Dependence analyses of actual causation

Most analyses of actual causation appeal to counterfactual dependence:

- Lewis (1973); Paul (1998); Halpern and Pearl (2005); Halpern (2016); Beckers (2016)

(3) If C caused E, then it was possible for C and E not to occur.

This implies effect contingency:

(4) Effect contingency

If C caused E,

E’s occurrence was not inevitable.

In these analyses of actual causation:

- Causation is understood as relating event types
- That is, counterfactual dependence relates whether or not an effect occurs with whether or not its cause occurs.

Since Socrates’ death had a cause, contemporary analyses wrongly predict that his death was not inevitable.

Causation does not require counterfactual dependence of any kind.

1. Socrates drinking poison caused an event, his death, which was bound to happen eventually.

2. Socrates’ death was inevitable. According to the *Phaedo*, it was caused by him drinking poison.

(1) and (2) are true.

∴ The very same thing can both:

be inevitable and have a cause.

∴ Causation does not require any counterfactual dependence from the cause to the effect.