

## On the Narrativist Argument for Free Will: To What Extent Do We Have to Unify Modal Contexts?

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In this paper, I scrutinize the narrativist solution to the classic philosophical problem of free will and determinism. In Section I, I reconstruct Keiichi Noe's narrativist argument for free will and point out that its main point involves the rejection of determinism and the defense of free will, since no cause necessitates human actions. In Section II, I argue that Noe's argument is insufficient in its own right. While his argument might successfully refute the claim that the cause(s) that necessitates human actions is identifiable, it has no force against the claim that some action is necessitated by a cause. The full defense of free will needs to refute the latter rather than the former claim. In section III, I seek effective ways for the narrativist to argue against the necessity of actions. In this process, I locate a crucial difficulty with the narrativist strategy for the defense of free will. Noe's argument harmonizes with Shozo Ohmori's analysis of the assertability conditions of sentences about past events, according to which for an assertion about a past event to be appropriate, its content must at least be consistent with present robust resources-testimonies, accepted laws, and material evidence. However, this requirement is placed on sentences about past events, not on narrative sentences, which include a plot that concatenates two temporally separated events. Therefore, the analysis of assertability conditions of narrative sentences must include an additional condition about plots: the causal relation between the two temporally separated events concatenated by a plot is required to be consistent with accepted laws. Here, the narrativist argument for free will faces a difficulty. If the condition about plots requires that the relation between the two events referred to by a narrative sentence be consistent with physical laws (included in accepted laws), then the narrativist's strategy for the defense of free will, which relativizes the causal relations to narrative systems and thereby blocks physicalistic unification, fails. I then argue that the only way for the narrativist to overcome this difficulty is to deny the cross-contextual/cross-narrative-systematic application of modal concepts. Of course, more detailed considerations about modal concepts are needed to make this option attractive. Lastly, in Section IV, I explain how the theme of the journal's "de/contextualization" issue theme relates to this paper.