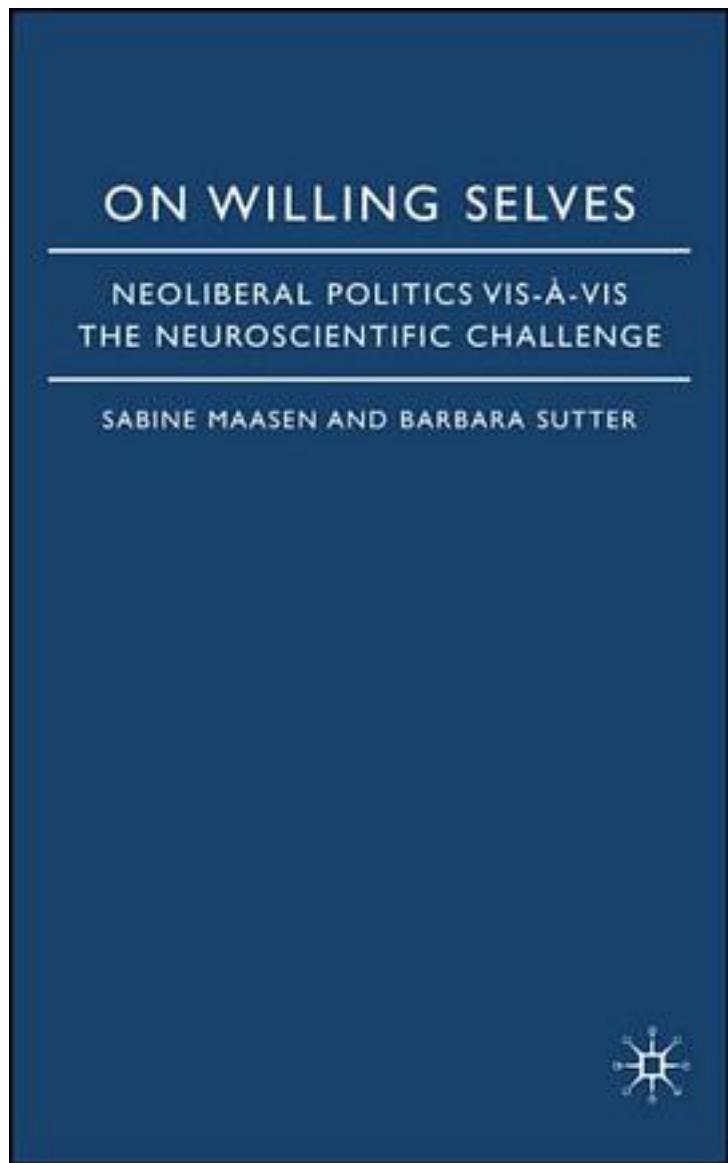


On Willing Selves



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Postmodern theories heralded the "death of the subject", and thereby deeply contested our intuition that we are free and willing selves. In recent times, the (free) will has come under attack yet again. Findings from the neuro- and cognitive sciences claim the concept of will to be scientifically untenable, specifying that it is our brain rather than our 'self' which decides what we want to do. In spite of these challenges however, the willing self has come to take centre stage in our society: juridical and moral practices ascribing guilt, or the organization of everyday life attributing responsibilities, for instance, can hardly be understood without taking recourse to the willing subject. In this vein, the authors address topics such as the genealogy of the concept of willing selves, the discourse on agency in neuroscience and sociology, the political debate on volition within neoliberal and neoconservative regimes, approaches toward novel forms of relational responsibility as well as moral evaluations in conceptualizing autonomy.

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