**Section 2: Hard Determinism from Philosophy, Science and Psychology**

**2a: Background to Hard Determinism:**

* As we have seen above ‘Hard Determinism’ is the belief that people have no free will at all.
* An analogy to illustrate the above is that a person’s life is like a tram running along fixed rails. Just as the tram has no choice but to run down the fixed tram lines, so a person has no choice but to follow pre-determined choices.
* For this section we will consider 3 further forms of Hard Determinism: Philosophical Determinism, Scientific Determinism and Psychological Determinism.

**2b. Philosophical Determinism: John Locke**

* We will consider philosophical determinism from John Locke (1632-1704).

**Past Causes**

* Locke developed a philosophical determinism theory based on the theory of past causes (a.k.a. Universal Causation) i.e. the belief, previously stated by Aquinas in his Cosmological Argument, that all actions and choices have a past cause.
* Therefore, Locke believed that all events that happen are determined by an unbreakable chain of past causes that cannot be escaped from.
* For example, the cause of my lateness to my class was that my mobile phone was not working so I did not know the time, the cause of my mobile phone not working was because I got it wet having a snowball fight with my children, the cause of the snowball fight was we were having fun whilst waiting for my friend to pick up my children, to go to their drama club, but he was late, the cause of my friend been late was a power cut in his street etc. Therefore, I was ultimately late for my RS class due to a set of passed causes over which I had no control.
* Therefore, if the above is correct and expanded out to everyone, and every situation, we find ourselves in then we could draw the conclusion that the future must logically be as fixed and unchangeable as the past.
* This is because we can look back and see that a set of past causes is fixed (we cannot change them – my neighbour was late) but these fixed causes continue to run forward affecting everything we do now and in the future e.g. making me late to my class.
* Later American philosopher William James supported Locke’s theory. James argued: **“Any other future set of outcomes than the one fixed from eternity is impossible.”**

**Free will is an illusion**

* From his above theory Locke created the phrase: “**free will is just an illusion**”.
* This is because people who believe they have free will are deluding themselves. People think they have free will because they think they can pause to reflect before making a choice.
* However, Locke believed that all such thoughts were in fact just the result of ignorance of past causes. This is because, Locke believed, most people do not have the intelligence (harsh!!) to see that there are no choices at all to be made.

**Analogy**

* Locke created his own analogy to illustrate the above theory.
* His analogy starts with a man who wakes up, in bed, in a room. The room, unknown to him, is locked from the outside. He chooses to stay in the room and have more rest, believing he has chosen freely to stay there.
* However, in reality he has no option but to stay in the room, it is only his ignorance of the locked door, that gave him an illusion of freedom.
* Just as it is the ignorance of causes that gives people the illusion of freedom.