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Philosophy 203
Topics in Philosophy:
PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY OF IDENTITY
&
History 200
Topics in History:
HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF IDENTITY

The Colorado College
Block 6, Spring 2008
Newberry Library, Chicago

Course Description

The issue or problem of “identity” emerged with modernity. Whereas pre-modern people often found themselves embedded in extended families or family-like groups and took solace in “higher” rational or spiritual life, modern peoples have become attuned to fluid personal and group ties and relatively doubtful of rational or spiritual transcendence, while becoming eager to break burdensome ties, move elsewhere, and “find themselves.”

But finding oneself has turned out to be simultaneously challenging and problematic. For much of the modern period, many Western peoples found themselves *truly* to be citizens, nationalists, rationalists, pragmatists – and especially members of nuclear families. But what of the “others” – the “irrational” women, the “lesser” natives, the sexual “deviants” the stateless communities, the people uncomfortable with modern family life? And what of the influential postmodern Western self who finds within a rich yet unpredictable existence caught in a shifting global order?

Our course will explore the meanings of and problems associated with personal and group identities across time and space, building on the notion that modernity is both liberating and, often, confusing. After a brief introduction to historical and philosophical approaches to identity during the first week, students will develop their own research projects exploring one aspect of the problem of identity using the rich resources of the Newberry Library.

Course Goals

A primary aim of the course will be to introduce students to some basic philosophical and historical approaches to understanding identity – both in personal and political, social, or cultural senses. The course will explore dilemmas and controversies associated with such approaches to identity.

An equally important aim of the course will be to give students experience doing primary source research and turning the results of their research into a critical essay on a topic of their choice.

Finally, the course will also seek to develop students’ ability to make judgments or develop interpretations on controversial issues, using philosophical principles and arguments in combination with historical evidence developed through research in primary document collections.

Course Requirements

Reading. This course will have a somewhat heavy yet quite rewarding reading list during the first week. Students will be expected to keep up with that reading. Plan to spend a fair amount of time reading *before* attending class and, at times, re-reading after class. In general, texts are to be brought to our meetings so that they may be referred to in our discussions. After the first week, students will be expected to spend a significant amount of time searching out, reading, and summarizing primary source materials.

Seminar Discussion and Writing Workshops. Course meetings during the first week will consist largely of discussion. Students should expect to attend class meetings consistently and punctually; and to discuss the subjects and texts under investigation in a civil manner. Performance in discussions will largely determine the participation grade. In week three, students will be placed small groups, in which rough drafts of the research papers will be circulated. Each small group will meet to discuss critically the rough draft, and students will be evaluated on the verbal and written feedback they give to classmates.

Writing. Students will write a five-page prospectus and annotated bibliography by the middle of the second week. That document will serve as the basis for discussions with the faculty about their research projects. The primary assignment of the course is the writing of a 15-20 page research paper, based on the Newberry Library's collections. Although students are welcome to cite secondary literature in their papers, the essay must be based on an interpretation of primary sources. In class, we will discuss at length the difference between primary and secondary sources. Please refer to *The Chicago Manual of Style* for guidance in documenting your essay. Provide a bibliography at the end of the paper, and separate primary and secondary sources in it.

Required Readings

- John Locke, selections from *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), ed. Roger Bishop Jones, downloaded from *Humanum* (Research Institute for the Humanities, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1994, 1995): <<http://www.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Philosophy/Locke/echu/>>, accessed 30 October 2004.
- _____, "Of Slavery" and "Of Property," in *Two Treatises of Government*, Book II (1689, 1764), downloaded from *The Online Library of Liberty* (Liberty Fund, 2005): <http://oll.libertyfund.org/EBooks/Locke_0057.pdf>, accessed 1 September 2005.
- Richard White, selections from *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge UP, 1991).
- Jean-Paul Sartre, "Bad Faith," in *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology* (1943), excerpted in *Existentialism: Basic Writings*, eds. Charles Guignon and Derk Pereboom (Hackett, 1995).
- _____, "Official Portraits" and "Faces" (1939) in *The Writings of Jean-Paul Sartre*, vol. 2, *Selected Prose* Northwestern UP, 1974).
- _____, "The Humanism of Existentialism" (1945), in *Existentialism*, eds. Guignon and Pereboom.
- David M. Halperin, selection from *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* (Routledge, 1990).
- Frantz Fanon, "Concerning Violence," in *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (Grove Press, 1963).
- Francis Robinson, "The British Empire and Muslim Identity in South Asia," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Ser., Vol. 8 (1998), pp. 271-89.
- Linda Martín Alcoff, selections from *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (Oxford UP, 2006).
- Alasdair MacIntyre, "Virtues, the Unity of Life, and the Conception of Tradition," in *After Virtue* (Notre Dame University Press, 1981, 1984).
- Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutman (Princeton University Press, 1994).

Note: all readings will be on electronic reserve at the Colorado College library at this address:

<http://coloradocollege.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=640>

Grading and Attendance Policies

Grades will be assigned on an 100-point scale and weighted in the following manner:

1. Seminar participation	First week	20%
2. Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography	Wed., 27 Feb.	10%
3. First draft	Wed., 5 Mar.	10%
4. Oral and written feedback in groups	Thurs., 6 Mar.	10%
5. Final paper	Wed., 12 Mar.	<u>50%</u>
TOTAL:		100%

Regular, timely attendance and active participation in the seminar discussions are an essential part of the course – worth 20% of your final grade. Unexcused absences and tardiness will be noted and will affect grades negatively. If you have a good reason to be absent or late, notify us as soon as possible. Be sure to write a note (so that we remember!), as well as to speak to us.

The schedule of assignments appears above. Students will be expected to meet all of these deadlines. Exceptions will be made only in extreme and unavoidable circumstances. If you expect to submit a draft or paper late, contact us immediately. Either see us in our offices, or give us a note or an e-mail message explaining your circumstances. If religious observances or other serious obligations conflict with the course schedule, let us know as soon as possible, and we can work out an alternate schedule for you.

Plan to attend class for the whole period, focusing on coursework throughout. “Attending for the whole period” means, among other things, that you will not leave class to visit the restroom, get a drink of water, chat with friends, call Mom on the cell, and the like. We will take a break about after about an hour and 20 minutes – that is when you may leave class (except in an emergency, of course). If you have a good reason for arriving late or leaving early, please notify us in advance. ***As a courtesy to all, please turn off all telephones and electronic devices while in class, including notebook computers.*** Note that this entire syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructors.

Honor Code

Students will be expected to abide by the Honor Code. Among other things, the Honor Code specifies that you will be responsible for producing all of your own work and that you will always cite the works or ideas of others used in your work. However, discussing your ideas and your writing with others is *not* a violation of the Honor Code. In fact, it is a good idea to compare your ideas and writings with those of others and to ask others for criticisms of your work. And using other people’s ideas can also be a good idea – ***if*** their ideas are good ***and*** you credit the authors for developing the ideas.

Disability Accommodations

If you believe you are eligible for learning accommodations as the result of a qualified disability, please contact us privately. If you believe you may have a disability that impacts learning, and you have not identified yourself to the College’s Disabilities Services Office, please do so immediately. You may also contact the College’s learning consultant, Dr. Bill Dove, at the Learning Center or directly at extension 719-389-6168. We will make appropriate learning accommodations in accordance with the Disabilities Service Office’s instructions.

Office Hours/Communication

We will be available most days when class is not in session in our offices at the Newberry Library. The easiest way to meet with us would be to make an appointment after class, or via e-mail (dmcennerney@coloradocollege.edu, bragan@coloradocollege.edu). In an emergency, try Dennis’ (719-232-8220) or Tip’s (719-232-3898) cell phone.

Dinners and Events

We will have three class dinners at restaurants in town, about once per week. In addition, we will schedule a visit to Hull House, the settlement house that social reformer Jane Addams established in 1889 to support and assimilate ethnic immigrants to the United States.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EVENTS

Note: All assignments are to be completed *before* class.

Week 1: Themes in the Philosophy and History of Identity

- Monday, 18 February Introduction – Problems of Identity
 -10 am: Orientation & tour (meet in the Newberry Library lobby)
 -1:30–5 pm: Film & discussion – “The Return of Martin Guerre”

No reading assigned.
- Tuesday, 19 February Forming Early Modern Identities: Separation versus Accommodation
 -10 am: Introduction to library services (meet in 3rd floor reference room)
 - 3-5 pm: Discussion

Readings:
 Locke, “Of Identity and Diversity” (1689) pp. 1-14.
 Locke, “Of Slavery” and “Of Property” (1690) pp. 1-6.
 White, *The Middle Ground*, pp. ix-xvi, 1-10, 50-93, 518-23.
- Wednesday, 20 February Searching for the Self: Bad Faith and History
 -3-5 pm: Discussion

Readings:
 Sartre, “Bad Faith” (1943) pp. 306-26.
 Sartre, “Official Portraits” and “Faces” (1939), pp. 64-71.
 Sartre, “The Humanism of Existentialism” (1945) pp. 268-86.
 Halperin, “One Hundred Years of Homosexuality,” pp. 15-40.

Evening: Class dinner, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, 21 February Resisting Identities and Imperialism
 -3-5 pm: Discussion

Readings:
 Fanon, “Concerning Violence,” pp. 30-65.
 Robinson, “The British Empire and Muslim Identity in South Asia,” pp. 271-89.
- Friday, 22 February Feminism, and the Problem of Contemporary Western Identities
 -3-5 pm: Discussion

Readings:
 Alcoff, “The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory” and “The Metaphysics of Gender and Sexual Difference,” pp. 133-76.
 MacIntyre, “Virtues, Unity of Life, and Concept of Tradition,” pp. 204-25.
 Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” pp. 25-73.

Week 2: Library Research

- Monday, 25 February - Researching Sources
 Wednesday 27 February -Individual research in the Newberry Library’s collections.
 -Informal meetings with faculty throughout the days.
- Wednesday, 27 February Topics and Evidence
-PROSPECTUS & ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE AT NOON.
- Thursday, 28 February Conferencing
 -Individual meeting with faculty throughout the days.
- Evening:* class dinner, 7 p.m.

Weeks 3-4: Drafting

- Friday, 29 February – Continued Research and Paper Drafting
 Wednesday, 5 March -Individual meetings with faculty throughout the days.
- Wednesday, 5 March Draft Deadline
-FIRST DRAFT DUE AT NOON.
- Thursday, 6 March Writing Workshops
 -Small group meeting to critique drafts throughout the day.
- Evening:* class dinner, 7 p.m.
- Friday, 7 March – Writing and Revision
 Wednesday, 12 March -Individual meetings with faculty throughout the days.
- Monday, 10 March Field Trip (tentative)
 -Visit to Hull House, Jane Addams’ settlement house – time TBA
- Wednesday, 12 March **FINAL PAPER DUE AT NOON.**

FURTHER READING

Inquiry into the meaning and lived experience of identity cuts across many fields, including sociology and anthropology (often focusing on the construction of collectivities in particular times and places); psychology (typically examining the development of “the self”); political science (analyzing the success or failure of national or subcultural group formations); and, of course, history in many forms (national and cultural identity, the intellectual history of the idea, the historical forms of the selves and groups, among others). In philosophy, investigations of identity tend to fall into three main categories: accounts of personal identity; inquiry into the logic of identity; and examination of social or political identity.

Below is a very unsystematic collection of references to works in each of these areas that Tutt Library owns, as well as a few important works that Tutt does not yet own. Articles and books appearing in the syllabus are not listed below.

In some cases, the works below are extremely important; others appear here just because our library carries them and a brief look at the book or article suggested that it might be worth some study. Dennis added a comment or two to some entries. Bear in mind, however, that this bibliography is a work-in-progress. Some important works are neglected, and some of the works here are probably not that significant. This list is offered to give students a sense of what else might be available on the broad topic of identity; however, for this course, it is neither necessary nor advisable to spend more time looking at secondary sources.

Identity – Logical and Analytic Accounts

Avrum Stroll. “Identity.” In *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 4., pp. 121-124.

Gottlob Frege. “On Sense and Reference,” trans. Max Black, *The Philosophical Review* 57 (1948), pp. 207-230.

Commonly regarded as one of the founding works of the analytic philosophical tradition.

Baruch Brody. *Identity and Essence*. Princeton University Press, 1980.

Milton K. Munitz, ed. *Identity and Individuation*. New York U. Press, 1971.

David Wiggins. *Sameness and Substance Renewed*. Cambridge U. Press, 2001.

Martin Heidegger. *Identity and Difference*. University of Chicago Press, 2002.

More in the way of a historical account that debunks logical analysis.

Personal Identity – Philosophical Accounts

Eric T. Olson. “Personal Identity.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
<<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-personal/>>.

David Shoemaker. “Personal Identity and Ethics.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
<<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-ethics/>>.

A very useful overview of the literature – a good place to start.

Terence Penelhum. “Personal Identity.” In *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 6, pp. 95-107.

The first section contains a good, short historical introduction to the problem of identity.

- Raymond Martin and John Barresi, ed. *Personal Identity*. Blackwell, 2003.
Very comprehensive collection of articles on the philosophy of personal identity. The introduction presents an extremely thorough (and long) overview of every major Western thinker's view of personal identity. The subsequent articles cover mainstream (largely analytic) philosophical accounts of identity published since 1970.
- Diana Tietjens Meyers. *Feminists Rethink the Self*. Westview Press, 1997.
Provocative collection of essays by feminist philosophers calling into question the more mainstream philosophical accounts of identity.
- Derek Parfit. "Personal Identity." In *The Philosophical Review* 80:1 (January 1971), pp. 3-27.
Often regarded as the most influential 20th-century account of personal identity – one that belittles the focus on identity.
- Derek Parfit. *Reasons and Persons*. Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Christine M. Korsgaard. "Personal Identity and the Unity of Agency: A Kantian Response to Parfit." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 18:2 (Spring, 1989), pp. 101-132.
- John Perry, ed. *Personal Identity*. U. California Press, 1975.
A good collection of the historical literature on personal identity, including influential works by Locke, Butler, and Hume, as well as the 1971 Parfit article.
- "Personal Identity." *Social Philosophy & Policy* 22: 2 (Summer, 2005).
A journal issue devoted to the topic of personal identity.

Social and Political Identity – Philosophical Accounts

- Cressida Heyes. "Identity Politics." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
<<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-politics/>>.
- Linda Martín Alcoff. *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*. Oxford U. Press, 2006.
A philosophical inquiry into contemporary identities and identity politics, focusing on gender and race.
- Patchen Markell. *Bound by Recognition*. Princeton U. Press, 2003.
A work of political theory questioning whether justice requires recognition.
- Shane Phelan. *Identity Politics: Lesbian Feminism and the Limits of Community*. Temple U. Press, 1989.
- Anne Norton. *Reflections on Political Identity*. Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1988.
- Ross Abbinett. *Culture & Identity: Critical Theories*. Sage, 2003.
- Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Harvard U. Press, 1992. [Originally published in Canada as *The Malaise of Modernity*.]
A short exploration of the problems and possibilities of modern notions of self-fulfillment.
- Jeff Noonan. *Critical Humanism and the Politics of Difference*. McGill-Queen's U. Press, 2003. [Not owned by CC]
- Kwame Anthony Appiah. *The Ethics of Identity*. Princeton, 2005.
An expansion of the essay in the Taylor *Multiculturalism* book.

Historical Approaches to the Self and Identity

Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, Harvard U. Press, 1989.

Jerrold Seigel, *The Idea of the Self: Thought and Experience in Western Europe since the Seventeenth Century*, Cambridge U. Press, 2005.

Raymond Martin and John Barresi, *The Rise and Fall of Soul and Self: An Intellectual History of Personal Identity*, Columbia U. Press, 2006.

Social and Political Identity – Sociological and Cultural Accounts

Benjamin Barber. *Jihad vs. McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy* (Ballantine Books, 1995, 2001)

A sprawling popular book connecting the rise of parochial identifications to the threatening anonymity of the global market order.

Hetherington, Kevin. *Expressions of Identity: Space, Performance, Politics*. London: Sage, 1998.

Focuses on expressivity and performance, and the ways in which “the new social movements” are not necessarily agents of social change but are instead a more heterogeneous phenomenon.

Richard Jenkins. *Social Identity*. Routledge, 1996.

Examines identity from a traditional sociological and anthropological perspective.

Jean-François Bayart. *The Illusion of Cultural Identity*. U. Chicago Press, 2005.

Critiques Anglo-American interest in identity, using classic sociological and political arguments to dispute the significance of cultural identity.

Gordon Matthews. *Global Culture / Individual Identity: Searching for Home in the Global Supermarket*. Routledge, 2000.

Ethnographic anthropological study of identities in Japan, the U.S., and Hong Kong, questioning whether unique cultural identities exist.

Ernest Gellner. *Culture, Identity, and Politics*. Cambridge U. Press, 1987.

Reflections of prominent anthropologist on the contemporary condition.

Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood, ed. *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*. Zed Books, 1997.

Essays on identity from a post-colonial perspective.

Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman, eds. *Modernity and Identity*. Blackwell, 1992.

A collection of conference papers on modernity and postmodernity that addresses the transformation of identity in a world marked by fluidity and change.

Manuel Castells. *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, Vol. II: The Power of Identity*. Blackwell, 1997.

Sprawling inquiry into the rise of new forms of identification in an age in which globalization and massive information flows undermine states and traditional forms of organizing.

Barbara Ryan, ed. *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York U. Press, 2001.

Very thorough collection of essays on the problems and promise of identity politics, especially as it involves feminist movements.

Rina Benmayor and Andor Skotnes. *International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories, Vol. III: Migration and Identity*. Oxford U. Press, 1994.
Histories of identities in transition in a globalizing world.

Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 1983, 2006.
One of the most influential accounts of how peoples come to acquire nationalist identifications.

Keywords: Identity: For a Different Kind of Globalization. Other Press, 2004. [Not owned by CC]
A collection of philosophical essays about the meaning of identity as seen from the perspectives of scholars from Africa, the United States, the Arab world, China, Europe, and India.

Psychological Approaches to Personal and Social Identity

Erik H. Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers*. International Universities Press, 1959.

_____, *Identity, Youth, and Crisis*. Norton, 1968.

Donald M. Taylor. *The Quest for Identity: From Minority Groups to Generation Xers*. Praeger, 2002.
Examines collective identities, especially among disadvantaged, dysfunctional minority groups.

Cynthia Burack. *Healing Identities: Black Feminist Thought and the Politics of Groups*. Cornell U. Press, 2004.
Psychoanalytic inquiry into identity politics, its problems and possibilities, as seen from a Black feminist perspective.

Theodore R. Sarbin and Karl E. Scheibe. *Studies in Social Identity*. Praeger, 1983,
Essays building on a model of “social identity” as developed by social psychologists and covering a wide range of topics and behaviors.

Marilyn B. Brewer and Miles Hewstone. *Self and Social Identity*. Blackwell, 2004.
Essays from the *Blackwell Handbook on Social Psychology* addressing the interplay between the individual self and collective selves.