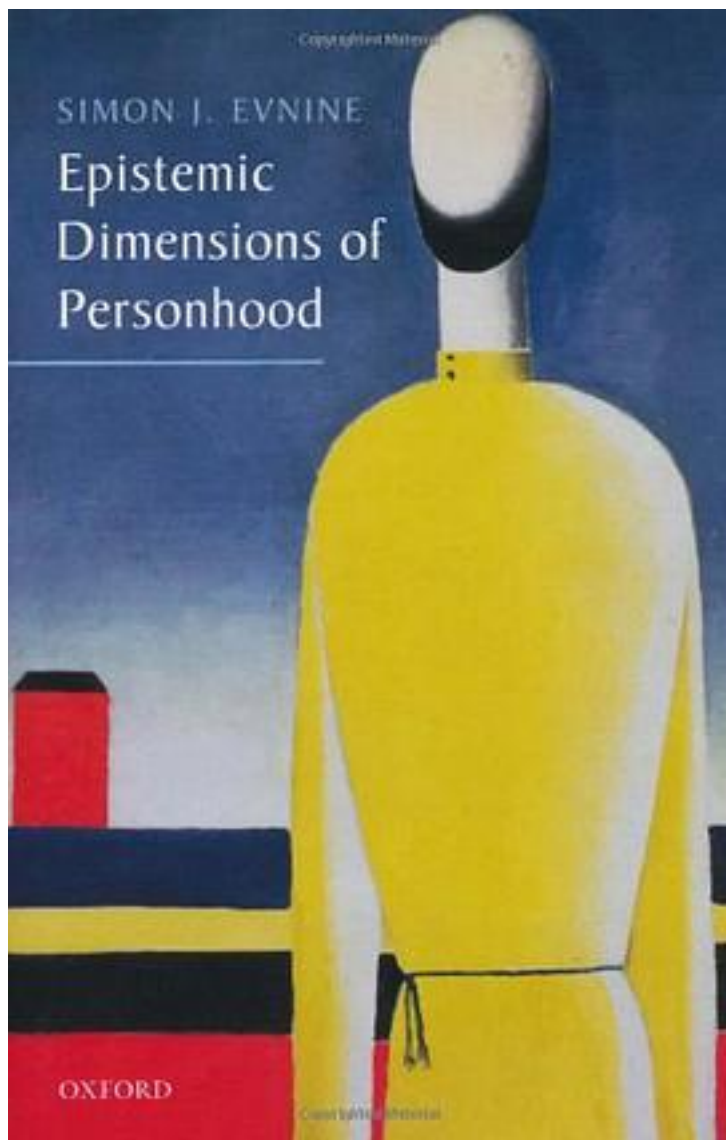


# Epistemic Dimensions of Personhood



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Simon Evnine examines various epistemic aspects of what it is to be a person. Persons are defined as finite beings that have beliefs, including second-order beliefs about their own and others' beliefs, and are agents, capable of making long-term plans. It is argued that for any being meeting these conditions, a number of epistemic consequences obtain. First, all such beings must have certain logical concepts and be able to use them in certain ways. Secondly, there are at least two principles governing belief that it is rational for persons to satisfy and are such that nothing can be a person at all unless it satisfies them to a large extent. These principles are that one believe the conjunction of one's beliefs and that one treat one's future beliefs as, by and large, better than one's current beliefs. Thirdly, persons both occupy epistemic points of view on the world and show up within those views. This makes it impossible for them to be completely objective about their own beliefs. Ideals of rationality that require such objectivity, while not necessarily wrong, are intrinsically problematic for persons. This 'aspectual dualism' is characteristic of treatments of persons in the Kantian tradition. In sum, these epistemic consequences support a traditional view of the nature of persons, one in opposition to much recent theorizing.

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