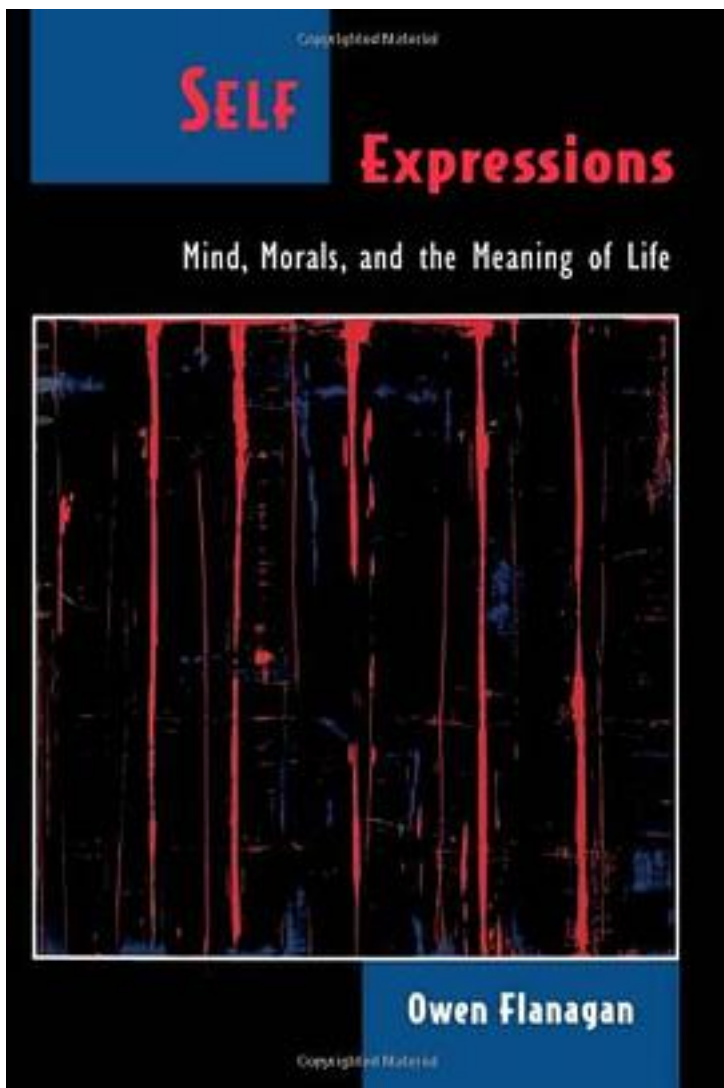


Self Expressions



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Product Description

Human beings have the unique ability to consciously reflect on the nature of the self. But reflection has its costs. We can ask what the self is, but as David Hume pointed out, the self, once reflected upon, may be nowhere to be found. The favored view is that we are material beings living in the material world. But if so, a host of destabilizing questions surface. If persons are just a sophisticated sort of animal, then what sense is there to the idea that we are free agents who control our own destinies? What makes the life of any animal, even one as sophisticated as Homo sapiens, worth anything? What place is there in a material world for God? And if there is no place for a God, then what hold can morality possibly have on us--why isn't everything allowed? Flanagan's collection of essays takes on these questions and more. He continues the old philosophical project of reconciling a scientific view of ourselves with a view of ourselves as agents of free will and meaning-makers. But to this project he brings the latest insights of neuroscience, cognitive science, and psychiatry, exploring topics such as whether the conscious mind can be explained scientifically, whether dreams are self-expressive or just noise, the moral socialization of children, and the nature of psychological phenomena such as multiple personality disorder and false memory syndrome. What emerges from these explorations is a liberating vision which can make sense of the self, agency, character transformation, and the value and worth of human life. Flanagan concludes that nothing about a scientific view of persons must lead to nihilism.

作者介绍:

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