

Intentional Selection

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6/25/25

Dedicated to the Kiwi Farms

It has been brought to my attention the weakness of a specific idea, and I know how to fix it.

The issue lies with something known as “natural selection”. Language reveals metaphysics, and this word is frequently used to denote selection forces happening in the wild by supposedly natural causes, which, although standard in biological discourse, suffers from a metaphysical shortcoming. The phrase suggests a passive, impersonal force shaping the development of life through “natural” causes. While functionally correct, it is a myopic and confused view, lacking the nuance of mind, being too narrow in its use. Its use even suggests this non understanding: when one says “natural selection caused this”, what they are admitting is that some thing did do the selection, but that the investigator doesn't know what that thing is, and so relies upon the claim from nature for his causative mechanism.

The impairment happens to be with the term “selection”, and a better understanding of it will improve clarity. To select is not simply to filter outcomes by algorithm or accident: it is an act of abstract thought. This problem is metaphysical in nature, and is from the mind category. This aspect of selection is often ignored, but it is its most important part: that some living, thinking, spirit took the responsibility upon themselves, given the chance, to make a choice.

This decision to choose, even when constrained by limited knowledge, carries weight. For if the underlying nature of reality resists total epistemological closure, then every act of choice is haunted by the shadow of what was not chosen. The opportunity cost is metaphysical: each selection excludes all others. This immediate consequence is lived. A certain opportunity cost is paid by the agent every time they select, and the bill is collected in the form of absence from and an inability to know of every other decision that could have been made instead.

The price can be ignored, and, like the objectivists do, one can claim that what one desires is all that they ever wanted anyway, and in their selfishness they retreat into themselves, whatever the cost carried by others around them.

Intentional selection is the view that all meaningful acts of selection require a chooser: a spirit or soul capable of weighing, valuing, and enacting decisions amidst alternatives that cannot all be known or foreseen.