



Neuro-Philosophy and the Healthy Mind: Learning from the Unwell Brain

Georg Northoff MD PhD

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Applying insights from neuroscience to philosophical questions about the self, consciousness, and the healthy mind.

Can we “see” or “find” consciousness in the brain? How can we create working definitions of consciousness and subjectivity, informed by what contemporary research and technology have taught us about how the brain works? How do neuronal processes in the brain relate to our experience of a personal identity? Where does the brain end and the mind begin?

To explore these and other questions, esteemed philosopher and neuroscientist Georg Northoff turns to examples of unhealthy minds. By investigating consciousness through its absence?in people in vegetative states, for example?we can develop a model for understanding its presence in an active, healthy person. By examining instances of distorted self-recognition in people with psychiatric disorders, like schizophrenia, we can begin to understand how the experience of “self” is established in a stable brain.

Taking an integrative approach to understanding the self, consciousness, and what it means to be mentally healthy, this book brings insights from neuroscience to bear on philosophical questions. Readers will find a science-grounded examination of the human condition with far-reaching implications for psychology, medicine, our daily lives, and beyond.

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