Models of Self and Pathologically Divided Minds

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Abstract:
What is the self? Is it a transcendental principle as many past philosophers (such as Descartes) have supposed, ensuring diachronic and synchronic unity both at, and through, stretches of time? Or is it an empirical construct, as most scientists and many contemporary philosophers claim? If an empirical construct, then diachronic and synchronic unity arise as separate and potentially separable features. The fractured selves reported from the psychiatric clinic (in conditions such as dissociative identity (multiple personality) disorder, and some forms of psychosis) force us to consider the normative implications of these differing conceptions of selves and their unity.

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