



The Remembered Self: Emotion and Memory in Personality

Jefferson A. Singer, Peter Salovey

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In *The Remembered Self* Jefferson A. Singer and Peter Salovey persuasively argue that memories are an important window into one's life story, revealing characteristic moods, motives, and thinking patterns. Through experimental evidence, clinical case material, and examples from literature, the authors offer a fresh perspective on the role of memory in personality and clinical psychology. They demonstrate how certain repetitive memories help shape our emotional responses to present situations. These same memories are in turn re-remembered and mis-remembered through the lens of our most passionate goals. Singer and Salovey discuss the specific role of mood's influence on what and how we remember, and they explain how a person's self-defining memories may serve as archetypes of the personality's most central themes. The authors also show how identifying and understanding key narrative memories can lead to more effective psychotherapy. Finally, the authors propose that a renewed emphasis on conscious thought and narrative memory may provide an integrative bridge among personality, social, clinical, and cognitive psychologists. Such an approach, the authors argue, could reduce the tension between heavily quantitative psychologists and qualitatively oriented phenomenologists, leading to a more inclusive and complex vision of the whole person. Organized in four parts, the book begins by introducing a new theoretical perspective on memory content and organization in personality and goes on to present research evidence in support of this theory. The second part illustrates how memory content can be influenced by mood states, attentional processes, and biases of the self. The third part of the book links the previous theoretical and experimental work to the practice of psychotherapy. Finally, the last chapter attempts to locate the philosophy and methods advocated in the book into a larger debate occurring at present in psychology. Unlike the conventional psychoanalytic approach to memory which concentrates on what is forgotten, Singer and Salovey treat memory in a new and different way with an emphasis on what is remembered. Theirs is a bold new theory of memory and self that is both comprehensive and accessible.

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