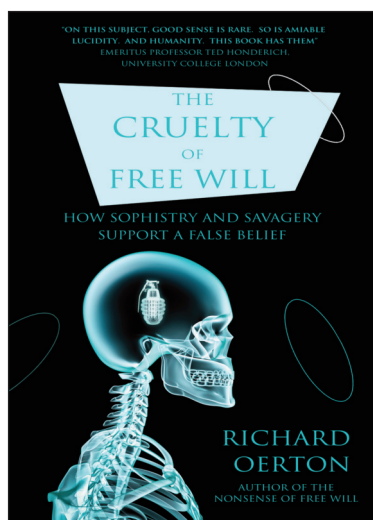




THE CRUELTY OF FREE WILL

Richard Oerton condemns the illusion of free will as harmful in his second book investigating the false belief

Richard Oerton, already the author of *The Nonsense of Free Will*, has now produced a sequel: *The Cruelty of Free Will*. It recapitulates the case against free will (so that it is self-contained) and then picks up where his earlier book left off by addressing two primary questions: why – and how – does free will belief persist so stubbornly? “Free will has always seemed to me a nonsensical idea,” explains Richard. “The view is shared by some philosophers and neuroscientists, but I wanted to put it across in a way that will appeal to the general reader.”

Following the success of his first book, described by New York Times bestselling author Sam Harris as ‘a wonderfully clear – and very clever – little book’, Richard presents a strong case for his assertion that belief of free will is destructive, fostering incomprehension and cruelty. He adds, “The belief persists because it seems to justify our urge to blame and to inflict suffering, but we close our eyes to the fact that we are all the products of biological and environmental luck for which none of us deserves to be blamed.”

Free will is thought to be a good thing and determinism a bad one, but Richard Oerton insists that we’ve got this the wrong way round. Our belief in free will allows us to think that those whose lives are bleak have only themselves to blame, and that criminals and other bad guys are embodiments of self-created wickedness deserving of retributive punishment – whereas in reality we should be exactly like them, and behave just as they do, if we had had the same biological inheritances and environmental influences. *The Cruelty of Free Will* asserts that human beings belong to what is still a savage species with few inhibitions against harming one another, and that we cling to the idea of free will mainly because it purports to justify the escape and expression of this savagery.

Having qualified as a solicitor in 1959, **RICHARD OERTON** has been a book review editor of the *Howard Journal* and has worked in private practice, in legal publishing and at the Law Commission. Richard has produced a number of legal and other articles, written and edited legal textbooks and written three non-legal books, including *The Nonsense of Free Will* (Matador, 2012).



PUBLICATION DATE 28TH NOVEMBER 2016

ISBN: 9781785899928

PRICE: £8.49

PRESS PACK

FOR AUTHOR INTERVIEWS, REVIEW OR COMPETITION COPIES, ARTICLES, PHOTOS OR EXTRACTS PLEASE CONTACT ALICE GRAHAM

TEL: 0116 279 2299 EMAIL: ALICE_GRAHAM@TROUBADOR.CO.UK

TROUBADOR PUBLISHING, 9 PRIORY BUSINESS PARK, WISTOW ROAD, KIBWORTH, LEICESTER LE8 0RX