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The Network Self

Relation, Process, and Personal Identity

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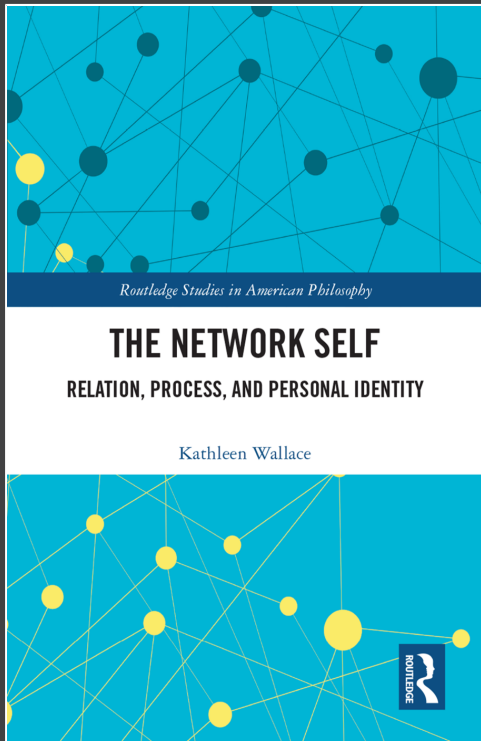
The concept of a relational self has been prominent in feminism, communitarianism, narrative self theories, and social network theories, and has been important to theorizing about practical dimensions of selfhood. However, it has been largely ignored in traditional philosophical theories of personal identity, which have been dominated by psychological and animal theories of the self. This book offers a systematic treatment of the notion of the self as constituted by social, cultural, political, and biological relations. The author's account incorporates practical concerns and addresses how a relational self has agency, autonomy, responsibility, and continuity through time in the face of change and impairments. This cumulative network model (CNM) of the self incorporates concepts from work in the American pragmatist and naturalist tradition. The ultimate aim of the book is to bridge traditions that are often disconnected from one another—feminism, personal identity theory, and pragmatism—to develop a unified theory of the self.

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