

Subject: EM: So You Think You Have Free Will? | Lunch with Robert Sapolsky (March 26)
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Join Dr. Robert Sapolsky for a compelling lecture exploring the ideas behind his book *Determined: A Science of Life Without Free Will*. Drawing on neuroscience, psychology, and biology, Sapolsky examines the provocative argument that human behavior is fully shaped by prior causes rather than true free will. The talk will unpack how genetics, brain chemistry, environment, and past experiences interact to influence every decision we make. Through engaging examples and scientific insight, Sapolsky challenges long-held beliefs about responsibility, morality, and justice. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of what modern science suggests about why we do what we do—and what that means for how society judges human behavior.

Robert Sapolsky is a MacArthur “Genius” Fellow, a professor of biology, neurology and neurosurgery at Stanford University, and a research associate at the National Museum of Kenya. His 2008 National Geographic special on stress, and his on-line lectures about human behavioral biology, have been watched tens of millions of times. The humor and humanity he brings to sometimes-sobering subject matter make Dr. Sapolsky a fascinating speaker. He lectures widely on topics as diverse as stress and stress-related diseases, biology and the free will debate, the biology of our individuality, the biology of religious belief, depression, memory, schizophrenia, and Alzheimer’s disease. His book *Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst*, is a New York Times best-seller, Washington Post Best Book of 2017, and received the Los Angeles Times book prize. *Behave* has been translated into 16 languages. Sapolsky has also written *A Primate’s Memoir*, which won the 2001 Bay Area Book Reviewers Award in nonfiction, *Why Zebras Don’t Get Ulcers*, *The Trouble with Testosterone*, and *Monkeyluv and Other Essays on our Lives as Animals*. Dr. Sapolsky was awarded Rockefeller University’s Lewis Thomas Prize for Writing about Science for 2008. His articles have appeared in publications such as *Discover*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Dr. Sapolsky's lecture is sponsored by the Open Academy.

So you think have free will?

Determined

An Afternoon with Dr.
Robert Sapolsky

03 • 26 • 2026

Gann Quadrangle
12:15 PM

Pizza will be served

