Having your strings pulled:

An error theory for manipulation arguments

GUNNAR BJÖRNSSON

UMEÅ UNIVERSITY; THE UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

A number of incompatibilists about moral responsibility have argued that *causal heteronomy*—an agent's actions being deterministically caused by factors outside her control—is relevantly like forms of responsibility-undermining manipulation. If these incompatibilists are right, determinism undermines responsibility.

In the first part of the talk, I argue that correctly formulated, manipulation arguments survive standard compatibilist replies. Moreover, incompatibilists have a tempting explanation of why conflicting compatibilist intuitions would be erroneous: in theoretically uncommitted judges, such intuitions rely on blurring causal heteronomy; manipulation arguments work by making this fact salient.

In the second part of the talk, I consider error theories that would instead support compatibilism, including the hypothesis that we take manipulation to undermine responsibility because we take it to bypass the agent's rational control or her "real self". Here I argue that there are strong reasons to be suspicious of these explanations.

In the third and final part, I first argue that while the incompatibilist is correct that manipulation arguments work by making causal heteronomy salient, they also work by blurring certain agential features. The compatibilist can thus offer an error theory parallel to the incompatibilists. Before concluding, I suggest that this compatibilist account of intuitional error gains considerably support from an account of responsibility judgments that I have defended elsewhere on independent grounds.