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Medicine : Public Health

Wallace, Rodrick, Fullilove, Mindy T.

Collective Consciousness and Its Discontents:

Institutional distributed cognition, racial policy, and public health in the United States

- Applies a multiple-workspace version of Dr. Wallace's earlier consciousness model to large-scale institutional cognition
- Uses the extended theory to understand recent patterns of interaction between public policy and public health in the U.S.

An earlier book by Rodrick Wallace entitled *Consciousness: A Mathematical Treatment of the Global Neuronal Workspace Model*, introduced a formal information-theoretic approach to individual consciousness implementing approaches developed previously by the cognitive scientist Bernard Baars and the philosopher Fred Dretske. This book takes a more formal 'groupoid' perspective and generalizes the results of that book to processes of 'distributed cognition' characteristic of large institutions that can entertain several, sometimes many, simultaneous 'global workspaces' which must compete for resources while communicating and cooperating. Equivalence classes of 'states' produce a network of language-analogs characterizing interacting cognitive modules which entertain multiple workspaces. Equivalence classes of these language-analogs produce dynamical manifolds describing temporal processes carried out by multiple-workspace institutions.

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