

Negotiating Identity

COMM089.002

Fall 2009

Room 204, Dey Hall, TTH 12:30-1:45pm

Class Leaders:

Meg Kassabaum	Email: kassabau@email.unc.edu
Yannick Louis-Charles	Email: yannick@email.unc.edu
Karla Martin	Email: ksmartin@email.unc.edu

Office Hours: 309 Battle Hall, Research Laboratories of Archaeology
--- by appointment only ---

COURSE OBJECTIVES: We all struggle to understand identity. "Who am I?" is a practical question that everyone grapples with when asked to introduce themselves, fill out personal information on a form, or make important life decisions. Moreover, "Who am I?" is an enduring philosophical question that scholars across the academic disciplines have debated for well over two millennia.

Broadly, *identity* is a term commonly used in academic discourse to describe the set of characteristics that identifies a person or group as a unique entity. In other words, one's identity is the answer to the question, "Who am I?". How do we decide what is included in that set of characteristics? Does what is included change with time or situation? Can our identity be both a cause and a consequence of the circumstances in which we find ourselves?

This course will explore how identities, whether of individuals or groups, are produced, maintained, transformed, resisted and shared. Students will be introduced to various theoretical perspectives that are used to make sense of identity ranging from biology and statistics, to anthropology and sociology, to business, education, and philosophy. We will explore these different perspectives by discussing issues of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, nationalism, class, and many other sources and shapers of identity.

HOW TO SUCCEED: This class will employ a variety of methods of instruction including lecture, class discussion, and small group interaction. As such, we expect you to be an active participant. The general objectives listed above and the specific ones we will discuss in class are your guides to the course material. They indicate the issues we will focus on in class, what you should look for in the readings, and what you will be expected to know and apply for writing assignments and class projects. To get the most out of this course—and to get a good grade—you will need to attend everyday, read the assigned materials, participate actively in discussions, and turn in all assignments described below. We encourage you to ask questions, express concerns, question one another and us, and interact with the material as much as possible. If you have questions that cannot be addressed in class or are having problems with the material, please come see us.

PARTICIPATION: Your active participation in this course will count for 10% of your final grade. Participation will be graded according to the following rubric:

Grade	Criteria
0	Absent.
1	Present, not disruptive. Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much to the discussion. Demonstrates very infrequent involvement and may or may not have read all the readings. Sometimes posts to Blackboard "Discussion Board".
2	Demonstrates adequate preparation for class: has completed all readings and understands the basic concepts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them. Offers straightforward information (e.g.: facts and comments straight from the reading), without elaboration or very infrequently. Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on. Often posts to Blackboard "Discussion Board".
3	Demonstrates good preparation for class: knows all of the readings well, has thought through implications of them. Offers interpretations and analysis of the day's material to class (i.e.: more than just facts). Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion. Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement. Often posts to Blackboard "Discussion Board".
4	Demonstrates excellent preparation for class: has analyzed all of the readings exceptionally well, relating them to other material (e.g.: previous readings, lectures, discussions, fieldtrips, etc.). Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of readings (e.g.: puts together pieces of the discussion to take the class further). Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion by keeping analysis focused, responding very thoughtfully to other students' comments, suggesting alternative ways of approaching material, etc. Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement. Always posts to Blackboard "Discussion Board".

ATTENDANCE: Prompt attendance at all classes is required and will count as 10% of your final grade. An attendance roll will be circulated each day and absences or tardiness not approved in advance by your instructors will lower your final grade. Grading for attendance will be as follows: 1 missed – no penalty; for each additional missed class, you will lose 1% of the total 10%. Thus, after 10 missed classes (5 weeks) no attendance points will be available. Timely requests for absences must be made and accompanied by appropriate documentation.

COURSE WEBSITE: We will use Blackboard as a web page for the course. We will post the course syllabus, links to related web pages, and email links to make it easy to contact us. We will also post assignments, changes to the syllabus and announcements. You should check Blackboard frequently, especially if you miss a class.

READINGS: All assigned readings are required for Tuesday unless you are told otherwise. Class lectures and discussions will build on and complement information and ideas presented in the readings. If you do not keep up with the readings, you will find it hard to follow the discussions in class and contribute meaningfully to your journal. In order to enhance class

discussion and get your perspective on the readings, you will be required to post one question, comment, or observation on the day's readings to the Blackboard "Discussion Board" by 9am on the day the readings are due. If you get stuck, refer to the reading handout for prompts.

JOURNAL: Major aims of this course are for students to define identity, its common types, and to understand how identity is transmitted throughout society. To this end, writing assignments will be used to assess student progress throughout the semester. Students shall keep a course journal, which will document students' perceptions of their own identity and their responses to lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. Journals may also be used for students to pose questions regarding the class. Writing assignments (at minimum 1 pg. per week) should be posted to Blackboard (in the Assignments section) 4 hours before Thursday's class. Your journal writing will be worth 25% of your final grade and will be graded according to the time, effort and independent thought put into each entry.

MIDTERM PAPER: Who are you? Create a written autobiography (4-6 pages). Discuss the circumstances, memories, and experiences that have been most influential in your life journey. Particularly look at your "identity" as we have defined it in class. Examine how sex, gender, race, ethnicity, region, nation, class, economics, religion, etc. have evolved in your story and shaped your identity. Due October 27. Your midterm paper will be worth 15% of your final grade and will be graded according to a rubric that will be passed out in class (and posted on Blackboard).

CREATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY: This assignment will have two parts, both to be turned in at the end of the semester on one of the three days set aside for student presentations. Together, these two parts will account for 30% of your final grade and will be graded according to rubrics that will be passed out in class (and posted on Blackboard).

Part 1: Personal Statement (5-7 pages)

Recall our discussion of personal identity on the first day of class. What characteristics did you use to identify yourself and why? Consider your midterm paper, class discussions, and readings over the last few weeks and then re-examine your choices. If you were to re-introduce yourself, would these still be the most salient to you? Has your perception of your identity changed in any way, and if so, in what ways? For example, is there any aspect of your identity that you did not consider as important before but now do, and vice versa? Finally, discuss how you negotiate, transmit, brand, or market your identity.

Part 2: In-Class Presentation (7 minutes maximum)

Design a creative presentation that shares your identity with the class. For example, you could write a poem, perform a song or dance, create a Powerpoint presentation, share a piece of artwork, create an ad or commercial for yourself.

Most importantly, we want your projects to reflect what you have learned about yourself throughout the semester and for you to be creative with how you display to your classmates who you are.

FINAL GRADE: Grades will be calculated as follows: 10% attendance, 10% participation, 10% group presentation, 15% midterm paper, 25% journal writing, 30% creative autobiography.

Grading Scale

A = 93-100	A- = 90-92	B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72	D = 60-69	F = below 60

CLASSROOM COURTESY: During the course we will be addressing a number of sensitive issues about which we may feel very strongly. At times, we may also feel confused or uncertain about our feelings. Our objective is to turn discussions into opportunities to learn as much as possible, not just about issues, but also about us. This objective depends on our ability to establish a safe and trusting environment for all to speak and share and explore their views and feelings. It is essential we hear—and listen—to as many viewpoints as possible. To facilitate this, we will make every effort to start and end classes on time. In return, we ask that you arrive before sessions begin and stay until they are over. As usual, please turn off your cell phones and all other electronic noisemakers!

OFFICE HOURS/EMAILING: We will be happy to meet with you outside of class. To provide maximum flexibility, we have not scheduled regular office hours. If you want to meet with one of us, you can make an appointment by talking to us after class, or by sending an email message. We encourage you to use email to set up appointments with us or ask **brief** questions about discussions and assignments. We will try to respond to your email messages promptly (within 24 hours unless we are sick or out-of-town). However, you should not expect email messages sent after 5 pm (and especially late night messages) to be answered until sometime the following day.

DISABILITY SERVICES INFORMATION: The office location listed at the beginning of this syllabus is not accessible to the disabled, any disabled student who wishes to meet with us should make an appointment by email in advance and we will find another meeting location. Additionally, if you have a medical condition/disability that may require reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to this course, please contact the Department of Disability Services at 962.8300, on the internet at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/eligibility/index.html> or via email at disabilityservices@unc.edu

HONOR CODE: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system for over 100 years. The system is the responsibility of students and is regulated and governed by them, but faculty share the responsibility. If you have questions about your responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to your instructor or consult with the office of the Dean of Students or the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. This document, adopted by the Chancellor, the Faculty Council, and the Student Congress, contains all policies and procedures pertaining to the student honor system. Your full participation and observance of the honor code is expected. If you require further information on the definition of plagiarism, authorized vs. unauthorized collaboration, unauthorized materials, consequences of violations, or additional information on the Honor Code at UNC, please visit <http://honor.unc.edu>.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING IDENTITY

AUG 25-27 Nature of Identity (readings due Thursday for this week)

- Kriesberg, Louis (2003) "Identity Issues" from www.beyondintractability.org, pp. 1-4
- Ross, Michael and Roger Buehler (2004) "Identity Through Time: Constructing Personal Pasts and Futures" in Self and Social Identity, M. B. Brewster and M. Hewstone, eds., pp. 25-28
- Sacks, Oliver (1970) "A Matter of Identity" in The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, pp. 108-115

SEPT 1-3 Shapers of Identity

- Kimble, Gregory A. (1993) "Evolution of the Nature-Nurture Issue in the History of Psychology" in Nature Nurture and Psychology, pp. 3-14
- Korostelina, Karina V. (2007) "Identification and Identity" in Social Identity and Conflict: Structures, Dynamics, and Implications, pp.18-20

SECTION 2: CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY

SEPT 8-10 Sex/Gender Identities

- Silverthorn, Dee (2004) "Reproduction and Development" in Human Physiology, pp. 698-702
- Lorber, Judith (2000) "'Night to his Day': The Social Construction of Gender" in Readings for Diversity and Social Justice, pp. 203-211
- Finn, Robin (2006) "Battling for One's True Sexual Identity" in *The New York Times*, Nov. 10
- Case Study Narratives (choose 1 to read for Thursday)
 - Roiphe, Katie (1997) "The Independent Woman (and Other Lies)" *Esquire* v127, n2, pp. 84-86 **AND** Harvey, Steve and Denene Millner (2009) "What Drives Men" in Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Man: What Men Really Think About Love, Relationships, Intimacy, and Commitment, pp. 12-17 and 190-191
 - Goldie, Terry (2008) "Being Out: The Closet with the Revolving Door" in QueerSexLife: Autobiographical Notes on Sexuality, Gender & Identity, pp. 215-222 & 227-229
 - Roscoe, Will (1998) "'That is My Road' The Life and Times of a Third Gender Warrior" in Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America, pp. 23-38

SEPT 15-22 Racial/Ethnic Identities

For Tuesday (15th): *MEET AT GLOBAL EDUCATION CENTER (Room 4003- fourth floor)*

- Singer, Sam and Henry R. Hilgard (1978) "The Biology of Human Races", "Biochemical Differences Between Human Races" and "The Number of Human Races" in The Biology of People, pp.481-485 and 490-491

- Omi, Michael and Howard Winant (2006) “Racial Formations” in Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study, 5th ed. Paula S. Rothenberg, ed., pp. 11-19

For Thursday (17th): MEET AT GLOBAL EDUCATION CENTER (Room 4003- fourth floor)

- Rockquemore, Kerry Ann and David L. Brunson (2008) “Who Is Black Today and Who Will Be Black Tomorrow?” in Beyond Black: Biracial Identity in America, pp.103-118
- OPTIONAL:* Attend “kip fulbeck: part asian, 100% hapa” performance and lecture, 7pm at the Global Education Center auditorium. Reception, book signing, and video participation opportunity to follow. See the exhibit website listed below for more information:

http://global.unc.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1017&Itemid=105

For Tuesday (22nd):

- McIntosh, Peggy (1989) “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” from *Peace and Freedom*, July-August, pp. 197-200
- Rodriguez, Richard (1996) “On Becoming A Chicano” in Readings for Sociology, Garth Massey, ed., pp. 240-245
- Kitano, Harry (1996) “A Hyphenated Identity” in Names We Call Home, Becky Thompson and Sangeeta Tyali, eds., pp 111-118
- Sturm, Circe (2002) “Social Classification and Racial Contestation” in Blood Politics: Race, Culture and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, pp. 111-115

SEPT 24 Class/Economic Identities

- Scott, Janny and David Leonhardt (2007) “Shadowy Lines That Still Divide” in Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology, Margaret L. Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins, eds., pp. 115-122
- Hatt, Beth (2007) “Growing Up as Poor, White Trash: Stories of Where I Come From” in Late to Class: Social Class and Schooling in the New Economy, Jane A. Van Galen and George W. Noblit, eds., pp. 19-28
- Baker (2003) “What is middle class?” *The Washington Times*, Nov 29 **AND** watch “Who is the middle class?” video clip at <http://abcnews.go.com/video/playerIndex?id=4182296>
- Stanley, Thomas J. and William D. Danko (1996) “Meet the Millionaire Next Door” in The Millionaire Next Door, pp. 7-16

SEPT 29-OCT 1 Religious Identities

- Queen, Edward L. II (n.d.) “The Formation and Reformation of Religious Identity” from http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/sites/partners/erpp/CJC_Queen.htm
- Mehta, Hemant (2007) “What the Nonreligious Believe” in I Sold My Soul on eBay: Viewing Faith Through an Atheist’s Eyes, pp. 53-64
- Newport, Frank. (2009) “Religious Identity: States Differ Widely” from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/122075/religious-identity-states-differ-widely.aspx>
- watch “Americans: Losing their Religion?” video at this address as part of your readings: <http://abcnews.go.com/video/playerIndex?id=7043805>

OCT 6 Regional/National Identities

- Ware, Vron (2007) “Who Cares?” in Who Cares About Britishness? A Global View of

the National Identity Debate, pp. 1-5

- Griffin, Larry J. and Katherine McFarland (2007) “ ‘In My Heart, I’m an American’: Regional Attitudes and American Identity” in *Southern Cultures*, pp. 119-125
- Takaki, Ronald T. (2007) “A Different Mirror” in Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology, Margaret L. Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins, eds., pp. 49-60

OCT 8 Other Group Identities (Preparation) MEET IN THE LIBRARY (Davis 247)

- You will be working in groups of 3-5 people to do short presentations on other group identities (e.g.: online identity, family identity, political identity, fraternity/sorority identity, medical/anonymous identity, sports/school identity, age group identity). Each group will choose one "other" identity on which to present and lead discussion. Today will be spent meeting with your small groups and beginning library research. One or two articles on your topic must be posted by October 13th. These group presentations will account for 10% of your final grade. You will also be responsible for providing feedback to the other groups on their presentations.

OCT 13 Regional/National Identities (continued)

- Robbins, Williams G. (1983) “Introduction” in Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest, William G. Robbins, et al., eds., pp. 1-7
- Boles, John B. (2004) “Forever Southern” in The South Through Time: A History of an American Region, 3rd ed., v2, pp. 599-609

OCT 15-20 Other Group Identities (Group Presentations)

OCT 22- No Class- FALL Break

SECTION 3: NEGOTIATING IDENTITY IN SOCIETY

OCT 27 Themes

- MIDTERM DUE

OCT 29-NOV 5 Multiple Identities

- Tatum, Beverly (2000) “The Complexity of Identity: Who Am I?” in Readings for Diversity and Social Justice, pp. 9-14
- Yoshino, Kenji (2007) “Preface” in Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights, pp. ix-xii and 1-27
- Alake, Olu (2005) “And Who Am I? Cultural Diversity, Identities and Difference” Interarts Foundation: Seminars on Cultural Diversity, Barcelona.

NOV 10-12 Transmitting Identities

- Kalick, Susan (1984) “The Symbolic Nature of Food in Establishing Group Identity” in Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity, Linda Keller and Kay Mussell, eds., pp. 44-50

- Lozada, Fuji (2007) “Sports and Identity” from <http://savageminds.org>
- Davis, Fred (1992) “Fashion and Social Identities” in Fashion, Culture, and Identity, pp. 15-18
- Johnson, Frankie J. (2006) “Tattooing: Mind, Body and Spirit. The Inner Essence of the Art” *Sociological Viewpoints*, pp. 45-51

NOV 17-19 Branding/Marketing Identities and the Media

For Tuesday

- Olins, Wolff (1995) “What It Is” in The New Guide to Identity: How to create and sustain change through managing identity, pp. 3-13

For Thursday

- Towle, Angela Phipps (2003) “Celebrity Branding: Making the Brand” from www.thr.com
- Sherman, R.J. (2009) “How To Brand Yourself” and “Everything You Need to Start Building Your Personal Brand Right Now” from www.brand-yourself.com

NOV 24- NO CLASS- Go to writing center instead of class.

NOV 26- NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING BREAK

DEC 1-8 Student presentations and wrap-up