

The Mythomanias: The Nature of Deception and Self-deception



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Recently, there has been a renewal of interest in the broad and loosely bounded range of phenomena called deception and self-deception. This volume addresses this interest shared by philosophers, social and clinical psychologists, and more recently, neuroscientists and cognitive scientists. Expert contributors provide timely, reliable, and insightful coverage of the normal range of errors in perception, memory, and behavior. They place these phenomena on a continuum with various syndromes and neuropsychiatric diseases where falsehood in perception, self-perception, cognition, and behaviors are a peculiar sign. Leading authorities examine the various forms of "mythomania," deception, and self-deception ranging from the mundane to the bizarre such as imposture, confabulations, minimization of symptomatology, denial, and anosognosia. Although the many diverse phenomena discussed here share a family resemblance, they are unlikely to have a common neurological machinery. In order to reach an explanation for these phenomena, a reliable pattern of lawful behavior must be delineated. It would then be possible to develop reasonable explanations based upon the underlying neurobiological processes that give rise to deficiencies designated as the mythomanias. The chapters herein begin to provide an outline of such a development. Taken as a whole, the collection is consistent with the emerging gospel indicating that neither the machinery of "nature" nor the forces of "nurture" taken alone are capable of explaining what makes cognition and behaviors aberrant.

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