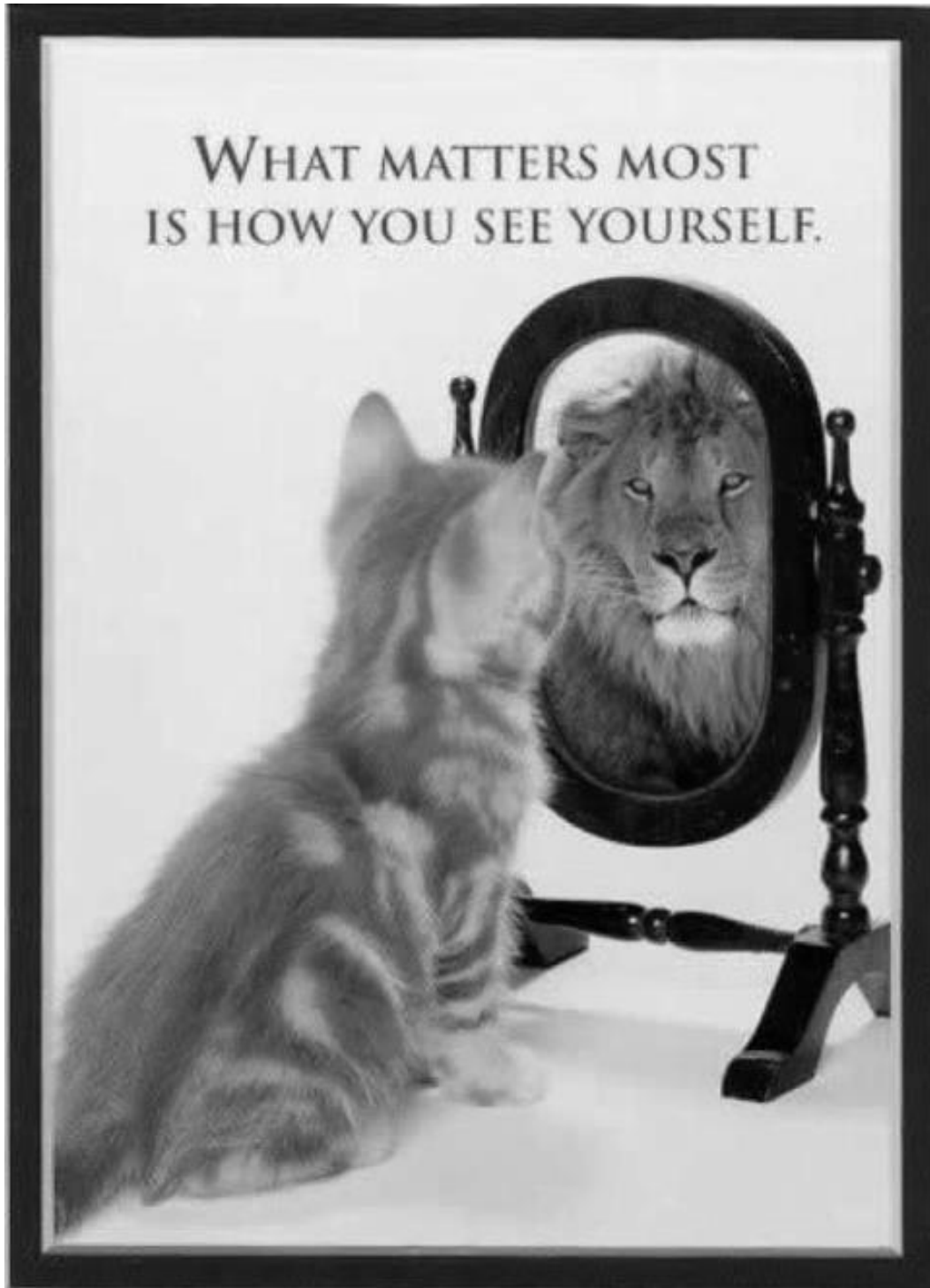


Psychological perspectives on  
**Self and Identity**

Module C8027

Level 3: 15 credits



Convenor: Viv Vignoles (Pevensey I 2B18; x3635; [v.i.vignoles@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:v.i.vignoles@sussex.ac.uk))

NOTE: Most of the questions you need answers to about this module are in this document. Please read it fully and carefully before your first seminar.

This document concerns the structure and content of the module. If you have questions about procedures, please consult the School of Psychology Administration Office in Pev1 2A13 or via [psychology@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:psychology@sussex.ac.uk)

## Aims and objectives

Psychological research has shown that in many ways our thoughts, feelings, motives and actions depend on who we think we are: our self-concepts or identities. This module explores classic and contemporary psychological accounts of self and identity processes. Coverage is broad, encompassing a thorough and critical examination of key theories and debates in social psychology - drawing also on developmental, cross-cultural, social constructionist and philosophical perspectives - as well as considering the implications of these theories for real-world issues, such as subjective well-being, health behaviours, personal relationships, prejudice and politics. The module is designed to encourage and reward independent and critical thinking about these issues.

## Module learning outcomes

By the end of the module, a successful student should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of a range of theoretical perspectives and empirical research into self and identity processes;
2. describe and evaluate current and possible future applications of such knowledge to issues of personal and social wellbeing;
3. show skills acquired in the critical evaluation and synthesis of ideas about self and identity processes derived from diverse bodies of literature;
4. show skills acquired in the communication of complex material in a clear and focused manner, both orally and in writing.

## Teaching and learning

This module is based around 10 seminars and 3 lectures. Details of times and places are in Sussex Direct. Most seminars will be focused around discussion of core readings, many of which will be introduced in presentations by individual students. At the end of each seminar, I will provide a brief introduction to the main ideas and readings to be addressed in the next seminar. It is important that you keep up to date with the core readings prior to attending each seminar, not just when you are presenting. In two lectures, I will give special presentations about my own studies into motivated identity construction, and you will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues arising.

This year there are two seminar groups. Students will not normally be allowed to change group unless they arrange to swap with another student. Any such changes must be cleared with me **and** with the Psychology Office, and changes are likely to impact on which topics you are assigned for your presentations.

## Reading

Students are strongly encouraged to keep up to date with the core readings for each week of the module. This is necessary in order to derive maximum benefit from the teaching sessions. Most of the introductory readings, and many of the other core and further readings can be found in the following book:

Schwartz, S. J., Luyckx, K., & Vignoles, V. L. (Eds.). (2011). *Handbook of identity theory and research*. New York: Springer.

You can also read the book online, using one of the following links.

If you are on campus, go to

<http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-1-4419-7988-9> .

If you are off campus, go to

<http://link.springer.com.ezproxy.sussex.ac.uk/book/10.1007%2F978-1-4419-7988-9>

and log in with your Sussex username and password.

Additionally, the following books include much relevant material:

Baumeister, R. F. (Ed.). (1999). *The Self in Social Psychology*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

Hoyle, R. H., Kernis, M. H., Leary, M. R. & Baldwin, M. W. (1999). *Selfhood: Identity, esteem, regulation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

The reading list specifies **core readings** for each topic. For each session, there are one or two *introductory readings*, which are essential for acceptable seminar performance, followed by *specific readings* for each topic. You should normally expect to read at least one of the specific readings each week. In some cases, I may assign readings to individual students, to make sure that all necessary readings are covered. In assessments, especially the finals essay, credit will be given for wider reading. **Further readings** can be found in the reading list, or by following up references in the core readings.

Many articles on self and identity appear in the mainstream journals in social, personality and developmental psychology. Over the last decade or so, three more specialist journals have emerged. The library has an online subscription to all three:

*Self and Identity* focuses mainly on social/personality psychology.

*Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research* focuses mainly on developmental psychology.

*Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* focuses mainly on ethnic studies.

You are also strongly encouraged to use your skills to locate relevant books and articles in the library catalogue, or by using relevant search engines.

If you have any difficulty locating the core readings—especially those you are supposed to cover in your seminar presentations—then please let me know.

## Assessment and module requirements

Formal assessment of your performance on the module is by a **3,000 word (extended) Essay** (80%), and **two 8-10 minute seminar Presentations** (10% each). Together, these tasks are designed to test the four learning outcomes specified on page 3.

In addition, you are expected to participate actively in all teaching sessions, which will include speaking informally about specific readings that you have prepared.

### ***Seminar presentations***

Each seminar is structured around several student presentations. During the module, you will be required to give two assessed seminar presentations focusing on specific articles or chapters that are identified in the reading list. You will be assigned one topic from the A list (weeks 3 to 7) and one topic from the B list (weeks 8 to 12).

Presentations should be of **8-10 minutes** duration (with 10 minutes as an absolute maximum), using PowerPoint slides and a handout.

Under each presentation title, I have listed one or two core readings. Where there is more than one reading, you should expect to include material from both readings in your presentation. Note that where there is more than one reading they are listed alphabetically, and not necessarily in the order that you should present them. You are not expected to give a full or sequential description of the contents of each reading. Credit will be given for **selecting** material from each reading that is most relevant to the title, for **structuring** this material into a coherent line of argument that your audience can follow, and for **presenting** this material as clearly as possible to your audience.

You should **bring** enough copies of the handout for every member of your seminar group, and a copy for me. In addition, you are asked to **upload an electronic copy** of your slides and/or handouts to Study Direct **before the seminar when you are due to give your presentation**. This will help to avoid wasting time during the seminars, and it also provides a useful resource for all students on the module.

### **Please note the following:**

- Seminar presentations must be given on the date agreed in advance with the module convenor. If you are unable to give your presentation on the agreed date but feel that there are exceptional circumstances, you can submit a claim in the usual way: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/circumstances>
- The presentation is only considered to be submitted when you have (1) delivered it at the agreed time and date and (2) uploaded your slides to the relevant forum on the Study Direct site.
- Feedback will be released via Sussex Direct.

In addition to these specific instructions, generic assessment criteria for oral presentations are linked from the School of Psychology website:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/examinationsandassessment>

**I will collect information about topic preferences during the introductory lecture in Week 1.** Please come to this lecture having read and thought about the list of topics.

### ***Extended essay***

Final assessment of the module is by a 3,000 word extended essay. **Submission instructions will be published on your Sussex Direct assessment timetable.**

Please note that there may be an earlier deadline for V&E students who do not stay at Sussex for the whole academic year. V&E students should ensure that they discuss this with the convenor and the psychology office at the beginning of the module.

A list of suggested titles is below, although you may also see me to request an alternative title reflecting interests you have developed within the module:

1. Is “self-discovery” a useful metaphor for the processes of identity formation?
2. Discuss the role of identity defences in everyday life.
3. How are self and identity processes influenced by the cultural context?
4. To what extent can a psychological understanding of self and identity processes help to foster human well-being?

Please note that each of these titles is intended to allow you to integrate material from across the different course topics, which is an important learning outcome of this module. Essays that purely summarise large amounts of information without showing evidence of your independent thinking or evaluation of the material will not receive the highest marks.

**Please note that there is no mechanism for giving a seminar presentation late.**

Hence, the normal outcome if you do not give your assessed presentation on the agreed date will be a zero mark for that component.

Assessments deadlines and methods of submission can be found on your assessment timetable via Sussex Direct.

Information on the following can be found at the link below:

- Submitting your work
- Missing a deadline
- Late penalties
- Exceptional circumstances
- Exams
- Help with managing your studies and competing your work
- Assessment Criteria

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/examinationsandassessment>

## Attendance, Absence and Engagement

You are expected to be 'in attendance' at the University for the full duration of the published term dates for your course of study. That means you should be regularly attending lectures, seminars, labs etc. and committing time to your studies to be in a position to comply with academic and administrative expectations.

**The university has an 80% attendance policy in place, so it's really important that you let us know if you are ill or cannot attend classes so that we can register this as a notified absence.**

**If you are unable to attend your seminars or workshops, you need to send an email to [psychologyabsence@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:psychologyabsence@sussex.ac.uk) setting out the following information:**

- Seminar(s) / workshop(s) that you will be absent from (list all of them)
- Tutor name
- Brief reason for absence

**Please see the following link for further information:**

**<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/attendance>**

## Seminar preparation

For seminars when you are not presenting, you are expected to have read the introductory reading for that week as well as at least one of the other core readings.

When reading an article or chapter, please use the following checklist of four questions to monitor your understanding, and bring your answers to these questions to the relevant seminar:

1. What have you learned from reading this that you didn't know before?
2. What did you like best about it?
3. What did you like least about it, or what do you disagree with?
4. What aspects did you have trouble understanding?

Preparing your answers to these questions (especially question 4!) will help us to have more useful and constructive discussions in each seminar.

## Module Evaluation

I want the module to be as good as it possibly can be, so any and all feedback you provide to me is gratefully received. Changes made in response to previous feedback have included the introduction of a study pack in order to reduce pressure on key resources in the library (now replaced by the production of a new course textbook!), the use of a horseshoe room layout in order to make the seminar discussions feel more inclusive and informal, a tighter structure for each seminar, and more information about the assessment criteria for presentations. Please help me to improve the module further.

## Overview of themes and presentation topics

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# Themes, topics and readings

## Week 1. INTRODUCTORY LECTURE: Why study self and identity?

In this introductory session, I will explain the practicalities of the module: what you should expect to do between now and submission of your final assessment, and when you need to have done it; what help you can expect from me, and what other resources are at your disposal. I will also provide an introduction to the main themes and structure of the module, introducing why I believe this is an important area for the development of psychological research and theory. It will be an advantage if you can come to this session having already looked at the introductory reading, especially pages 1 to 13. The references marked *further reading* provide alternative introductions to the themes of this course, and the books contain much material likely to be useful in subsequent weeks.

### **Learning outcomes**

The successful student will be able to:

- identify and describe a range of social psychological theories and findings in which self and identity processes and motives are implicitly or explicitly involved
- summarise core features of a social psychological approach to self and identity

### **Introductory reading**

Vignoles, V. L., Schwartz, S. J., & Luyckx, K. (2011). Introduction: Toward an integrative view of identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 1-27). New York: Springer.

Vignoles, V. L. (2016). Identity: Personal AND social. To appear in K. Deaux & M. Snyder (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Personality and Social Psychology* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

### **Further reading**

Ashmore, R. D. & Jussim, L. J. (Eds.). (1997). *Self and identity: Fundamental issues*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Baumeister, R.F. (1998). The self. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed.; pp. 680-740). New York: McGraw-Hill. [A shorter review is available in Baumeister, 1999, introduction.]

Brewer, M. B. & Hewstone, M. (Eds.). (2003). *Self and social identity*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell

Brown, J. D. (1998). *The self*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Gecas, V. (1982). The self-concept. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 8, 1-33.

Hoyle, R. H., Kernis, M. H., Leary, M. R. & Baldwin, M. W. (1999). *Selfhood: Identity, esteem, regulation* (chapters 1 to 3). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

James, W. (1999). The self. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), *The self in social psychology* (pp. 69-77). Philadelphia: Psychology Press. (Original work published 1892)

Leary, M. R. (2004). *The curse of the self: Self-awareness, egoism, and the quality of human life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Leary, M. R. & Tangney, J. P. (Eds.). (2012). *Handbook of self and identity* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Guilford.

Markus, H. & Wurf, E. (1987) The dynamic self-concept: A social psychological perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 38, 299-337.

## **Week 2. READING WEEK**

There is no teaching during week 2. This is to give you time to get up to speed with the course readings, and so that those students who are giving presentations early in the term will have sufficient time to prepare their presentations. Please use this time wisely.

### **Week 3. Knowing yourself? Self-evaluation processes**

Mainstream social psychological research into the 'self-concept' has focused a great deal on processes of self-evaluation. As noted by Festinger (1954), people often use social comparisons to evaluate themselves, especially where 'objective' standards for evaluation are unavailable. However, contrary to Festinger, who believed that social comparison functioned for *self-assessment*, subsequent research has generally shown systematic biases affecting both the targets selected and the dimensions used when making social comparisons: comparisons tend to be *self-enhancing*, designed to portray the self in a positive light, although they may also reflect goals for future *self-improvement*. Theories of *self-consistency* stress the need for stable self-evaluations: while self-enhancement theory predicts that people will accept positive information and reject negative information about the self, self-verification theory predicts that such processes will be limited when the information is not consistent with the existing self-concept.

Researchers have long assumed that self and identity processes are strongly influenced by the motive to maintain and enhance self-esteem. Yet, it is increasingly argued that self-esteem is not the whole story: other motives or needs may also shape how we see ourselves, in turn affecting our thoughts and feelings, and our actions towards others. Taylor, Neter and Wayment (1995) suggest that self-evaluation processes serve separable motives for self-enhancement, self-assessment, self-consistency and self-improvement, whereas Sedikides and Strube (1997) suggest that all four processes mainly serve needs for self-esteem—that self-enhancement is the dominant motive.

#### **Learning outcomes**

The successful student will be able to:

- describe evidence for self-enhancement biases on a wide range of tasks
- evaluate evidence on each side of the self-enhancement/self-consistency debate
- critically evaluate the claim that self-enhancement is the dominant motive

#### **Core readings**

##### *Introductory*

Gregg, A. P., Sedikides, C., & Gebauer, J. (2011). Dynamics of identity: Between self-enhancement and self-assessment. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 305-327). New York: Springer.

##### *A1: Can people evaluate themselves accurately if they try?*

Pronin, E., Gilovich, T., & Ross, L. (2004). Objectivity in the eye of the beholder: Divergent perceptions of bias in self versus others. *Psychological Review*, 111, 781–799.

Zell, E., & Krizan, Z. (2014). Do people have insight into their abilities? A metasynthesis. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 9, 111-125.

##### *A2: What are the main motivational influences on self-evaluation?*

Sedikides, C. & Strube, M. J. (1997). Self-evaluation: To thine own self be good, to thine own self be sure, to thine own self be true, and to thine own self be better. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 29, 209-269.

Taylor, S. E., Neter, E., & Wayment, H. A. (1995). Self-evaluation processes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 21, 1278 - 1287.

**A3: What factors moderate the influence of different self-evaluation motives?**

- Green, J. D., Pinter, B. & Sedikides, C. (2005). Mnemic neglect and self-threat: Trait modifiability moderates self-protection. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 35*, 225-235.
- Swann, W. B., Jr., Griffin, J.J., Predmore, S., & Gaines, B. (1987). The cognitive-affective crossfire: When self-consistency confronts self-enhancement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52*, 881-889.

**Further reading**

- Alicke, M. D., & Sedikides, C. (2009). Self-enhancement and self-protection: What they are and what they do. *European Review of Social Psychology, 20*, 1-48.
- Collins, R. L. (1996). For better or worse: The impact of upward social comparison on self-evaluation. *Psychological Bulletin, 119*, 51-69.
- Dauenheimer, D. G., Stahlberg, D., Spreemann, S. & Sedikides, C. (2002). Self-enhancement, self-verification, or self-assessment? The intricate role of trait modifiability in the self-evaluation process. *Revue Internationale de Psychologie Sociale, 15*(3-4), 89-112.
- Dweck, C. S. (1999). *Self-Theories: Their role in motivation, personality and development*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.
- Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations, 7*, 117-140.
- Greenwald, A. G. (1980). The totalitarian ego: Fabrication and revision of personal history. *American Psychologist, 35*, 603-618.
- Katz, J., Arias, I. & Beach, R. H. (2000). Psychological abuse, self-esteem, and women's dating relationship outcomes: A comparison of the self-verification and self-enhancement perspectives. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 24*, 349-357.
- Kwang, T., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (2010). Do people embrace praise even when they feel unworthy? A review of critical tests of self-enhancement versus self-verification. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 14*, 263-280.
- Leary, M. R. (2005). Sociometer theory and the pursuit of relational value: Getting to the root of self-esteem. *European Review of Social Psychology, 16*(1), 75-111.
- Pronin, E. (2008). How we see ourselves and how we see others. *Science, 320*(5880), 1177-1180.
- Sedikides, C. (1993). Assessment, enhancement, and verification determinants of the self-evaluation process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65*, 317-338.
- Sedikides, C. & Strube, M. J. (1997). Self-evaluation: To thine own self be good, to thine own self be sure, to thine own self be true, and to thine own self be better. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 29*, 209-269.
- Shrauger, J. S. (1975). Responses to evaluation as a function of initial self-perceptions. *Psychological Bulletin, 82*, 581-596.
- Svenson, O. (1981). Are we all less risky and more skillful than our fellow drivers? *Acta Psychologica, 47*, 143-148.
- Wills, T. A. (1981). Downward comparison principles in social psychology. *Psychological Bulletin, 90*, 245-271.

## Week 4. Being yourself? Self-presentation and self-verification

Research into self-presentation emphasises that self-processes do not only occur *within* the individual. Rather, we normally expend considerable effort on *impression management*, both portraying ourselves to others in a positive light and claiming particular identities. Indeed, some theorists have questioned the entire notion of an authentic/inner/real self, arguing that we may create a different 'self' for every context and every relationship we inhabit.

Recent research suggests that we do not only *represent* (or misrepresent) the private self-concept in social interaction, but in so doing we may also be *constructing* it, with processes of social interaction serving to maintain or to transform current private understandings of the self. Thus, identities are not just a product of individual psychological processes, they are also constructed and negotiated in social interaction. Identity claims are problematic unless they are validated in some way by partners in social interaction; yet, people seem to be adept at managing their social interactions in order to ensure that such validation occurs.

### Learning outcomes

The successful student will be able to:

- summarise evidence for and against the concept of a 'looking-glass self'
- discuss the interplay of individual and social processes in constructing identities
- summarise the arguments of Goffman and others about the prevalence, characteristics and implications of self-presentation
- evaluate the implications of these arguments for the existence of a 'true self'

### Core readings

#### Introductory

Schlenker, B. R. (2012). Self-presentation. In M. R. Leary & J. P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (2nd ed., pp. 542-570). New York: Guilford.

A4: *Do people have 'true selves', or do we just enact different roles in different contexts?*

Goffman, E. (1959). *Presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Doubleday.

Turner, R. H. (1976). The real self: From institution to impulse. *American Journal of Sociology*, 81, 989-1016.

A5: *Are some people more "true to themselves" than others?*

Schlegel, R. J., Hicks, J. A., King, L. A., & Arndt, J. (2011). Feeling like you know who you are: Perceived true self-knowledge and meaning in life. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37, 745-756.

Schlenker, B. R., & Weigold, M. F. (1990). Self-consciousness and self-presentation: Being autonomous versus appearing autonomous. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59, 820-828.

A6: *To what extent do private self-views depend on validation from others?*

Strauger, J. S. & Schoeneman, T. J. (1979). Symbolic interactionist view of self-concept: Through the looking glass darkly. *Psychological Bulletin*, 86, 549-573.

Tice, D. M. (1992). Self-presentation and self-concept change: The looking glass self is also a magnifying glass. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63, 435-451.

A7: *If identities are contingent on social contexts and relationships, then how do people manage to form and maintain coherent and plausible identities?*

Snyder, M. & Swann, W. B., Jr. (1978). Behavioral confirmation in social interaction: From social perception to social reality. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 14, 148-162.

Swann, W.B., Jr., Rentfrow, P. J., & Guinn, J. (2002). Self-verification: The search for coherence. In M. Leary and J. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (pp. 367-383). Guilford: New York.

### **Further reading**

Baldwin, M. W., & Holmes, J. G. (1987). Salient private audiences and awareness of the self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 1087-1098.

Bargh, J. A., McKenna, K. Y. A., & Fitzsimons, G. M. (2002). Can you see the real me? Activation and expression of the "true self" on the internet. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58, 33-48.

Chen, S., Boucher, H., & Kraus, M. W. (2011). The relational self. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 149-175). New York: Springer.

Cooley, C. H. (1902). *Human nature and the social order*. New York: Scribner's.

Goffman, E. (1959). *Presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Doubleday.

Marková, I. (1987). Knowledge of the self through interaction. In K. Yardley & T. Honess (Eds.), *Self and identity: Psychosocial perspectives* (pp. 65-80). New York: Wiley.

Schlegel, R. J., Hicks, J. A., Arndt, J., & King, L. A. (2009). Thine own self: True self-concept accessibility and meaning in life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 473-490.

Schlenker, B. R., Dlugolecki, D. W., & Doherty, K. J. (1994). The impact of self-presentations on self-appraisals and behaviors: The power of public commitment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 20-33.

Serpe, R. T., & Stryker, S. (2011). The symbolic interactionist perspective and identity theory. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 225-248). New York: Springer.

Sheldon, K. M. (2002). The self-concordance model of health goal-striving: When personal goals correctly represent the person. In E. L. Deci & R. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Handbook of self-determination research* (pp. 65-86). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Vohs, K. D. & Finkel, E. J. (Eds.). (2006) *Self and relationships: Connecting intrapersonal and interpersonal processes*. New York: Guilford Press.

## **Week 5. Finding yourself? Identity exploration and commitment**

Developmental psychological research into identity has tended to focus especially on adolescence, and draws heavily in the theoretical ideas of Erik Erikson. Erikson argued that adolescence was a crucial life-stage for identity formation, when the individual has the task of finding and committing themselves to a stable set of goals, values, preferences and interests. While Erikson's empirical focus was on case studies of historical figures and of psychotherapeutic clients, many developmental psychologists have translated his ideas into mainstream quantitative methods and have tested hypotheses that are derived from his thinking, most notably James Marcia and Michael Berzonsky.

An important question about Eriksonian approaches is whether they are too influenced by contemporary Western cultures. Erikson argues that successful identity development requires a period of "crisis" (also referred to as "moratorium" or "exploration"). Is identity exploration always beneficial, or can one have too much choice?

In 1986, Markus and Nurius coined the term *possible selves* to describe people's expectations, desires and fears about who they might be in the future. They argued that desired and feared possible future selves should be core motivators of people's behaviour in the present. Subsequent research has investigated the contents of possible selves among various populations, implications of the degree of consistency between desired and feared selves and their possible use in interventions.

### **Learning outcomes**

The successful student will be able to:

- describe some key features of Erikson's ideas about identity
- evaluate the translation of Erikson's ideas into mainstream quantitative research
- form and defend a view about the importance of choice in identity formation
- summarise and evaluate the arguments of Markus and Nurius regarding the characteristics and functions of expected, desired and feared possible future selves

### **Core readings and presentation topics**

#### *Introductory*

Schwartz, S. J. (2001). The evolution of Eriksonian and neo-Eriksonian identity theory and research: A review and integration. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 1, 7-58.

#### *A8: Compare and contrast the concepts of "identity statuses" and "identity styles".*

Berzonsky, M. D. (2011). A social cognitive perspective on identity construction. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 55-76). New York: Springer.

Kroger, J. & Marcia, J. E. (2011). The identity statuses: Origins, meanings, and interpretations. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 31-53). New York: Springer.

#### *A9: Is identity exploration always a good thing?*

Luyckx, K., Schwartz, S., Berzonsky, M. D., Soenens, B., Vansteenkiste, M., Smits, I., & Goossens, L. (2008). Capturing ruminative exploration: Extending the four-dimensional model of identity formation in late adolescence. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 42, 58-82.

Waterman, A. S. (2011). Eudaimonic identity theory: Identity as self-discovery. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 357-379). New York: Springer.

*A10: What are the main psychological functions of possible future selves, and how are these ideas constructed?*

Oyserman, D. & James, L. (2011). Possible identities. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 117-145). New York: Springer.

### **Further reading**

Bosma, H. A., & Kunnen, S. E. (2001). Determinants and mechanisms in ego identity development: A review and synthesis. *Developmental Review, 21*, 39-66.

Carroll, P., Shepperd, A., & Arkin, R. (2009). Downward self revision: Erasing possible selves. *Social Cognition, 27*, 550-578.

Dunkel, C. & Kerpelman, J. (Eds.). (2006). *Possible selves: Theory, research and applications*. Hauppauge, NY: Nova.

Erikson, E. H. (1956). The problem of ego identity. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 4*, 56-121.

Erikson, E. H. (1959). Identity and the Life Cycle. *Psychological Issues, 1*, 1-171.

Josselson, R. (1996). *Revising herself: The story of women's identity from college to midlife*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Knox, M., Funk, J., Elliott, R., & Bush, E. G. (1998). Adolescents' possible selves and their relationship to global self-esteem. *Sex Roles, 39*, 61-80.

Luyckx, K., Schwartz, S. J., Goossens, L., Beyers, W., & Missotten, L. (2011). Processes of identity formation and evaluation. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 77-98). New York: Springer.

Marcia, J. E. (2002). Identity and psychosocial development in adulthood. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, 2*, 7-28.

Markus, H. R. & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist, 41*, 954-969.

Scabini, E. & Manzi, C. (2011). Family processes and identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 565-584). New York: Springer.

Schwartz, S. J. (2002). In search of mechanisms of change in identity development: Integrating the constructivist and discovery perspective on identity. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, 2*, 317-339.

Skorikov, V. B., & Vondracek, F. W. (2011). Occupational identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 693-714). New York: Springer.

Soenens, B. & Vansteenkiste, M. (2011). When is identity congruent with the self? A self-determination theory perspective. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 381-402). New York: Springer.

Waterman, A. S. (1984). Identity formation: Discovery or creation? *Journal of Early Adolescence, 4*, 329-341.

Wurf, E., & Markus, H., (1991) Possible selves and the psychology of personal growth. In D. J. Ozer, J. M. Healy, A. J. Stewart, (Eds.), *Perspectives in personality, Vol 3* (pp. 39-62). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.



## **Week 6. Individual and collective selves: Social identity processes**

In the 1970's and 1980's, Henri Tajfel, John Turner and colleagues developed the "social identity approach". Although the initial focus of social identity theory (SIT) was on understanding the psychological underpinnings of intergroup relations, rather than seeking to understand identity in its own right, their research led them to a great deal of theorising about identity processes, including the subsequent development of self-categorisation theory (SCT), as well as identity process theory (IPT: week 7).

SCT focuses especially on understanding the circumstances in which an individual will move from categorising themselves as an individual to categorising themselves as an 'interchangeable' group member, resulting in group-focused cognitions, affect and behaviour. SCT has been highly generative, providing a solid—although arguably not complete—theory of identity to undergird SIT's focus on intergroup relations and social change. Nevertheless, a point of contention is the separability of individual and group levels of self-categorisation assumed in SIT and SCT.

A major focus of SIT is on the diverse range of identity maintenance strategies that group members may deploy in order to maintain positive distinctiveness of their group identity. Theorizing and research in this area may help us to understand the origins of both intergroup discrimination and social change.

### ***Learning outcomes***

The successful student will be able to:

- summarise the key propositions of SIT regarding intergroup discrimination and social change
- describe and interpret the basic findings of the minimal group paradigm
- outline and evaluate the key theoretical claims of SCT

### ***Core readings***

#### *Introductory*

Spears, R. (2011). Group identities: The social identity perspective. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*. New York: Springer.

*A11: What are the key findings of early research using the minimal group paradigm, and how have they been interpreted?*

Tajfel, H., Billig, M. G., Bundy, R. P., & Flament, C. (1971). Social categorization and intergroup behaviour. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 1, 149-178.

Turner, J. C., Brown, R. J., & Tajfel, H. (1979). Social comparison and group interest in ingroup favouritism. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 9, 187-204.

*A12: How do people come to see themselves and others as group members?*

Oakes, P. J., Turner, J. C., & Haslam, S. A. (1991). Perceiving people as group members: The role of fit in the salience of social categorizations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30, 125-144.

Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., & McGarty, C. (1994). Self and collective: Cognition and social context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 454-463.

**A13: What are the consequences of categorizing oneself as a group member?**

- Abrams, D., Wetherell, M., Cochrane, S., Hogg, M. A., & Turner, J. C. (1990). Knowing what to think by knowing who you are: Self-categorization and the nature of norm formation, conformity and group polarization. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, 97-119.
- Steele, C. M. & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797-811.

**A14: Describe the different ways that members of negatively valued groups can manage their social identities. What are their implications for social change?**

- Ellemers, N., van Knippenberg, A., & Wilke, H. (1990). The influence of permeability of group boundaries and stability of group status on strategies of individual mobility and social change. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, 233-246.
- Mummendey, A., Klink, A., Mielke, R., Wenzel, M., & Blanz, M. (1999). Socio-structural characteristics of intergroup relations and identity management strategies: Results from a field study in East Germany. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, 259-285.

**Further reading**

- Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (2000). Collective action and psychological change: The emergence of new social identities. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 579-604.
- Ellemers, N. (1993). The influence of socio-structural variables on identity management strategies. *European review of social psychology*, 4, 27-57.
- Hogg, M. A. & Turner, J. C. (1987). Intergroup behaviour, self-stereotyping and the salience of social categories. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 26, 325-340.
- Onorato, R. S. & Turner, J. C. (2004). Fluidity in the self-concept: The shift from personal to social identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34, 257-278.
- Postmes, T. & Branscombe, N. R. (Eds.). (2010). *Rediscovering social identity*. New York and Hove: Psychology Press.
- Postmes, T. & Jetten, J. (Eds.) (2006). *Individuality and the group: Advances in social identity*. London: Sage.
- Sedikides, C. & Brewer, M. B. (2001). Individual self, relational self, and collective self: Partners, opponents, or strangers? In C. Sedikides & M. Brewer (Eds.), *Individual self, relational self, collective self* (pp. 1-6). Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.
- Spears, R., Oakes, P. J., Ellemers, N. & Haslam, S. A. (Eds.). (1997). *The social psychology of stereotyping and group life*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. C. (2001). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In M. A. Hogg & D. Abrams (Eds.), *Intergroup relations: Essential readings*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.
- Turner, J. C. & Onorato, R. S. (1999). Social identity, personality, and the self-concept. In T. R. Tyler, R. M. Kramer & O. P. John (Eds.), *The psychology of the social self* (pp. 11-46). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

## **Week 7. Defended selves: Identity motives, threat and maintenance**

In previous sessions, we have examined various ways in which people strive (consciously or otherwise) to construct, maintain and enhance positive and coherent understandings of themselves, and to gain validation of these understandings from others. However, the dynamic, self-regulating nature of self and identity processes becomes especially apparent in situations where the possibility of maintaining a desired self-image is under threat. In these situations, people engage in an enormous variety of coping strategies—some productive, others less so—in their attempts to restore the relevant desired properties to their self-images. Coping strategies can result in undesirable outcomes such as denying the significance of information about health risks or engaging in prejudiced cognition and even hostile behaviour towards other people.

An important goal of recent research is to identify ways of avoiding the activation of undesirable and counterproductive coping strategies. Self-affirmation theory proposes that if important and valued aspects of the self are affirmed at the time of a threat, this can alleviate the impact of the threat and thus defensive coping strategies can be reduced or even avoided entirely. A number of studies have supported this proposition, although implications for intervention remain unclear.

### ***Learning outcomes***

The successful student will be able to:

- compare and contrast the predictions of identity process theory (Breakwell, 1988) and self-affirmation theory
- describe and evaluate evidence for a wide range of strategies which may be employed to cope with threats to identity
- use the available literature to construct informed predictions of when, and among whom, which coping strategies might occur in response to what kind of threat

### ***Core reading***

#### *Introductory*

Breakwell, G. M. (1988). Strategies adopted when identity is threatened. *Revue Internationale de Psychologie Sociale*, 1, 189-203.

Sherman, D. K., & Cohen, G. L. (2002). Accepting threatening information: Self-affirmation and the reduction of defensive biases. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 11, 119-123.

#### *A15: How can people best escape from aversive self-awareness?*

Baumeister, R. F. (1991). The self against itself: Escape or defeat? In R. C. Curtis (Ed.), *The relational self: Theoretical convergences in psychoanalysis and social psychology* (pp. 238-256). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

#### *A16: To what extent does self-esteem maintenance provide a useful explanation of the motivational underpinnings of social identity processes?*

Rubin, M. & Hewstone, M. (1998). Social identity theory's self-esteem hypothesis: A review and some suggestions for clarification. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2, 40-62.

Vignoles, V. L., & Moncaster, N. (2007). Identity motives and ingroup favouritism: A new approach to individual differences in intergroup discrimination. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 46, 91-113.

*A17: Is it possible to predict how people will respond to identity threats?*

Bushman, B. J. & Baumeister, R. F. (1998). Threatened egotism, narcissism, self-esteem, and direct and displaced aggression: Does self-love or self-hate lead to violence? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *75*, 219-229.

Steele, C. M. (1975). Name-calling and compliance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *31*, 361-370.

*A18: Does self-affirmation theory provide a convincing way of reducing maladaptive responses to identity threat?*

Fein, S., & Spencer, S. J. (1997). Prejudice as self-image maintenance: Affirming the self through derogating others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*, 31-44.

Sherman, D. K., & Cohen, G. L. (2006). The psychology of self-defense: Self-affirmation theory. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *38*, 183-242.

### **Further reading**

Aberson, C. L., Healy, M., & Romero, V. (2000). Ingroup bias and self-esteem: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *4*, 157-173.

Abrams, D. & Hogg, M. A. (1988). Comments on the motivational status of self-esteem in social identity and intergroup discrimination. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *18*, 317-334.

Baumeister, R. F., Dale, K., & Sommer, K. L. (1998). Freudian defense mechanisms and empirical findings in modern social psychology: Reaction formation, projection, displacement, undoing, isolation, sublimation, and denial. *Journal of Personality*, *66*, 1081-1124.

Biernat, M., Vescio, T. K., & Green, M. L. (1996). Selective self-stereotyping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *71*, 1194-1209.

Branscombe, N. R., Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (1999). The context and content of social identity threat. In N. Ellemers, R. Spears & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Social identity* (pp. 35-58). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Campbell, W. K., & Sedikides, C. (1999). Self-threat magnifies the self-serving bias: A meta-analytic integration. *Review of General Psychology*, *3*, 23-43.

Carr, H., & Vignoles, V. L. (2011). Keeping up with the Joneses: Status projection as symbolic self-completion. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *41*, 518-527.

Ethier, K. A. & Deaux, K. (1994). Negotiating social identity when contexts change: Maintaining identification and responding to threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *67*, 243-251.

Farsides, T. (1995, September). *Why social identity theory's self-esteem hypothesis has never been tested – and how to test it*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the British Psychological Society Social Psychology Section, University of York, UK.

Greenberg, J., Solomon, S. & Pyszczynski, T. (1997). Terror management theory of self-esteem and cultural worldviews: Empirical assessments and conceptual refinements. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *29*, 61-139.

Hogg, M. A. (2007). Uncertainty-identity theory. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 39, pp. 69-126). San Diego, CA: Elsevier.

Hunter, J. A., Cox, S. L., O'Brien, K., Stringer, M., Boyes, M., Banks, M., Hayhurst, J. G., & Crawford, M. (2005). Threats to group value, domain-specific self-esteem and

- intergroup discrimination amongst minimal and national groups. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 44, 329-353.
- Leary, M. R., Tchividjian, L. R. & Kraxberger, B. E. (1994). Self-presentation can be hazardous to your health: Impression management and health risk. *Health Psychology*, 13, 461-470.
- Leary, M. R., Terry, M. L., Allen, A. B., & Tate, E. B. (2009). The concept of ego threat in social and personality psychology: In ego threat a viable scientific construct? *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 13, 151-164.
- Leonardelli, G. J., Pickett, C. L., & Brewer, M. B. (2010). Optimal distinctiveness theory: A framework for social identity, social cognition, and intergroup relations. In M. P. Zanna & J. M. Olson (Eds.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 43, pp. 63-113). San Diego, CA: Elsevier.
- Martiny, S. E., Kessler, T., & Vignoles, V. L. (2012). Shall I leave or shall we fight? Effects of threatened group-based self-esteem on identity management strategies. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 15, 39-55.
- Pickett, C. L., Silver, M. D. & Brewer, M. B. (2002). The impact of assimilation and differentiation needs on perceived group importance and perceptions of ingroup size. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 546-568.
- Schimmel, J., Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., O'Mahen, H. & Arndt, J. (2000). Running from the shadow: Psychological distancing from others to deny characteristics people fear in themselves. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 446-462.
- Steele, C.M. (1988). The psychology of self-affirmation: Sustaining the integrity of the self. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 21, 261-302.
- Tesser, A. (2000). On the confluence of self-esteem maintenance mechanisms. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4, 290-299.
- Timotijevic, L. & Breakwell, G. M. (2000). Migration and threat to identity. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 10, 355-372.
- Vignoles, V. L. (2014). Quantitative approaches to researching identity processes and motivational principles. In R. Jaspal & G. M. Breakwell (Eds.), *Identity process theory: Identity, social action, and social change* (pp. 65-94). Cambridge University Press.

## RESEARCH LECTURE 1: Modelling identity motives

In this lecture I will give a presentation about some of my own research into identity motives, in which I have developed a new methodological approach to measuring identity motives. This helps with the important task of integrating the fragmented literature on motivated identity construction into a single, coherent model.

### Learning outcomes

The successful student will be able to:

- consolidate the learning outcomes from previous weeks
- draw connections among topics within the self and identity literature
- describe the key predictions and findings of motivated identity construction theory

### Core reading

Vignoles, V. L. (2011). Identity motives. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 403-432). New York: Springer.

### Further reading

Droseltis, O. & Vignoles, V. L. (2010). Towards an integrative model of place identity processes: Dimensionality and predictors of intrapersonal-level place preferences. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 30*, 23-34.

Easterbrook, M. & Vignoles, V. L. (2012). Different groups, different motives: Identity motives underlying changes in identification with novel groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 38*, 1066-1080.

Eriksson, E. L., Becker, M., & Vignoles, V. L. (2011). Just another face in the crowd? Distinctiveness seeking in Sweden and Britain. *Psychological Studies, 56*, 125-134.

Vignoles, V. L. (2004). Modelling identity motives using multilevel regression. In G. M. Breakwell (Ed.), *Doing social psychology research* (3rd ed., pp. 174-204). Oxford: Blackwell.

Vignoles, V. L. (2009). The motive for distinctiveness: A universal, but flexible human need. In C. R. Snyder & S. Lopez (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 491-499). New York: Oxford University Press. [e-mail me for a copy]

Vignoles, V. L. (2014). Quantitative approaches to researching identity processes and motivational principles. In R. Jaspal & G. M. Breakwell (Eds.), *Identity process theory: Identity, social action, and social change* (pp. 65-94). Cambridge University Press.

Vignoles, V. L., Chryssochoou, X. & Breakwell, G. M. (2002). Evaluating models of identity motivation: Self-esteem is not the whole story. *Self and Identity, 1*, 201-218.

Vignoles, V. L., Manzi, C., Regalia, C., Jemmolo, S., & Scabini, E. (2008). Identity motives underlying desired and feared possible future selves. *Journal of Personality, 76*, 1165-1200.

Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., Manzi, C., Gollledge, J. & Scabini, E. (2006). Beyond self-esteem: Influence of multiple motives on identity construction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*, 308-333.

## Week 8. Invented selves: Discourse and social construction

Social constructionism (Gergen, 1985; Harré, 1986) assumes that psychological concepts such as self, person, mind and group are not ‘things’ as we would study in the natural sciences, but rather they are human constructs with multiple meanings that are actively negotiated through social interaction and communication processes. Researchers have tried to study the ways in which language is used to *create* selves and identities in different contexts, drawing on “discursive resources” or commonly shared patterns of meaning available in different cultures and contexts.

Some perspectives emphasise how identity claims may be used to serve persuasive or rhetorical functions, rather than necessarily reflecting any inner psychological reality. Others focus on the impact of available cultural discourses on the individual. Only by using socially constructed concepts is it possible for us to form beliefs about who we are—or self-concepts. However, in forming our self-concepts, we are inevitably constrained by the choice of cultural discourses that are available or emphasized in our social environments. A feature of critical discourse analysis is the questioning—and thus potential *deconstruction*—of the cultural discourses that shape our experienced ‘realities’.

How can socially constructed categories such as gender, ethnicity and sexuality seem so natural? Widespread and taken-for-granted beliefs about social categories can often lead to self-fulfilling prophecy effects, which in turn reinforce the beliefs that created them.

### **Learning outcomes**

The successful student will be able to:

- identify and summarise social constructionist critiques of mainstream psychology
- explain how identity formation may be both enabled and constrained by discourse
- discuss consequences of the early development of gender self-stereotypes

### **Core readings**

#### *Introductory*

Bamberg, M., De Fina, A., & Schiffrin, D. (2011). Discourse and identity construction. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 177-199). New York: Springer.

Bussey, K. (2011). Gender identity development. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 403-432). New York: Springer.

#### *B1: What does it mean to view “selves” and “identities” as discursive products?*

Abell, J. & Stokoe, E. H. (2001). Broadcasting the royal role: Constructing culturally situated identities in the Princess Diana *Panorama* interview. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 40, 417-435.

Bamberg, M. (2010). Blank check for biography? Openness and ingenuity in the management of the ‘Who-Am-I-Question’. In D. Schiffrin, A. DeFina, & A. Nylund (Eds.). *Telling stories: Language, narrative, and social life* (pp. 109-121). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

#### *B2: How does prevailing cultural discourse enable or constrain particular ‘ways of being’?*

Kitzinger, C. & Wilkinson, S. (1995). Transitions from heterosexuality to lesbianism: The discursive production of lesbian identities. *Developmental Psychology*, 31, 95-104.

Pehrson, S., Vignoles, V. L., & Brown, R. (2009). National identification and anti-immigrant prejudice: Individual and contextual effects of national definitions. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 72, 24-38.

**B3: How do gender stereotypes come to be seen as 'natural'?**

Serbin, L. A., Poulin-Dubois, D., Colburne, K. A., Sen, M. G., & Eichstedt, J. A. (2001). Gender stereotyping in infancy: Visual preferences for and knowledge of gender-stereotyped toys in the second year. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 25, 7-15.

Smith, C. & Lloyd, B. (1978). Maternal behavior and perceived sex of infant: Revisited. *Child Development*, 49, 1263-1265.

**Further reading**

Banerjee, R. (2005). Gender identity and the development of gender roles. In S. Ding & K. Littleton (Eds.), *Children's personal and social development* (pp. 141-179). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Barrett, M. (2005). National identities in children and young people. In S. Ding & K. Littleton (Eds.), *Children's personal and social development* (pp. 181-220). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Breakwell, G. M., Vignoles, V. L. & Robertson, T. (2003). Stereotypes and crossed-category evaluations: The case of gender and science education. *British Journal of Psychology*, 94, 437-455.

Deaux, K. (1992). Personalizing identity and socializing self. In G. M. Breakwell (Ed.), *Social psychology of identity and the self-concept*. (pp. 9-33). London: Surrey University Press.

Gergen, K. J. (1985). The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40, 266-275.

Gergen, K. J. (1991). *The saturated self: Dilemmas of identity in contemporary life*. New York: Basic Books.

Grodin, D. & Lindlof, T. R. (1996). *Constructing the self in a mediated world*. London: Sage.

Harré, R. (1986). An outline of the social constructionist viewpoint. In R. Harre (Ed.), *The Social Construction of Emotions* (pp. 2-14). Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1991). The discursive production of selves. *Theory and Psychology*, 1, 51-63.

Harter, S. (1999). *The construction of the self: A developmental perspective*. New York: Guilford Press.

Harter, S. (2006). The self. In N. Eisenberg (Vol. Ed.), W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Series Eds.). *Handbook of child psychology, Vol. 3: Social, emotional, and personality development* (6th Ed., pp. 505-570). New York: Wiley.

Kao, G. (2000). Group images and possible selves among adolescents: Linking stereotypes to expectations by race and ethnicity. *Sociological Forum*, 15, 407-430.

Labov, W. (2010). Unendangered dialect, endangered people: The case of African American Vernacular English. *Transforming Anthropology*, 18(1), 15-27.

Potter, J. & Wetherell, M. (1987). Speaking subjects. In *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour* (pp. 95-115). London: Sage.

Russell, J. (1999). Counselling and the social construction of self. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 27, 339-352.

Shotter, J. & Gergen, K. J. (Eds.). (1989). *Texts of identity*. London: Sage.



## Week 9. Doing identities: Embodiment and the material self

In 1892, William James famously wrote: “*In its widest possible sense, [...] a man’s Me is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank account.*”

Psychological research has often seemed to ignore the role of the body in identity processes. Yet, the body is an important part of people’s lived experience of themselves. Elsewhere in the social sciences, researchers have increasingly tended to appreciate the importance of ‘embodiment’, and this is now beginning to be reflected in social psychology. This has the implication that identities should be viewed as embodied social practices, not just categories in the heads of individuals or in their discourse.

Since the publication of William James’ early writings on “The Self”, psychologists have recognized that the psychological boundaries of the self-concept extend well beyond those of the individual person. As we have explored in previous weeks, research into relational and collective identities has shown people often view and treat significant others, as well as the groups they belong to, as ‘part of themselves’—both cognitively and behaviourally. Yet, research into the extension of the self-concept to encompass material artefacts and places—rather than other people—has been somewhat more scarce.

### Learning outcomes

The successful student will be able to:

- describe the concept of ‘embodiment’
- explain and give illustrations of the concept of symbolic self-completion
- compare and contrast the concepts of place attachment and place identity
- explain the implications of intersectionality for theories of social identity processes

### Core readings

#### Introductory

Diamond, L. M., Pardo, S. T., & Butterworth, M. R. (2011). Transgender experience and identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 629-646). New York: Springer.

Dittmar, H. (2011). Material and consumer identities. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 749-773). New York: Springer.

*B4: Discuss the role of bodily actions and clothing choices in identity construction.*

Carney, D. R., Cuddy, A. J. C., & Yap, A. J. (2010). Power posing: Brief nonverbal displays affect neuroendocrine levels and risk tolerance. *Psychological Science*, 21, 1363-1368.

Hopkins, N. & Greenwood, R. M. (2013). Hijab, visibility and the performance of identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 438-447.

*B5: How can we best understand the relationship between sex and gender?*

West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society*, 1, 125-151.

**B6:** Discuss the role of stereotype embodiment on the aging process.

Levy, B. (2009). Stereotype embodiment: A psychosocial approach to aging. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 18, 332-336.

Nelson, T. D. (2005). Ageism: Prejudice against our feared future self. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61, 207-221. [see also following papers]

**B7:** What is the role of 'place' in the construction and maintenance of identity?

Dixon, J. & Durrheim, K. (2004). Dislocating identity: Desegregation and the transformation of place. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24, 455-473.

Droseltis, O. & Vignoles, V. L. (2010). Towards an integrative model of place identity processes: Dimensionality and predictors of intrapersonal-level place preferences. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30, 23-34.

### **Further reading**

Braun, O. L., & Wicklund, R. A. (1989). Psychological antecedents of conspicuous consumption. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 10, 161-187.

Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing gender*. New York: Routledge.

Clay, D., Vignoles, V. L. & Dittmar, H. (2005). Body image and self-esteem among adolescent girls: Testing the influence of sociocultural factors. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 15, 451-477.

Coleman, P.G. (1996). Identity management in later life. In R. Woods, (Ed.), *Handbook of the Clinical Psychology of Ageing* (pp 93-113). Chichester: Wiley.

Cross, S. & Markus, H. (1991). Possible selves across the life span. *Human Development*, 34, 230-255.

Dittmar, H. (2005). A new look at "compulsive buying": Self-discrepancies and materialistic values as predictors of compulsive buying tendency. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 24, 832-859.

Dittmar, H., Halliwell, E., & Ive, S. (2006). Does Barbie make girls want to be thin? The effect of experimental exposure to images of dolls on the body image of 5-to 8-year-old girls. *Developmental Psychology*, 42, 283-292.

Gollwitzer, P. M., & Wicklund, R. A. (1985). Self-symbolizing and the neglect of others' perspectives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48, 702-715.

Halliwell, E., & Dittmar, H. (2004). Does size matter? The impact of model's body size on women's body-focused anxiety and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23, 104-122.

Hess, T. M., Auman, C., Colcombe, S. J., & Rahhal, T. A. (2003). The impact of stereotype threat on age differences in memory performance. *Journal of Gerontology B: Psychological Sciences*, 58, P3-P11.

Hormuth, S. E. (1990). *The ecology of the self: Relocation and self-concept change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jurik, N. C. & Siemsen, C. (2009). "Doing Gender" as canon or agenda: A symposium on West and Zimmerman. *Gender and Society*, 23, 72-75. [and following papers]

Koen, J., & Durrheim, K. (2010). A naturalistic observational study of informal segregation: Seating patterns in lectures. *Environment and Behavior*, 42, 448-468.

Levy, B. (1996). Improving memory in old age through implicit self-stereotyping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 1092-1107.

- Levy, B. R., Slade, M. D., Kunkel, S. R. & Kasl, S. V. (2002). Longevity increased by positive self-perceptions of aging. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 261-270.
- Levy, B. R., Zonderman, A. B., Slade, M. D., & Ferrucci, L. (2009). Age stereotypes held earlier in life predict cardiovascular events in later life. *Psychological Science*, 20, 296-298.
- Mittal, B. (2006). I, me, and mine: How products become consumers' extended selves. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 5, 550-562.
- Novelli, D., Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (2010). Come together: Two studies concerning the impact of group relations on personal space. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49, 223-236.
- Schubert, T. W., & Koole, S. L. (2009). The embodied self: Making a fist enhances men's power-related self-conceptions. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45, 828-834.
- Shields, S. A. (2008). Gender: An intersectionality perspective. *Sex Roles*, 59, 301-311. [and the articles that follow]
- Van Wolputte, S. (2004). Hang on to your Self: Of bodies, embodiment, and selves. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 33, 251-269.
- Wicklund, R. A., & Gollwitzer, P. M. (1982). *Symbolic self-completion*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

## **Week 10. Empty selves: Identities in historical context**

A relatively neglected area of enquiry is to understand the *historical* development of prevailing concepts of selfhood. Baumeister (1986, 1987) argues that the self 'as we know it' is a comparatively recent phenomenon, probably dating from around the sixteenth century AD. However, others have placed a much earlier date on the origins of the individualistic conception of self (e.g. Harbus, 2002). A much longer-range account of the *evolutionary* development of the symbolic self over the last few million years is proposed by Sedikides and Skowronski (1997), suggesting that the symbolic self-concept originated as an evolutionary adaptation of *Homo erectus* in the Pleistocene era.

### **Learning outcomes**

The successful student will be able to:

- outline some key features of contemporary Western forms of selfhood
- compare and contrast theoretical accounts of their historical development
- critically evaluate methods for looking at historical change in identity processes

### **Core readings**

#### *Introductory*

Burkitt, I. (2011). Identity construction in sociohistorical context. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 267-283). New York: Springer.

#### *B8: To what extent is the 'self' as we know it a recent cultural invention?*

Baumeister, R. F. (1987). How the self became a problem: A psychological review of historical research. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 163-176.

Sedikides, C., & Skowronski, J.J. (1997). The symbolic self in evolutionary context. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 1, 80-102.

#### *B9: What are the pressures involved in constructing an identity in contemporary Western societies?*

Cushman, P. (1990). Why the self is empty: Toward a historically situated psychology. *American Psychologist*, 45, 599-611.

Giddens, A. (1999). Modernity and self-identity: Tribulations of the self. In A. Jaworski & N. Coupland (Eds.), *The discourse reader* (pp. 415-427). Oxford: Routledge.

#### *B10: How can we study self and identity processes of people who lived in the past?*

Harbus, A. (2002). The medieval concept of the self in Anglo-Saxon England. *Self and Identity*, 1, 77-97.

Liu, J. H. & Robinson, A. R. (2016). One ring to rule them all: Master discourses of enlightenment—and racism—from colonial to contemporary New Zealand. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 46, 137-155.

### **Further reading**

Baumeister, R. F., & Muraven, M. (1996). Identity as adaptation to social, cultural, and historical context. *Journal of Adolescence*, 19, 405-416.

Benton, J. F. (1982). Consciousness of self and perceptions of individuality. In R. Benson & G. Constable (Eds.), *Renaissance and renewal in the twelfth century* (pp. 263-295). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Danziger, K. (1997). The historical formation of selves. In R. D. Ashmore & L. Jussim (Eds.), *Self and identity: Fundamental issues* (pp. 137-159). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gill, C. (2008). The ancient self: Issues and approaches. In P. Remes, & J. Sihvola (Eds.), *Ancient philosophy of the self* (pp. 35-56). New York: Springer.
- Kasser, T., Cohn, S., Kanner, A. D., & Ryan, R. M. (2007). Some costs of American corporate capitalism: A psychological exploration of value and goal conflicts. *Psychological Inquiry*, 18, 1-22. [and following commentaries]
- Logan, R. D. (1987). Historical change in prevailing sense of self. In K. Yardley & T. Honess (Eds.), *Self and identity: Psychosocial perspectives* (pp. 13-26). Chichester, UK: Wiley.
- Sedikides, C., & Skowronski, J. J. (2000). On the evolutionary functions of the symbolic self: The emergence of self-evaluation motives. In A. Tesser, R. Felson, & J. Suls (Eds.), *Psychological perspectives on self and identity* (pp. 91-117). Washington, DC: APA Books.
- Sedikides, C., Skowronski, J. J., Gaertner, L. (2004). Self-enhancement and self-protection motivation: From the laboratory to an evolutionary context. *Journal of Cultural and Evolutionary Psychology*, 2, 61-79.
- Sedikides, C., Skowronski, J. J., & Dunbar, R. I. M. (2006). When and why did the human self evolve? In M. Schaller, J. A. Simpson, & D. T. Kenrick (Eds.), *Evolution and social psychology: Frontiers in social psychology* (pp. 55-80). New York, NY: Psychology Press.

## **Week 11. Cultural selves: Identities in cultural context**

Cross-cultural psychology has provided an alternative way of addressing social constructionist arguments about the self without abandoning the empirical tools of mainstream social psychology. The theoretical distinction made by Markus and Kitayama (1991) between independent and interdependent self-construals has generated a large body of research into cultural differences in self-conceptions over the last decade, although some have questioned the accuracy of the theory as well as the appropriateness of evidence used to support it (e.g. Matsumoto, 1999; Spiro, 1993).

Perhaps surprisingly, much less attention has been paid to cross-cultural variability in social identity processes. Against the common view that social identity processes are more prevalent in 'collectivist' cultures, Yuki (2011) provides a more nuanced view, suggesting that the 'cognitive redefinition of the group' inherent in SCT may be a specifically Western way of understanding groups and group identification.

Another way of examining the cross-cultural implications of SCT is through the concept of 'cultural identity'. As a result of globalization, people may become more aware of cultural differences, and so may come to see their cultural group memberships as self-defining.

### **Learning outcomes**

The successful student will be able to:

- summarise dominant arguments about cultural differences in self-concept
- evaluate the implications of such arguments for a universal theory of self and identity
- explain Yuki's critique of the cross-cultural applicability of SCT
- discuss how cultures may be transformed into cultural identities

### **Core reading**

#### *Introductory*

Smith, P. B., Fischer, R., Vignoles, V. L., & Bond, M. H. (2013). *Social psychology across cultures: Engaging with others in a changing world*. London: Sage. Chapter 7: "Self and Identity Processes".

[or the chapter by Peter B. Smith in Schwartz, Luyckx, & Vignoles (2011)]

*B11: What are the key features of Markus and Kitayama's theory of independent and interdependent self-construals, and how have their ideas been criticized?*

Markus, H. R. & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98, 224-253.

Spiro, M. E. (1993). Is the Western conception of the self "peculiar" within the context of the world cultures? *Ethos*, 21, 107-153.

*B12: To what extent are Markus and Kitayama's main predictions about identity processes in different parts of the world supported by subsequent evidence?*

Cross, S. E., Hardin, E. E., & Gercek-Swing, B. (2011). The what, how, why, and where of self-construal. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15, 142 -179.

Vignoles, V. L., Owe, E., Becker, M., Smith, P. B., Easterbrook, M., Brown., R., ... Bond, M. H. (2016). Beyond the 'East-West' dichotomy: Global variation in cultural models of selfhood. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 145, 966-1000.

*B13: Is the social identity perspective useful for understanding identity processes in non-Western cultures?*

Yuki, M. (2011). Intragroup relationships and intergroup comparisons as two sources of group-based collectivism. In R.M. Kramer, G.J. Leonardelli, & R.W. Livingston (Eds.), *Social cognition, social identity, and intergroup relations: A Festschrift in honor of Marilyn Brewer* (pp. 247-266). New York: Taylor & Francis.

*B14: What are the implications of globalization for self and identity processes?*

Arnett Jensen, L., Jensen Arnett, J., & McKenzie, J. (2011). Globalization and cultural identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 285-301). New York: Springer.

### **Further reading**

Bochner, S. (1994). Cross-cultural differences in the self-concept: A test of Hofstede's individualism-collectivism distinction. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 25*, 275-283.

Geertz, C. (1975). On the nature of anthropological understanding. *American Scientist, 63*, 47-53.

Gupta, A., & Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "culture": Space, identity, and the politics of difference. *Cultural Anthropology, 7*, 6-23.

Ho, D. Y. F. (1995). Selfhood and identity in Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism: Contrasts with the West. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 25*, 115-139.

Kanagawa, C., Cross, S. E., & Markus, H. R. (2001). 'Who am I': The cultural psychology of the conceptual self. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*, 90-103.

Kitayama, S., Park, H., Sevincer, A. T., Karasawa, M., & Uskul, A. K. (2009). A cultural task analysis of implicit independence: Comparing North America, Western Europe, and East Asia. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 97*, 236-255.

Lebra, T. S. (1992). Self in Japanese culture. In N. R. Rosenberger (Ed.), *Japanese sense of self* (pp. 105-120). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Levine, T. R., Bresnahan, M. J., Park, H. S., Lapinski, M. K., et al. (2003). Self-construal scales lack validity. *Human Communication Research, 29*, 210-252.

Lindholm, C. (1997). Does the sociocentric self exist? Reflections on Markus and Kitayama's "Culture and the Self". *Journal of Anthropological Research, 53*, 405-422.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (2010). Cultures and selves. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 5*, 420-430.

Matsumoto, D. (1999). Culture and self: An empirical assessment of Markus and Kitayama's theory of independent and interdependent self-construal. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 2*, 289-310.

Singelis, T. M., Bond, M. H., Sharkey, W. F., & Lai, S. Y. (1999). Unpackaging culture's influence on self-esteem and embarrassability: The role of self-construals. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 30*, 315-341.

Unemori, P., Omoregie, H., & Markus, H. R. (2004). Self-portraits: Possible selves in European-American, Chilean, Japanese and Japanese American cultural contexts. *Self and Identity, 3*, 321-328.

## **Week 12. Reunifying identity: Self-continuity and narrative**

In previous weeks, we have seen that people often seek to maintain and enhance consistency over time in their self-conceptions and that information inconsistent with existing self-conceptions may sometimes constitute a threat to identity. Indeed, from a philosophical perspective (e.g. Wiggins, 2001), it is hard to see how a sense of personal or group identity can be maintained without some sense of personal or group continuity between past, present and future. However, there are many ways in which we can maintain a sense of continuity other than simply avoiding change—life changes may be unavoidable, necessary and are often desirable, and we have seen how identities are inherently composed of multiple elements. Research has shown a number of ways in which people maintain and enhance a sense of their continuity over time. People often modify their recollections of the past to make them more consistent with the present. In addition, we often construct narratives about how we have changed, making change meaningful.

### ***Learning outcomes***

The successful student will be able to:

- understand philosophical and theoretical arguments for the importance of self-continuity
- compare and contrast theories and research into self-verification, autobiographical memory, self-narratives and continuity warrants
- describe the negative implications of lacking a sense of self-continuity
- compare and contrast research into personal and collective self-continuity

### ***Core readings***

#### *Introductory*

McAdams, D. P. (2011). Narrative identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 99-115). New York: Springer.

#### *B15: What are the risks of living without self-continuity?*

Chandler, M. J., Lalonde, C. E., Sokol, B. W. & Hallett, D. (2003). Personal persistence, identity development, and suicide: A study of Native and non-Native North American adolescents. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 68(2), vii-130. [especially Chapters II and IV]

Hershfield, H. E. (2011). Future self-continuity: How conceptions of the future self transform intertemporal choice. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1235, 30-43.

#### *B16: Compare the different ways that a sense of self-continuity can be achieved*

Chandler, M. J., Lalonde, C. E., Sokol, B. W. & Hallett, D. (2003). Personal persistence, identity development, and suicide: A study of Native and non-Native North American adolescents. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 68(2), vii-130. [especially Chapters III and VI]

Sedikides, C., Wildschut, T., Routledge, C., & Arndt, J. (2015). Nostalgia counteracts self-discontinuity and restores self-continuity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 45, 52-61.



*B17: Discuss the importance of perceived collective continuity for personal well-being and intergroup relations.*

- Sani, F., Bowe, M., & Herrera, M. (2008). Perceived collective continuity and social well-being: Exploring the connections. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 38*, 365-374.
- Smeeke, A., & Verkuyten, M. (2014). When national culture is disrupted: Cultural continuity and resistance to Muslim immigrants. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 17*, 45-66.

### **Further reading**

- Addis, D. R., & Tippett, L. J. (2004). Memory of myself: Autobiographical memory and identity in Alzheimer's disease. *Memory, 12*, 56-74.
- Belk, R. W. (1990). The role of possessions in constructing and maintaining a sense of past. *Advances in consumer research, 17*, 669-676.
- Brockmeier, J. & Carbaugh, D. (Eds.). (2001). *Narrative and identity: Studies in autobiography, self and culture*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Bruner, J. S. (1994). The 'remembered' self. In U. Neisser & R. Fivush (Eds.), *The Remembering Self: Construction and Accuracy in the Self-Narrative*, pp. 41-54. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Conway, M. A., & Pleydell-Pearce, C. W. (2000). The construction of autobiographical memories in the self-memory system. *Psychological Review, 107*, 261-288.
- Crossley, M. L. (2000). *Introducing narrative psychology: Self, trauma and the construction of meaning*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Eakin, P. J., (1999). *How our lives become stories: Making selves*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Edley, N. & Wetherell, M. (1999). Imagined futures: Young men's talk about fatherhood and domestic life. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 38*, 181-194.
- Eich, E., Macaulay, D., Louwenstein, R. J., & Dihle, P. H. (1997). Memory, amnesia, and dissociative identity disorder. *Psychological Science, 8*, 417-422.
- Gergen, K. J. & Gergen, M. M. (1988). Narrative and the self as relationship. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 21, pp. 17-56). London: Academic Press.
- Harré, R. (1998). *The singular self: An introduction to the psychology of personhood*. London: Sage.
- Hershfield, H. E., Cohen, T. R., & Thompson, L. (2011). Short horizons and tempting situations: Lack of continuity to our future selves leads to unethical decision making and behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 117*, 298-310.
- Lampinen, J. M., Odegard, T. N. & Leding, J. K. (2004). Diachronic disunity. In D. R. Beike, J. M. Lampinen & D. A. Behrend (Eds.), *The self in memory* (pp. 227-254). New York: Psychology Press.
- Lecky, P. (1961). *Self-consistency: A theory of personality* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Shoe String Press.
- Lucero-Montano, A. (2003). Artifacts and persons. *Philosophy Pathways, 63*, II. [Available online: [www.philosophypathways.com/newsletter/issue63.html](http://www.philosophypathways.com/newsletter/issue63.html)]
- McAdams, D. P., Josselson, R. & Lieblich, A. (Eds.). (2001). *Turns in the road: Narrative studies of lives in transition*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

- Orona, C. J. (1990). Temporality and identity loss due to Alzheimer's disease. *Social Science & Medicine*, 30, 1247-1256.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1991). Narrative and self-concept. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 1(2-3), 135-153.
- Pronin, E., Olivola, C. Y., & Kennedy, K. A. (2008). Doing unto future selves as you would do unto others: Psychological distance and decision making. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 224-236.
- Sani, F. (Ed.). (2008). *Self-continuity: Individual and collective perspectives*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Sani, F., Bowe, M., Herrera, M., Manna, C., Cossa, T., Miao, X., Zhou, Y. (2007). Perceived collective continuity: Seeing groups as entities that move through time. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 1118-1134.
- Sani, F., Herrera, M., & Bowe, M. (2009). Perceived collective continuity and ingroup identification as defence against death awareness. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45, 242-245
- Smith, J. A. (1994). Reconstructing selves: An analysis of discrepancies between women's contemporaneous and retrospective accounts of the transition to motherhood. *British Journal of Psychology*, 85, 371-392.
- van Gennep, A. (1977) *The rites of passage*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. (Original work published 1908)
- Wiggins, D. (2001). *Sameness and substance renewed*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

## RESEARCH LECTURE 2: Culture and identity motives

People from different cultures tend to describe themselves somewhat differently when asked to do so, but it is not clear whether or not these differences in content reflect differences in underlying motives. Many theorists take a 'relativist' view, arguing that identity motives are simply reflections of particular cultural beliefs and values; yet, evolutionary and philosophical arguments support a 'universalist' view, that each of the motives has a function which should not depend on culture. So who is right?

### Learning outcomes

The successful student will be able to:

- consolidate the learning outcomes from previous weeks, especially weeks 7, 9 & 10
- draw connections between theories of culture and theories of self and identity
- explain the claim that identity motives are “culturally flexible universals”

### Core reading

Becker, M., Vignoles, V. L., Owe, E., Brown, R., Smith P. B., Easterbrook. M., Herman, G., de Sauvage, I., Bourguignon, D., Torres, A., Camino, L., Silveira Lemos, F. C., Ferreira, M. C., Koller, S. H., González, R., Carrasco, D., Lay, S., Musa, R., Wang, Q., Bond, M. H., Vargas Trujillo, E., Balanta, P., Valk , A., Mekonnen, K. H., Nizharadze, G., Fulop, M., Regalia,C., Manzi, C., Brambilla, M., Harb, C., Aldhafri, S., Martin, M., Macapagal, M. E. J., Chybicka, A., Gavreliuc, A., Buitendach, J., Schweiger Gallo, I., Ozgen, E., Guner, E. U., & Yamakoglu, N. (2012). Culture and the distinctiveness motive: Constructing identity in individualistic and collectivistic contexts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102, 833-855.

### Further reading

- Becker, M., Vignoles, V. L., Owe, E., Easterbrook, M., Brown, R., Smith, P. B., ... & Koller, S. (2014). Cultural bases of self-evaluation: Seeing oneself positively in different cultural contexts. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 40, 657-675.
- Cai, H., Sedikides, C., Gaertner, L., Wang, C., Carvallo, M., Xu, Y., ... Jackson, L. E. (2011). Tactical self-enhancement in China: Is modesty at the service of self-enhancement in East Asian culture? *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2, 59-64.
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