blame in Suzy and the Neuroscientist; in contrast, the way in which Jimmy came to act doesn't make Jimmy deserving of blame in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case.

As we have seen, the association of responsibility with desert strongly supports the claim that the making-responsible relation is a DM2-relation. It also helps explain why DM2-RESPONSIBILITY succeeds where DM1-RESPONSIBILITY failed (in the treatment of Frankfurt-style cases). I conclude that DM2-RESPONSIBILITY captures an important way in which responsibility is tied to difference making.

#### **4. Making Responsible Is Making a Difference because Making Happen Is Making a Difference**

Let us summarize the main conclusions of the last two sections. In section 2, I briefly examined the claim that causation requires difference making. I drew attention to the fact that DM1-CAUSATION (the principle that causation is a DM1-relation) seems to succumb to examples involving

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backup causal routes. On the other hand, DM2–CAUSATION (the principle that causation is a DM2–relation) doesn't succumb to those examples; on the contrary, it is motivated by the contrast between those scenarios where there is causation and scenarios where causation seems absent apparently due to the fact that there is no difference making. In section 3, I examined the claim that moral responsibility requires difference making (again, by appeal to some suggestive examples). I drew attention to the fact that DM1–RESPONSIBILITY (the principle that the making-responsible relation is a DM1–relation) seems to succumb (together with the principle of alternative possibilities) to Frankfurt-style examples. On the other hand, DM2–RESPONSIBILITY (the principle that the making-responsible relation is a DM2–relation) doesn't succumb to those examples; on the contrary, it is motivated by the contrast between those scenarios where the agent is responsible and scenarios where the agent seems not to be responsible due to the fact that there is no difference making. I will now suggest that these results are connected. They are connected in the way that, on reflection, one should expect them to be connected.

Again, according to an actual-sequence view of responsibility, responsibility is a matter of how the actual sequence unfolds. Now, it is natural to understand what constitutes the actual sequence in causal terms: the actual sequence leading to, say, a choice includes those events antecedent to the choice that causally contributed to the choice (or the relevant subset of that sequence of events). On this view, responsibility for a choice is a function of the elements that actually played a role in bringing about the choice.<sup>21</sup> It is natural, then, to make the following connections between the previous results.

First, *DM1–RESPONSIBILITY is false because DM1–CAUSATION is false*. In Suzy and the Neuroscientist, the actual sequence issuing in Suzy's choice makes her responsible for her choice, although she wouldn't have made a different choice in the absence of the actual sequence. This is to say, DM1–RESPONSIBILITY fails. Moreover, from the standpoint of an actual-sequence view of responsibility, according to which responsibility is

21. This is all very rough. In Sartorio 2011, I discuss different possible ways of understanding the claim that responsibility is a function of actual sequences. I argue that the best way to understand it is as a supervenience causal claim. I also argue that we should understand the view as intending to capture the metaphysical conditions of responsibility only (sometimes called the "freedom" conditions) and not other potential conditions for responsibility such as epistemic conditions.

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a function of the actual causal sequence, it is natural to suggest that this is due to the fact that the elements in the actual sequence issuing in Suzy's choice causally resulted in her choice even if the choice didn't counterfactually depend on them (that is to say, even if she would have made the same choice in their absence). In other words, the reason DM1-RESPONSIBILITY fails is that DM1-CAUSATION fails: Suzy is responsible for her choice because of the actual sequence leading to her choice, and the actual sequence leading to her choice is constituted by the actual causes of the choice, which brought about the choice even if the choice didn't counterfactually depend on them.

Second, *DM2-RESPONSIBILITY is true because DM2-CAUSATION is true*. Part of my argument for DM2-RESPONSIBILITY was based on a contrast between Frankfurt-style scenarios, where the agent is responsible in virtue of the actual sequence, and scenarios where a certain sequence of events and the absence of that sequence would have made a similar contribution to the agent's responsibility, and thus where the agent is not responsible in virtue of that sequence of events (the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case). I argued that agents in Frankfurt-style cases are responsible partly because they are not like Jimmy, in that respect. On the basis of DM2-CAUSATION, we can explain why it is that, when a certain sequence of events and the absence of that sequence would have made a similar contribution to the agent's responsibility, the agent is not responsible in virtue of that sequence of events. This is because the events in that sequence are not genuine causes, and thus they are not part of the actual causal sequence, according to an actual-sequence view of responsibility. Since they are not part of the actual causal sequence, they do not make the agent responsible. As we have seen, this is what happens in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case: wearing the hat and not wearing the hat would have made a similar contribution; hence Jimmy is not responsible for the shattering in virtue of wearing the hat because his wearing the hat is not part of the actual causal sequence.

By appeal to DM2-CAUSATION, we can similarly explain the lack of responsibility by agents in the other examples that we used to motivate the idea that responsibility requires difference making: the sharks case and the train case (section 3.1 above). In the sharks case, failing to jump into the water doesn't make the relevant kind of difference because, given the presence of the sharks, there isn't the required contrast between what it contributes to the child's death and what its absence (that is, my act of jumping in) would have contributed to it. My failing to jump into the water, then, doesn't cause the child's death. Hence, it follows from an

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actual-sequence view of responsibility of the kind I am envisaging that I cannot be responsible for failing to save the child in virtue of having failed to jump in. Similarly for the train case: flipping the switch or diverting the train doesn't make the relevant kind of difference to the victim's death because, partly due to the fact that the train would have equally reached the victim through the other track, there isn't the required contrast between what the flipping of the switch contributes to the victim's death and what its absence (the failure to flip the switch) would have contributed to it. My flipping the switch is then not a cause of the victim's death. It follows from an actual-sequence view of responsibility of the kind I am envisaging that I cannot be responsible for the victim's death in virtue of having flipped the switch.

There is a general lesson to be drawn from these examples (which we hinted at before, in section 3.1). It is that, although making a difference is only a necessary condition for responsibility, it is a necessary condition that is not always easily met. In particular, merely wanting to make a difference, forming certain intentions, and acting on those intentions are not enough. Again, even if I really want the drowning child to die and decide not to attempt a rescue so that the child drowns, I don't contribute to the drowning by failing to attempt a rescue. Even if I flip the switch wanting the victim on the tracks to die, I don't contribute to the death by flipping the switch. And even if (in the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case) Jimmy puts on the hat that triggers Suzy to throw the rock, wanting for the window to shatter, he doesn't contribute to the shattering by putting on his hat. The agents in these scenarios escape responsibility because they fail to make a difference, even if they do everything in their power to make one. The facts of the world conspire against those agents in such a way that they become mere bystanders in the situation, as opposed to genuine participants. As a result, they lack the capacity to make the difference required for responsibility.

We have seen that the two principles of difference making based on DM2, DM2-CAUSATION and DM2-RESPONSIBILITY, come together nicely over the background of an actual-sequence view of responsibility. According to the view that results, responsibility requires difference making because (a) responsibility is a function of actual causes, and (b) causation requires difference making. Responsibility doesn't require difference making of the DM1-kind because causation doesn't require difference making of that kind; however, given that causation requires difference making of the DM2-kind, responsibility also requires difference making of the DM2-kind. In other words, it

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is part of the essence of responsibility that something cannot make you responsible unless its absence would not have made you responsible. This is so because it is part of the essence of causation that something cannot be a cause (thus, it cannot be part of the actual causal sequence) unless its absence would not have been a cause (thus, unless its absence would not have been part of the actual causal sequence).

On this view, responsibility is grounded in difference making. The kind of difference making it is grounded in is happily consistent with the truth of determinism. If agents are sometimes free and responsible, then this will be in virtue of the actual causal sequence issuing in their acts and choices. But in order for something to be part of the actual sequence, it will have to be causally efficacious, and in order for it to be causally efficacious, it will have to make the right kind of difference. Again, responsibility is grounded in difference making because it is grounded in causation, and causation is a difference-making relation.

It might seem surprising that a simple point like this can be the answer to the question: how, if at all, is responsibility grounded in difference making? But there are three main reasons why the answer was not immediately obvious. First, although causation seems to be a difference-making relation, as we have seen, it is hardly evident how the difference-making nature of causation should be spelled out (in particular, the most obvious way of understanding difference making, DM1, fails to capture the sense in which causes are difference-makers). Second, although actual sequences are clearly seen as something like causal histories by proponents of actual-sequence views of responsibility, very little attention has been paid to the concept of causation and the properties of the causal relation in the development of those views. And, finally, as we have seen, the debate about whether responsibility is tied to difference making has been consistently conflated with the debate about whether responsibility requires access to alternative possibilities. As a result, the fate of the thought that responsibility is grounded in difference making has been incorrectly tied to the success or failure of Frankfurt-style cases in establishing that responsibility doesn't require alternative possibilities. Frankfurt-style cases have enjoyed all of the attention when they should have enjoyed only part of it.

When (in section 3.2 above) I gave my general argument for DM2-RESPONSIBILITY, I argued that the difference-making nature of the relation of making responsible results from the fact that it is a grounding relation (of a certain kind) and the fact that grounding relations (of that kind) are DM2-relations. Now, it is important to see

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that this is a claim that compatibilists and incompatibilists alike could agree upon. Anyone who claimed that an agent's responsibility must be grounded in something could claim (and, to my mind, *should* claim) that a fact and its absence could not play the same grounding role.<sup>22</sup> What's distinctive about the view that I am recommending, then, isn't so much the claim that the grounds of responsibility are difference-makers but, rather, the *particular* type of grounds or difference-makers posited by the view: the claim that actual sequences are those difference-makers. As we have seen, it is *this* claim that helps compatibilists in their battle against incompatibilists. For it is this claim that helps compatibilists argue that those agents who are intuitively not responsible because they don't make a difference (the agents in the sharks case, the train case, and the Jimmy-Suzy-Billy case) are indeed not responsible because they don't make a difference.

The view that results, then, is at the same time substantial and well motivated. It is well motivated because it is motivated by plausible claims about the nature of moral responsibility, including (among other things) general claims about difference making that seem to be universally acceptable. And it is substantial because the view combines those general claims about difference making with more specific claims about what plays the difference-making role, which is what gives the theory its final content and shape. It is this particular combination of universal acceptability and substance that makes the view appealing.

## 5. Conclusion

I conclude that it is possible to make a difference in a deterministic world. It is even possible to make a difference that matters to responsibility. Compatibilists, and, in particular, actual-sequence theorists, should welcome this result. As I mentioned in the introduction, it is common for such theorists to concede that determinism rules out the ability to make a difference and to argue that responsibility is not grounded in difference making. This is, I think, a mistake. As we have seen, even assuming the success of Frankfurt-style cases, responsibility still resiliently appears to be grounded in difference making in an important way. I have suggested

22. For example, an agent-causal theorist would claim that, when an agent is responsible for a choice, his or her responsibility is grounded in the agent's being the agent-cause of the choice, but the same agent-causal theorist obviously wouldn't claim that the agent's responsibility could have been grounded in the agent's not being the agent-cause of the choice. Thanks to an editor of the *Philosophical Review* for bringing up this point.

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that, instead of resisting this appearance, compatibilists should embrace it wholeheartedly. I have argued that it is possible for compatibilists to do this in a principled way, by relying on a general distinction between two kinds of difference-making relations and explaining how the distinction fits within a compatibilist theory of responsibility.<sup>23</sup> The account I have offered here is, in particular, an ideal match for an actual-sequence view. Not only is there room for difference making in a view of this kind, but, also, it is possible to argue that a key notion in such a view, that of an actual sequence, is what plays the difference-making role. That is to say, not only is an actual-sequence view compatible with a role for difference-makers, but the ultimate grounds for responsibility according to a view of this kind, the actual sequences in question, *are* difference-makers.

Of course, incompatibilists could still try to argue that the form of difference making captured by this view is not the form of difference making ultimately required by responsibility—they could try to argue that responsibility requires difference making of a stronger kind, one that is incompatible with determinism. But if Frankfurt cases are indeed successful in casting doubt on the alternative-possibilities requirement, and if the account of difference making put forth here successfully captures whatever remains of the appearance that responsibility requires difference making, then the burden of proof is on the incompatibilist to show that responsibility requires a form of difference making that is incompatible with determinism.

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23. Hieronymi (2011) recently accused Fischer of conceding too much to the incompatibilist and claimed that it is possible for agents to "make a difference" even if determinism is true. But she did this by building her own notion of making a difference (a kind of "autonomy") instead of by working with a more neutral and independently motivated notion that even an incompatibilist would have to recognize as legitimate. So I don't count her efforts as a full-blown attempt to capture the appearance that responsibility is grounded in difference making. In particular, her view doesn't attempt to capture the intuition that agents are not responsible because they don't make a difference in scenarios like the sharks case or the diverted train case.

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