



Narrative Identity and Personal Responsibility

Linda Ethell

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Narrative Identity and Personal Responsibility is about why and how identifying ourselves by means of narrative makes it possible for us to be responsible, morally and otherwise. The book begins as an investigation into how it is that we can hold people responsible for who they are, despite the fact that we have almost no control over our lives in our formative years. It explains the relation between representation, personal identity, and self-knowledge, demonstrating how awareness of the vulnerability of our identity as persons is the origin of our capacity for the cathartic revision of a self-identifying narrative which is the condition of moral awareness.

Innovative in its interdisciplinary juxtaposition of ethics, moral psychology, literary theory and literature, *Narrative Identity and Personal Responsibility* develops a sophisticated and comprehensive account of human nature. This book offers an intuitively satisfying and humane yet rigorous account of why and how we think of ourselves as simultaneously free and constrained by nature. Its fundamental thesis, the mediation of narrative representation between agent and the world, suggests new answers to old problems in moral psychology, such as the question of free will and responsibility.

With a more literary style than many philosophy texts, it works through a series of interconnected problems of as much interest to a thoughtful layperson as to academic philosophers.

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