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Inside front cover: René Magritte, 'La reproduction interdite' ('Not to be reproduced'), a 1937 portrait commissioned by Edward James, a British art collector, who planned to set it into a wall behind a two-way mirror so that it would only become visible when a light behind the glass was switched on; like another Magritte painting commissioned by James, it is a *portrait manqué*, in which the patron's identity is erased. See Sydney Shoemaker on *Identity & identities*, pages 40 – 48: "In the case of persons, identity seems to matter in a way it doesn't matter in the case of other things. We won't much care if a car or washing machine is replaced by a different one, as long as the replacement is as good as the original. But this indifference does not extend to family and friends. And it certainly does not extend to ourselves." Image © 2006 C. Herscovici, Brussels/Artists Rights Society, NY. Banque d'Images, ADAGP/Art Resource, NY.

The pavement labyrinth once in the nave of Reims Cathedral (1240), in a drawing, with figures of the architects, by Jacques Cellier (c. 1550 – 1620).

Akeel Bilgrami

Notes toward the definition of 'identity'

The extremity of 'identity' politics in many parts of the globe during the last few decades has given rise to widespread use of the term 'identity' as well as to a glamorous theoretical interest in the concept. However, there has been little clarity or rigor in its theoretical deployment. This brief essay will make a very small effort at correcting that.

My main concern will be how we use 'identity' in the context of identity politics, not how the word surfaces in discussions of metaphysics, about which philosophers have already produced a flourishing and interesting literature. In politics, when we say an individual has a certain identity, we mean that he belongs to a certain type relevant to what we commonly call 'identity politics.'

For some years now, in various essays, I have tried to impose some theoretical order on the concept by distinguishing at the outset between the 'subjective' and 'objective' aspects of identity.[1] Your subjective identity is what you *conceive* yourself to be, whereas your objective identity is how you might be viewed *independently* of how you see yourself. In other words, your objective identity is who you are in light of certain biological or social *facts* about you.

Of course, subjective identity and objective identity are often closely related. It is neither routine nor plausible, at least in a political sense, to conceive of yourself as something you manifestly are not. Could I, born of Indian parents, think of myself as an African American? I suppose I could. One can imagine all sorts of things that go beyond reality. But since we are interested in the notion of identity in the realm of identity politics, we would be sensible to put aside self-conceptions that amount to fantasies.[2]

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1 I spell out the distinction in detail in Akeel Bilgrami, "Identity," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes (New York: Elsevier, 2001). Before that I had written about the distinction in a slightly different vocabulary, as the 'first person' point of view and the 'third person,' or detached, point of view, in Akeel Bilgrami, "What Is a Muslim?" *Critical Inquiry* 18 (4) (Summer 1992).

2 I don't want to push this too far, however. People do imagine themselves to have various

But while the two aspects of identity are closely linked, there can be asymmetry between them. Subjective identity – when it is not mere fantasy – presupposes some proximate objective version of that identity, but not vice versa. For instance, one might be a Jew or an Indian objectively – born to a Jewish mother or to Indian parents – but not identify subjectively as a Jew or an Indian.

It is worth spending time discussing both subjective and objective identities, since they raise very different philosophical issues and ought to be analyzed in very different ways. But before doing so let me quickly register another distinction.

On the question of political identity, one can take either a *normative* angle or a *descriptive* one. A normative perspective asks if it is *good* to have identity or to engage in a politics based on one's cultural, national, racial, or other forms of identity. Much writing about identity politics takes this perspective, with a view to arguing either that identities should not be left out of politics or that infecting politics with identitarian issues is dangerous and wrong.

By contrast, a descriptive treatment of the subject merely tries to analyze what it means to have an identity in the context of identity politics. Of course, a descriptive angle on identity can observe that those who have a certain subjective identity *themselves* often think that it is a good thing. However, the *theorist* of identity, in taking a descriptive approach to the subject, does not take a position either way. This distinction between the normative and the descriptive is important. Too often, an author's normative stance drives his description of identity, skewing the analysis in one direction or the other. Rather than taking a normative approach to identity politics, this brief essay merely tries to examine 'identity' descriptively.

Identity, in the subjective sense, can be important to politics. It can influence one's allegiances and the manner in which one pursues them or allows oneself to be mobilized. But not all subjective identities are relevant to politics. For instance, I am a cricket lover – and that I am one is part of my self-conception – but, for me, my love for cricket does not play any role in my politics. So politically central self-conceptions will be our focus. However, not even all of one's political self-conceptions are germane to what I mean by 'identity' for the purposes of this essay. You may conceive of yourself as a Democrat in the United States, for example, but still not have a subjective identity in the relevant sense. After all, not all politics is identity politics.[3]

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identities, and mobilize themselves politically on that basis. Thus, some group may thoroughly exaggerate its victimhood in the present in order to mobilize an identity in politics. But even here it is presupposed that at some stage they were victims, so it is not entirely made-up and fantastical. I suppose it is also possible that some group completely fabricates an identity in order to make some political capital out of it. I am not saying that one cannot have an identity politics that has only a subjective element with no objective basis whatsoever. I only really want to say that if this happened, we could dismiss the subjective identity *much* more easily than if it were based on something objective. At the very least I want to say that fantasies are not an interesting basis for identity – or perhaps they are *too* interesting to be of relevance to identity politics. Still, I grant that such a politics *could* arise. It cannot be ruled out by mere a priori analysis.

3 Because all of us conceive of ourselves in various ways that do not make a difference to identity politics, the idea that we have 'multiple' identities (or the slightly different, seemingly more organic idea that we are 'hybrid')

These examples imply that the way one sees oneself – as this or that social, cultural, or political type – is only a *necessary* condition of a political identity, not a sufficient one.[4] What other conditions might one add to sufficiently characterize the kind of subjective identity important to identity politics?

One such condition might be: *intensely held* self-conceptions, for instance, strongly held commitments to being a Muslim, a Quebecois, etc.

But while intensity is usually typical of the subjective element of identity politics, it is not enough to describe identity in terms of intensity alone. A cocaine addict may have a very intense desire for cocaine but not want to have those cravings. That is, he may be *alienated* from, rather than *identified* with, his desire for cocaine. If this is so, he does not conceive of himself as a cocaine addict, even if he is one. He may have the objective identity of a cocaine addict but not the subjective one.

This example reveals the ambiguity of the expression 'conceives of oneself.' In one sense, it can mean 'being aware that one is a Muslim or Indian or …'; on the other, it can mean 'valuing the fact of being a Muslim or Indian or ….' The latter sense is the relevant one to our discussion of subjective identity. We are looking to see not only if a person is aware of having Islamic tendencies but also if he *values* having them. So subjective identity requires identification with one's own tendencies.

This implies a distinction between first-order and second-order states of mind. To be alienated from one's desires is to have desires (such as in our example, the desire for cocaine) at the first-order level that one disapproves of at the second order. In contrast, to be identified with one's desires means one approves of those desires.[5] To put it differently, we need to have some kind of *reflective endorsement* of first-order states of mind before we can say we identify with them. It is not enough to like the idea of being a Muslim; one has to, in some sense, approve of liking the idea. If one disapproved of one's Islamic tendencies, then one would be alienated from one's mental, moral, and political tendencies and would lack identity in the *subjective* sense.[6]

Politically relevant and intensely held desires that their possessors reflectively endorse – this looks like a good, initial working definition of 'identity.'[7] Ac-

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is too obvious to deny. But, equally, to assert that we have 'multiple' identities does not put the conceptual and political difficulties of identities in the public arena to rest. Even those who take a normatively favorable stance toward identity politics, and think that there should be more identity politics, do not deny that all people possess multiple identities. Thus, those who would like to criticize identity politics have to do much more than simply assert that there are multiple identities. I discuss these issues more extensively in the papers mentioned in notes 1 and 10.

4 A note of caution: it may be too ambitious to think that we could give the sufficient conditions of 'identity,' or of most social and political concepts. Still, in our efforts to define subjective identity, we could aspire to greater sufficiency than simply saying that it requires one to conceive of oneself in a certain way.

5 More fully: Not being alienated from one's desires need not require one to approve of one's desires; it may only require that one not disapprove of them. But to actually identify with one's desires requires approving of them.

6 It is possible to think of those tendencies, in such cases, as constituting one's objective rather than subjective identity, but I won't pursue that any further.

7 There is a complication here. Sometimes one's second-order desires may be quite neurotic and irrational, too. When they are, they

cording to this definition, we might say a Palestinian today, or an Indian in the 1940s, who has strong nationalist first-order political tendencies and reflectively endorses them at the second order, has a Palestinian, or an Indian, identity.

However, those examples, though roughly right, may give the impression that identities in politics are only instrumental, needed only in order to mobilize yourself and others similar to you toward certain ends – national independence, racial equality, gender justice, and so on. And this, in turn, may give the impression that the agents in question think of these identities as intended to last only until they achieve the goals these identities serve.

But not all identities have this merely instrumental role in an agent's psychological economy. Their role in a psycho-

logical economy may be much more subtle than that. They may, for instance, be a source of dignity and self-respect when one is feeling especially vulnerable ; they may be a source of solidarity and belonging when one is feeling alienated from one's social environment ; and so on. When they serve much more subtle functions of this kind, it is too crude to describe them by saying that the agents hold these identities instrumentally or temporarily. They may seem to *the agents* to have an *intrinsic* and not instrumental value. *Others* may analyze them by saying, "These identities, even if not explicitly instrumental, as in the case of the Palestinian today or the Indian in the 1940s, are nevertheless serving the function of providing a source of dignity and comfort in a situation of vulnerability and humiliation ...." But from their *own subjective points of view*, the agents will simply think of these identities in intrinsic terms rather than as serving such functions, and so they will not see them as temporary, lasting only while those functions need to be served. If others are right in their analysis, these identities may well be overturned and revised by the agents in question when these functions cease to be served. But that makes no difference to the fact that, from the agents' own points of view, the identities are quite intrinsic ; therefore, in their own minds the identities are conceived as something they ought to hold permanently and without being vulnerable to revision.[8]

How should one capture this element in our analysis of subjective identity ?

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cannot be invoked as revealing what one identifies with or what one is alienated from. Thus, for instance, I may disapprove at the second order of my first-order desire for political activism, but this may be because of a bad experience I once had when I tried my hand at political activity. Let's say the experience scarred me and made me pathologically wary of politics even though all my first-order instincts, tendencies, and values may orient me toward involvement in politics. It is possible that, even from within my value economy, I can see that this second-order disapproval of my first-order politics is irrational. It is interesting to ask, when this happens, whether or not there is a third-order disapproval of the second-order disapproval of the first-order desire for political activity. If one says there is, we are in danger of generating an infinite regress. It may be better to account for the irrationality of a second-order desire by showing it to be irrational not by the lights of a yet higher-order desire but by a failure of coherence between the second-order desire and other desires and values, whether at the second or even the *first* order. To say this, however, is to commit oneself to a coherentism about values and desires that requires very careful explanation.

8 I discuss this phenomenon in the context of present-day Muslim identity in Bilgrami, "What Is a Muslim ?" See also my "Occidentalism, The Very Idea : An Essay on Enlightenment and Enchantment," *Critical Inquiry* 32 (Spring 2006).

One can do so by pointing out that some forms of reflective endorsement are different from others in a very specific and interesting way. Some reflective endorsements take the following form, which we may call the 'Ulysses and the Sirens' model.[9]

It is best to approach the idea with an example. Someone with Islamic commitments might think (and some Muslims, in fact, do): "Sooner or later, the spread of pernicious forms of modernity will affect us, too; and it may weaken us from our Islamic commitments, so we must protect ourselves from the possibility of such weakening and entrench in our society certain Islamic ways of life that we will live by even if our commitments to Islam were to weaken." Such endorsement of one's Islamic commitments at the first order is distinctive. It doesn't just approve of those commitments; it entrenches them and guards them against a time when there might well be a weakening or a loss of the commitments.

This is distinctive because not all second-order approval of one's desires and commitments anticipates and resists change in this way. Much of the time, when we support some tendency of ours, it is only to the extent that we expect to have it. If we thought that this propensity were to pass, we would not necessarily protect ourselves against that event. The person with first-order nationalist tendencies under colonial subjugation, for example, may endorse her nationalism at the second order – but she may also know full well that it would not survive the success of her people's anti-imperialist struggles. In other words, once independence is won,

she may have no particular second-order rationale to preserve her first-order nationalist commitments. And she may actually desire a future in which she lives in a state of independence *without* a particularly strong Palestinian (or Indian) identity.

This is even true of many noninstrumental desires. I may intrinsically value the pursuit of philosophy now but not in a way that makes me want to ensure I will be doing it at a time when I don't value it as much. But the Muslim in the example is quite different. In his case, he does not limit his second-order approval of his first-order Islamic tendencies to the time when he feels a strong commitment to Islam, but reaches out to when he thinks he might not. Such a person now values and desires an Islamic future for himself, even if he now thinks that when the future comes he may not have the desire to be in an Islamic society.

It is tempting to think that this kind of reflective endorsement is irrational. But before we dismiss this form of subjective identity, we should pause because, to a large extent, it characterizes liberal identity as well.

Let's ask: why do we entrench some of our commitments and values in the Constitution by calling them 'fundamental rights'? Take free speech. We gave it special status as the First Amendment of the Constitution because we didn't want to allow ourselves to put it aside too easily, in the event that our commitment to it weakened. Imagine a repugnant neo-Nazi movement spreading its views among an especially susceptible population in our society. Perhaps we would be so alarmed by their speech we would want to censor it. It is partly in order to *prevent us* from taking that step that we elevated free speech to a fundamental right. In other words, we protect ourselves from acting on what we *now*

9 I am criticized for this way of thinking about identity in Jon Elster, *Ulysses Unbound* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

perceive as our future 'weakened' state of mind because we currently find desirable a future in which our society embraces free speech.

This parallels how the Muslim in the example above thinks of an Islamic future. Of course, given the nature of Islamic political doctrine and practice in many Muslim societies, such as Iran, he may not think of entrenching it via the same sort of mechanisms as the Liberal does, i.e., a liberal-democratic constitution. But even so, he will want to ingrain Islamic values so deeply now that were Muslims, including himself, ever to falter in their Islamic commitments, the social, political, and legal institutions would make it difficult for them to shed their Islamic ways of life.

So, both cases, Muslim and Liberal, broadly follow the 'Ulysses and the Sirens' model. On this score, neither the Muslim nor the Liberal are any more or less irrational than the other.

I am not saying, however, that the commitments, values, or desires upon which identities are based are immutable or primordial. Not at all. The commitments may well change. But from the point of view of the subject who has these commitments, she *would like them to be permanent*, even if (as she fears) the commitments are not permanent.[10]

10 To put it crudely, the point here is not that such commitments *can* freeze history out, but that they are the kind of commitments that would *like* to do so. It is precisely a conception of the moral or political subject as historically situated and responding to the internal conflicts that history throws up, and the deliberative possibilities prompted by such conflicts, that provides this gap between what the commitments would like to do and what they can do. For more on this nondeterministic Hegelian conception of the dynamics of identity politics, see Akeel Bilgrami, "Secular Liberalism and Relativism," *boundary* 2 31 (2004).

That shows just how deep those commitments are *for her*. And that is why they are so suitable a basis for defining her subjective identity.

This idea is quite intuitive if we recall such frequently heard identity-asserting claims as "I will lose my sense of self, if I betray my people," or in E. M. Forster's schoolboy morality, "I will lose my sense of self, if I betray my friends." Remarks such as these use the none too precise rhetoric of 'sense of self,' but what they are perhaps trying to express (not very well) is how ideals of friendship, nationality, religion, race, gender, etc., can sometimes 'bind' us, Ulysses-style, thereby creating subjective identities.

One plausible analysis of subjective identity, then, is that it is imparted on an agent by her intensely held, politically relevant commitments that mobilize her and others like her who hold such commitments, and that she reflectively endorses at the second-order level in a way that approximates the model of Ulysses and the Sirens.

When we turn to the objective aspects of identity, conceiving of oneself as what one is, reflectively endorsing what one is, is not a necessary condition. For instance, racial identities, when they are thought to be given in biological conditions, are objective in this sense. Gender identity that invokes chromosomes is similarly objective. But biological criteria are not the only criteria invoked in objective identity. Intersubjective and social criteria are also much favored. For example, Marxists often claim that one's identity is given by one's role in a particular economic formation in a given period of history – that is, one's class identity, as 'class' is defined by Marx.

Many oppose the purely biological ways of thinking of various kinds of identity, such as racial and gender iden-

tities, claiming that these identities are 'socially constructed' by the perceptions and attitudes of one's fellows, by the zeitgeist of a particular period, by the conceptual categories and social institutions at a given time. Foucault and those influenced by him have made much of this, and Foucault himself gave detailed historical and social accounts of particular concepts and institutions in Europe as determining identities. In fact, it is interesting that Foucault claims that it is not only the biological and other scientific criteria that are caught up in social factors of this kind, but also the subjective ones we discussed in the last section as well. These, too, are shaped by conceptual and institutional formations far removed and hidden from the exercise of our reflective self-understanding, thereby showing the ideals of individual autonomy, which we assume to be in play in subjective identity, to be illusory.

I will not take up these issues raised by Foucault's influence here.[11] I will look instead briefly at the motivations for seeking objective factors of identity at all, over and above the subjective ones.

Many agents may identify with some objective property they have that is not what is most salient about them to others, and it is sometimes thought that it is these latter rather than the former that may often define their identity, no matter what subjects may conceive themselves to be. A good example of this can be seen in Stalin's[12] well-known defini-

tion of a 'nation,' which stresses the importance of historical and economic criteria for national identity, with a view to providing a corrective to what he saw as somewhat premature and ungrounded subjective identifications with one's 'nationality' found in many secessionist demands in different parts of the Soviet Union. Here, whether he was right or wrong about his formulation of the objective nature of national identity, the motivation for his theoretical position may have been (at least implicitly) political.

But underlying these objectivist views is a more interesting *theoretical* rationale that points to important issues of a more philosophical nature. The claim that agents may have a certain identity even if they do not take themselves to do so implies that what one takes oneself to be can be mistaken – a kind of self-deception (or, at least, a self-myopia, which does not involve the motivated element often associated with self-deception, but involves at least the idea that one may sometimes simply be too deep to fully know oneself – where 'deep' is not intended as a bit of eulogy).

It would be philosophically clarifying to make a distinction between two different sorts of appeal to objectivist identities that are said to be (possibly) hidden from a subject's own self-conception. One claim, the weaker one, is that a subject's behavior often betrays his identity, certain identity-imparting features of his psychology – his character and personality, even if he does not endorse and identify with those features. The other, stronger, claim is that identity does not even require that something in the subject's behavior reveal the identity. Nothing in his behavior need reveal the psychological features that give him his particular identity. To demand that it do so is to have too behavioral a criterion

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11 See Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York : Pantheon Books, 1972). For a fine general discussion of the social construction of identity, see Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 1999).

12 See Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and The National Question* (Moscow : Progress Publishers, 1953).

of identity; rather, the features and the identity are given by some social, political, economic, or biological theory about him and others like him.

The weaker claim, not surprisingly, is less controversial since it requires that the features of a subject that are going to define his identity are something that he at least reveals in his behavior. The subject may not endorse them, or even acknowledge them, but if the only good explanation of his behavior is that he has those features, and if those features are salient compared to others, then some claim can be made regarding how they constitute his identity. Within this view, the more extreme cases will be where the subject does not even acknowledge the features as being revealed in the behavior. Many of the identities that surface in Freudian and psychoanalytic theories make much of this sort of case (Oedipal or narcissistic identities). The less extreme cases will be those where there *is* acknowledgement of the features, but no endorsement of them on the part of the subject. These are likely to be more common. What may be called 'silent' identities, as in 'silent majorities,' often consist of subjects who are not self-identified with a certain pattern of behavior, but will not be in any particular state of denial (as they are in the more extreme cases) about whether their behavior reveals the features they are seen to have. It is very likely, for example, that many ordinary Muslims (those who are sometimes called 'moderate' Muslims) in Iran and other Islamic countries, who do not identify with absolutist or fundamentalist Islam, may all the same admit that much in their behavior mutedly plays along with the Islamist elements in their societies.[13]

The stronger claim very often appeals to biological criteria, but it is most interesting when it does not. Since the biological criteria are in any case usually caught up with social factors (see the point made about them above during the brief mention of the 'social construction' of identity), they will be ignored here. Perhaps the most well known, well worked out, and widely discussed of the stronger objectivist versions of identity, which is not biologically based, is due to Marx[14] and those influenced by him. On this view what makes for having a class identity, say, a proletarian identity, need not amount to any kind of self-identification with the working class. It need not even require any behavior that suggests certain unacknowledged or unendorsed allegiances to that class. All that is required is simply the objective fact of having a certain place and function in the relations of production during the modern capitalist period of economic history.

What is remarkable and controversial about this strong view, more so than anything found in the weaker claim, is that something regarding the self and its identity is being attributed without any basis or manifestation required in the conscious or unconscious behavior of the selves or agents concerned. A working-class person who exhibits no proletarian consciousness nor any of the solidarity and forms of behavior appropriate to the class, and none of whose behavior reflects an unconscious expression of such solidarity or consciousness, is nevertheless said to have proletarian class identity, albeit with a 'false con-

13 In Bilgrami, "What Is a Muslim?" I analyze why this happens among ordinary Muslims.

14 This can be found in any number of Marx's writings in which he formulates the doctrine of historical materialism, including Karl Marx, "The Communist Manifesto," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. R. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978).

sciousness.' It is only because he has this identity that there can be cause to call such a subject's consciousness 'false.' It is false precisely because he fails to conceive himself aright, fails to see his deepest self, which is determined by objective historical and material relations.

There has been a familiar and fascinating controversy about the very idea of objective identity, even though in the standard formulations of the controversy, the notion of identity is often not mentioned at all. For instance, Isaiah Berlin's anxieties about the notion of 'positive liberty' are, at bottom, about the notion of objective identity as I have analyzed it, where self and self-conception can come so radically apart.[15] What such a separation encourages is the idea that the achievement of *self*-realization of individual citizens, that is, the achievement of their own autonomy and liberty (in the 'positive' sense), is now left to states or to the 'vanguards' of political parties, which lay claim to greater understanding of what a subject's self *really* and *objectively* is. On such a view, according to those alarmed by it, there is no paradox in the familiar expression 'forcing someone to be free.' (Lenin's 'vanguardism' was frank about denying any such paradox.[16])

Underlying political anxieties of this kind is a more philosophical issue, which is much discussed in contemporary moral psychology: the issue of 'external' as opposed to 'internal' reasons. An internal reason is a reason for one to do or believe or value something, which appeals to some other evaluative ele-

ment in one's moral-psychological economy. An external reason makes no such appeal to an internal element; it requires only some objective fact that need not even be recognized by the subject for whom it provides a reason.

Thus, in the orthodox Marxist tradition, a proletarian, given his historically determined identity about which he may have no understanding at all, has (an 'external') reason to be a revolutionary, even if there is no element in his own scheme of values (no 'internal' reason) that recommends it to him. Berlin's anxieties about statist tyranny carried out in the name of self-realization, autonomy, and positive liberty were thus implicitly and more deeply about the very idea of external reasons, even though he never quite articulated them as having that underlying target. However, it becomes explicit in a denial of the cogency of the very idea of external reasons in a brilliant essay by Bernard Williams (a philosopher much influenced by Berlin), though the point is marred in that essay by a somewhat confused equation of internal reasons with a Humean notion of value and motivation.[17]

This last set of points provides a good resting point for my notes toward the definition of 'identity,' in which I have distinguished fundamentally between the subjective and objective aspects of the concept. To a considerable extent, which of these two aspects we emphasize in our study of the concept will be a matter of theoretical decision, a decision that, in turn, depends on nonarbitrary philosophical considerations having to do with, as we have just seen, themes at some distance from identity, such as autonomy and moral reasons.

15 See Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *Four Essays on Liberty* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

16 See V. I. Lenin, "What is to be Done?" in *The Leninist Anthology*, ed. R. Tucker (New York: Norton, 1975).

17 See Bernard Williams, "Internal and External Reasons," in *Moral Luck* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

This is why Self, Freedom, and Reason have been closely connected themes in philosophy ever since Kant, both in the analytical and the European traditions of the discipline. Though much more needs to be said in detail to make the links between these themes perspicuous and explicit, it is safe to say that the more inclined we are to be uneasy about the idea of 'external reasons,' the more likely we are to stress the subjective rather than the objective aspects of identity.

Kwame Anthony Appiah

The politics of identity

I am never quite sure what people mean when they talk about 'identity politics.' Usually, though, they bring it up to complain about someone else. One's own political preoccupations are just, well, politics. Identity politics is what other people do.

Here's one example: When someone in France suggested gay marriage was a good idea, many French people complained that this was just another instance of American-style identity politics. (In France, as you know, 'American-style' is *en effet* a synonym for 'bad.') 'Why should *les gays* insist on special treatment?' So the French legislature created the Pacte Civil de Solidarité (PACS), whose point is exactly that marriage is open to *any* two citizens. 'Much better,' those people said. 'Sexuality has

nothing to do with the government.' You might wonder how someone who said *that* could think that civil marriage should *not* be open to gays. Isn't that straight identity politics?

In short, I think that what Sir John Harrington so sagely said of treason is largely true of identity politics: it never *seems* to prosper only because it has largely won the political stage.

But I think there is a way of explaining why identity matters. 'Identity' may not be the best word for bringing together the roles gender, class, race, nationality, and so on play in our lives, but it is the one we use. One problem with 'identity': it can suggest that everyone of a certain identity is in some strong sense *idem*, i.e., the same, when, in fact, most groups are internally quite heterogeneous, partly because each of us has many identities. The right response to this problem is just to be aware of the risk.

But another difficulty with social identity is that the very diversity of that list can leave you wondering whether all these identities have anything interesting in common. What did it mean when I added 'and so on' just now to a list that ran from gender to nationality?[1] Well,

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1 I'm reminded of Jorge Luis Borges's famous example of a list he claimed to have found in

you can only answer that sort of question by proposing a theory of identity.

My own account of social identities is nominalist because I explain how the identities work by talking about the labels – the names – for them. Take some arbitrary identity-label X. My proposal is: X will have criteria of ascription; some people will identify as X's; some people will treat others as X's; and X will have norms of identification.

Ascription: The criteria of ascription for X are the properties on the basis of which we sort people into those we do and those we don't call X's. These criteria need not be the same for everyone. Indeed, people will rarely agree on exactly which properties X's must have. Here is scope for one kind of identity politics: Are F-to-M transgender people men? Are Muslims really French? This form of identity politics involves negotiation (not necessarily by way of the state) of the boundaries of various groups. At the same time, this isn't just a matter of what people say about you, or whether they're polite: it may affect what resources you have access to. If being a devout Muslim is inconsistent with being French, you might not be able to go to a state school with your hijab on.

Identification: By itself, mere classification does not produce what I mean by 'a social identity.' What makes a classification a relevant social identity is not just that some people are called X's but also that being an X figures in their thoughts, feelings, and acts. When a person thinks of herself as an X in the relevant way, she *identifies as an X*, which means she sometimes *feels like* or *acts as an X*. For example: Joe Kansas is in Rome. He sees a lost-looking couple and hears one of them say, with an American accent, 'Gee, honey, I wish I knew the route to the Capitol.' Since Joe's just come from there, he goes up to them and tells them the way. Why? Because he's an American and so are they. In other words, to *feel like an X* is to respond affectively in a way that depends on your identity as an X. You may feel proud of Mary, a fellow Englishwoman, say, who has just scaled Everest. Politicians mobilize this sort of feeling all the time, when they can – more scope then for a politicization of identities.

Treatment: Finally, to treat someone as an X is to do something to her *because she is an X*. When Joe tells those lost tourists the way to the Capitol, he's helping them, in part, 'because they're Americans.' Kindness of this sort is a common form of treatment directed toward fellow in-group members. Unkindness is an equally frequent form of treatment directed toward out-group members. Here is room for politics, once more, as people try to use the government to enforce their likes and dislikes. And the politics can be very serious: think of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

Norms of identification: Identities are useful, in part, because once we ascribe an identity to someone we can often make predictions about her behavior on that basis. This is not just because the criteria of ascription entail that members of the group have, or tend to have, certain properties. It's also because social identities are associated with norms of behavior for X's. People don't only do and avoid doing things because they're X's; there are things that, as X's, they

an ancient Chinese encyclopedia. It begins: "(a) those that belong to the Emperor, (b) embalmed ones, (c) those that are trained, (d) suckling pigs, (e) mermaids, . . ." and ends with "(n) those that resemble flies from a distance." What would it mean to add 'and so on' here?

ought and ought not to do. The 'ought' here is what a philosopher would call a general practical ought – the ordinary ought, not some special moral one. Here are some examples of the type of norms I have in mind. Negatively: men ought not to wear dresses; gay men ought not to fall in love with women; blacks ought not to embarrass the race; Muslims ought not to eat pork. Positively: men ought to open doors for women; gay people ought to come out; blacks ought to support affirmative action; Muslims ought to make the Hajj.

To say these norms exist isn't to endorse them. The existence of a norm that X's ought to A amounts only to its being widely thought – and widely understood to be thought – that X's ought to A.

Let me underscore at once how wide a range of kinds of people fit the general rubric I have laid out. This story answers the questions: what things 'like' race, ethnicity, gender, class are; what it means to say 'gender, nationality, *and so on*.' We can now add, for example, professional identities (lawyer, doctor, journalist, philosopher); vocations (artist, composer, novelist); affiliations, formal and informal (Man. U. fan, jazz aficionado, Conservative, Catholic, Mason); and other more airy labels (dandy, conservative, cosmopolitan). There are also relationships that are an obvious extension of the general rubric: you can be X's father and identify as such, or treat someone as X's dad. Fatherhood has norms – things dads ought to do.

If this is what identities are, it appears silly to be either 'fer' or 'agin' them. Either posture calls to mind the full-hearted avowal of the American transcendentalist Margaret Fuller, "I accept the universe!" – and Thomas Carlyle's famously robust rejoinder, "Gad! She'd better!"

'There it is,' Carlyle's point was. 'We'd better deal with it.'

But if we're going to deal with identity, it's reasonable to ask how large a part these identities should play in our political lives, whether we take politics in the narrow sense of our dealings with the state, or, more broadly, as our dealings, in social life, with one another.

To answer that question it helps to begin not with politics, not even with social life directly, but with the 'ethical life' of individuals. By 'ethics,' I mean something like what whoever put the label *Nichomachean Ethics* on that ancient book meant by it. (Apparently, it probably wasn't Aristotle.) *Ethics* is a reflection on what it means for human lives to go well, for us to have *eudaimonia*. (This is Aristotle's word, perhaps best translated as 'flourishing.') Ethics, in this sense, has important connections with morality, which Ronald Dworkin taught me to distinguish from ethics as follows: Ethics, he said, "includes convictions about which kinds of lives are good or bad for a person to lead, and morality includes principles about how a person should treat other people."[2]

Each of us has a life to live. We face many moral demands, but they leave us many options. We mustn't be cruel or dishonest, for example, but we can still live in many ways without these vices. Of course, all of us also have constraints of historical circumstances and physical and mental endowments: I was born into the wrong family to be a Yoruba *Oba* and with the wrong body for motherhood; I am too short to be a successful

2 Ronald Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 485, fn. 1. Note that Dworkin's definition allows that the ethical might subsume the moral. It might be best to lead a life in which you treat others as they should be treated.

professional basketball player and insufficiently musical to be a concert pianist. But even when we have taken these things into account, each human life begins with many possibilities. Everybody has – or, at least, should have – a great variety of decisions to make in shaping a life. And a philosophical liberal, like me, believes these choices belong, in the end, to the person whose life it is.

This means at least two things. First, the standard by which we decide whether I'm flourishing is, in part, set by aims I define for myself. Second, provided I give others their moral due, the job of managing my life is mine. Thoughtful friends, benevolent sages, and anxious relatives rightly offer advice as to how to proceed. But it ought to be *advice*, not coercion. And, just as private coercion is wrong, it is also wrong when undertaken by governments interested in the perfection of their citizens. In other words, once I have done my duty, the shaping of my life is up to me.

What John Stuart Mill taught us to call individuality is one term for this task. But our individuality isn't produced in a vacuum; rather, the available social forms and, of course, our interactions with others help shape it. Chapter 3 of *On Liberty* ("On individuality as one of the elements of well-being") is the classic English formulation of this notion of individuality; but, as Mill freely acknowledged there, his own thinking about these matters had been profoundly shaped by an essay of Wilhelm von Humboldt, written in the 1790s, and known to us now as *The Limits of State Action*. (It's a good thing that's how we know it: the German title was actually *Ideen zu einem Versuch die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staats zu bestimmen*.) In Chapter 2, "Of the individual man, and the highest ends of his existence," Humboldt wrote that it is "through a social

union…based on the individual wants and capacities of its members, that each is enabled to participate in the rich collective resources of the others."[3] Liberals realize that we need other people: respect for individuality is not an endorsement of individualism.

You might object that I count too many things as social identities. But the fact that my account includes things we don't normally think of as social identities is actually an advantage. Because these other identities are important, as the usual social identities are, in our ethical lives. Humboldt, after the passage I just quoted, gives as his first example marriage ("the union of the sexes"), and then drifts perilously close to discussing homosexual relationships, too.[4] 'Spouse,' in short, is one of those relational words, like 'father,' that fit the model.

And it's important to put the social identities we normally talk about in the context of all these others, because the feature they all share, from the point of view of ethics, is that people make use of them in seeking *eudaimonia*.

Why do we have such a diverse range of social identities and relations? One answer, an etiological one, speaks to our evolution as a social species designed for

3 Wilhelm von Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action*, ed. J. W. Burrow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 9. Humboldt's essay, though written in 1891–1892, was not first published in a fairly complete form until 1852. See the editor's introduction, vii.

4 That's perhaps one reason he didn't publish the essay himself, leaving it to his brother Alexander to publish posthumously. Another was that suggesting limits on the state probably wasn't so popular with Friedrich Willhelm, King of Prussia, nephew of Frederick the Great – who, come to think of it, might have liked the gay part.

the game of coalition building in search of food, mates, and protection. This is why we have the sort of in-group solidarities and out-group antagonisms that social psychologists have been exploring for the last half century.

But from the point of view of a creature with that psychology, there is another, equally persuasive answer: we use identities to construct our human lives. For we make our lives *as* men and *as* women, *as* Yanks and *as* Brits, *as* Catholics and *as* Jews; we make them *as* philosophers and *as* novelists; we make them *as* fathers and *as* daughters. Identities are a central resource in this process. Morality – by which I mean what we owe to one another – is also part of the scaffolding on which we make that construction. So are various projects that we voluntarily undertake: Voltaire's garden at Ferney shaped the last years of his life. (He really meant what he said at the end of *Candide*.)

Identities are so diverse and extensive because, in the modern world, people need an enormous array of tools in making a life. The range of options sufficient for each of us isn't enough for us all. Indeed, people are making up new identities all the time: 'gay' is basically four decades old; 'punk' is younger. As Mill said in one of my favorite passages from Chapter 3 of *On Liberty*:

> If it were only that people have diversities of taste, that is reason enough for not attempting to shape them all after one model. But different persons also require different conditions for their spiritual development; and can no more exist healthily in the same moral, than all the variety of plants can exist in the same physical atmosphere and climate. The same things which are helps to one person towards the cultivation of his higher nature, are hindrances to another . . . . unless there is

a corresponding diversity in their modes of life, they neither obtain their fair share of happiness, nor grow up to the mental, moral, and aesthetic statures of which their nature is capable.[5]

Philosophers have written a good deal recently about one way in which social identities have figured in politics, namely in what Hegelian language labels the 'politics of recognition.' The responses of other people obviously play a crucial role in shaping one's sense of who one is. As Charles Taylor points out, this process begins in intimate life: "On the intimate level, we can see how much an original identity needs and is vulnerable to the recognition given or withheld by significant others." Relationships, he says, are "crucial because they are crucibles of inwardly generated identity."[6]

But that's just the beginning. Our identities don't depend on interactions in intimate life alone. Law, school, church, work, and many other institutions also shape us. However, this fact doesn't tell us what role the state should play in the regulation of such acts of recognition.

Unfortunately, we live in societies that have not treated certain individuals with respect because they were, for example, women, homosexuals, blacks, Jews. Because our identities are 'dialogically' shaped, as Taylor describes it, people who have these characteristics find them central – often negatively central – to

5 John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, in *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, vol. 18, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963 – 1991), 270.

6 Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 36. Cf. Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995).

their identities. The politics of recognition starts when we grasp that this is wrong. One form of healing pursued by those who have these identities involves seeing these collective identities not as sources of limitation and insult but as valuable parts of who they are. And since a modern ethics of authenticity (which goes back, roughly, to Romanticism) requires us to express who we centrally are, they move, next, to demanding society recognize them *as* women, homosexuals, blacks, and Catholics, and do the cultural work necessary to resist the stereotypes, to challenge the insults, to lift the restrictions.

Since these old restrictions suggested substantially negative norms of identification, constructing a life with dignity entails developing positive norms of identification instead. For example, an American homosexual after Stonewall and gay liberation takes the script of the closet, and works, in community with others, to assemble a series of positive gay norms of identification. This new conception recodes being a faggot as being gay, which requires, among other things, declining to stay in the closet. But if one is to be out of the closet in a society that deprives homosexuals of equal dignity and respect, then one must constantly deal with assaults on one's dignity. Thus, the right to live as an 'open' homosexual is not enough. It is not even enough to be treated with equal dignity *despite* being homosexual, for that would mean accepting that being homosexual counts to some degree against one's dignity. Instead, one must ask to be respected *as* gay.

This is a demand that others could accede to as individuals: I have no objection to calling social negotiations of this sort a kind of micropolitics. But what can it mean for the state? On one side lies the individual oppressor whose ex-

pressions of contempt may be part of who he or she is, and whose rights of free expression are presumably grounded, at least in part, in the connection between individuality and self-expression. On the other, the oppressed individual, whose life can go best only if his or her identity is consistent with self-respect. How, if at all, is the state to intervene?

There are undoubtedly all sorts of things that might be done here: laws against hate speech or verbal harassment in the workplace, state education for tolerance, public celebrations of the heroes of the oppressed. But it's important to see that, while members of groups that have experienced historical exclusion, contempt, or obloquy may indeed need new social practices in order to flourish, what they are seeking is not always *recognition*. When blacks and women in the United States campaigned for the vote, they did so very often as blacks and as women. But they weren't asking for recognition of their identity; they were asking, precisely, for the vote. Participation of this sort may presuppose a minimal sense of recognition, but it entails a good deal more. Similarly, when the lesbian and gay movement in the United States pursues recognition, it does so by asking for rights – to serve in the military, to marry – that would be worth having even if they came without recognition. So not all political claims made in the name of a group identity are primarily claims for recognition.

In social life, too, it's equally important not to pursue a politics of recognition too far. If recognition entails taking notice of one's identity in social life, then the development of strong norms of identification can become not liberating but oppressive. There is a kind of identity politics that doesn't just permit but *demands* that I treat my skin color or

my sexuality as central to my social life. Even though my 'race' or my sexuality may be elements of my individuality, someone who insists that I organize my life around these things is not an ally of individuality. Because identities are constituted in part by norms of identification and by treatment, there is no clear line between recognition and a new kind of oppression.

One reasonable criticism of identity politics consists, then, in pointing out that there's more than recognition – often much more – at stake when people ask to be recognized. This resembles the standard old-style Marxist criticism that identities other than class-based ones get in the way of seeing where our real interests lie. (There's some truth to this, though as a good liberal, I don't think our real interests are just our economic ones.) But the point here is not just that recognition isn't all that matters. Indeed, because our identities shape our aims and our aims help fix our interests, we can have real so-to-speak identity interests as well.

Many people in the United States voted for George Bush in part because they wanted someone who was, like them, an evangelical Christian, in the White House. They voted *as* evangelicals, but this, at best, is very obliquely a point about recognition. Getting a wave from the White House may count as state recognition, I suppose, but most evangelicals sensibly don't hang their self-respect on that rather wobbly peg. Now I think that for many of them that vote was a mistake, since George Bush's actual policies are bad for many of the things that matter most to them – health care, pension provision, tax policy, not losing their sons and daughters in foreign adventures. And though he is, I believe, a sincere evangelical Christian, George Bush hasn't done – and probably won't do – much in changing the law on many of the so-called social issues that evangelical Christians might be thought to care about: stopping abortions, refusing to recognize lesbian and gay relationships in any way, and getting lots of mentions for God in public life. So what George Bush says about abortion and homosexuality draws them to him, even though they should pick someone else if they cared about policy rather than identity.

This kind of politics is actually a deep feature of modern democratic life. We identify with people and parties for a variety of psychological reasons, including identifications of this prepolitical sort, and then we're rather inclined to support all the policies of that person or party. This is, in part, because sensible people have better things to do than work out, all by themselves, what the proper balance should be between, say, VAT and income taxes, but it's also because people sufficiently like you may actually pick policies, when they do think about them, that you would pick, if you had the time. So here, as in many places in life, it is sensible to practice a cognitive division of labor. That used to work by creating political identities – left, right, small-l liberal, Labour, Tory, big-l Liberal, Democrat, Republican, Christian Democrat, and Marxist. In many of the advanced democracies, party affiliations are less strong than they used to be, and other identities are bearing more political weight. But that's in part because many of the older party affiliations were class-based, and social class as defined by one's work has declined in significance in people's identifications. In that very profound way a new kind of identity politics, based in the declining social salience of class, has been on the rise since the 1960s.

Kwame Anthony Appiah on identity

I count seven different ways in which I've said that you might speak of 'identity politics.' (1) There are political conflicts about who's in and who's out. (2) Politicians can mobilize identities. (3) States can treat people of distinct identities differently. (4) People can pursue a politics of recognition. (5) There can be a social micropolitics enforcing norms of identification. (6) There are inherently political identities like party identifications. And (7) social groups can mobilize to respond collectively to all of the above. Maybe it's not so surprising then that, as I said at the start, I'm never quite sure what people mean when they talk about identity politics.

David A. Hollinger

From identity to solidarity

Just who belongs together with whom, and for what purposes, and on what authority? Where and why do the claims of descent, religion, nationality, economic position, ideology, gender, and 'civilization' trump one another in the competition for the loyalties of individuals in an epoch of increased global integration? How much do we owe to 'our own kind' – whatever that may mean – and how much to 'strangers,' to the rest of humankind? Our most discerning social observers often conclude that "the boundaries of responsibility are increasingly contested."[1]

The problem of solidarity is shaping up as the problem of the twenty-first

century. Yet the centrality of this problem to our time, and to our apparent future, is often obscured by the popularity of the term *identity*.[2] This word sounds like a reference to a stable, if not static, condition, largely cultural and psychological, but the word as commonly used in the United States during the past several decades has actually functioned to assign political and social roles to individuals and to flag expectations about just who will make common cause with whom. To share an identity with other people is to feel in solidarity with them: we owe them something special, and we believe we can count on them in ways that we cannot count on the rest of the population. To come to grips with one's true identity is to ground, on a presump-

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1 Samuel Scheffler, *Boundaries and Allegiances : Problems of Justice and Responsibility in Liberal Thought* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2001), 65.

2 For a highly informative comparative account of how the notion of 'identity' is currently understood and employed in a variety of nations around the world, see Nadia Tazi, ed., *Keywords : Identity* (New York : The Other Press, 2004). The classic study of the history of this idea in the United States down to about 1980 is Philip Gleason, "Identifying Identity : A Semantic History," *Journal of American History* LXIX (1983) : 910 – 931.

tively primordial basis, vital connections to other people beyond the family.

What exactly do I mean by 'solidarity,' and why do I characterize it as a *problem*? How does this problem relate to "the problem of the color line," which W. E. B. Du Bois a century ago called "the problem of the twentieth century"? How has the notion of identity delayed a fuller recognition of the urgency and scope of the problem of solidarity? This essay addresses those questions.[3]

Solidarity is an experience of willed affiliation. Some might prefer to speak of 'community,' but this usage blurs more than it clarifies. This word often serves simply to classify people, to denote a group defined by one or more characteristics shared by its members – whether or not those members are disposed to act together. Hence we speak of 'the real-estate community,' 'the gay community,' 'the Asian American community,' 'the scientific community,' 'the national community,' 'the Upper West Side community,' 'the manufacturing community,' 'the golfing community,' and so on, to indicate what may be an organized interest group or nothing more than a collectivity of individuals who share a distinguishing trait, practice, or place of residence.[4]

'Solidarity' best serves us if we use it to denote a state of social existence more specific than what 'community' has come to mean. Solidarity entails a greater degree of conscious commitment, achieved only when parties to an affiliation exercise at least *some* measure of agency, if only in consciously affirming an affiliation into which they were born. The experience of solidarity is more active than mere membership in a community. When the word 'solidarity' entered the English language in the middle of the nineteenth century, it was understood to refer to a property that some communities possessed and others did not. The English word 'community,' denoting a body of individuals, dates back many more centuries.[5] Solidarity is more performative than is community. Solidarity implies a special claim, even if modest in dimensions, that individuals have on each other's energies, compassion, and resources.

What is at semantic issue can be illuminated when we consider the popular notion of a 'community of fate.' This term commonly refers to a collectivity whose members have been subject to a single set of historical constraints. Jews are often described as a community of fate. Many Jews also affiliate with one another, affirm Jewish identity, and help

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3 Portions of this essay are drawn from the preface to a book being published simultaneously, David A. Hollinger, *Cosmopolitanism and Solidarity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

4 For a characteristic example, see http://groups.msn.com/stampcollectingcommunity, which is a website for 'the stamp collecting community.' For another, illustrating the practice of the press to use the term 'global community' to refer simply to the opinions of a variety of heads of state, see the headline, "Global Community Slams Gaza Incursion," posted June 29, 2006 (an account of diplomatic reactions to military actions by Israel): http://

www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp? ARTICLE_ID=50844.

5 The *Oxford English Dictionary*'s first entry for *solidarity* dates from the mid-nineteenth century; that for *community* as a body of people dates from the fourteenth century. Credit for the development of *solidarity* as a tool of social theory is generally given to Émile Durkheim. Its more frequent use in recent years in places where the less precise word, community, had often been employed owes much to the work of Richard Rorty, especially his *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

to constitute a vigorous and sustaining solidarity. But not all members of the Jewish community of fate demonstrate significant solidarity with other Jews. The same distinction can apply to black people in the United States, to other descent-defined groups, to women, and to any population group whose members have been treated in some special fashion by persons who have exercised power over them. A community of fate will often sustain a solidarity, but the problem of solidarity arises only when the role of 'fate' is supplemented by the action of forces other than those that created a given 'community of fate' to begin with.

Feminism is a solidarity, but womanhood is not. Judaism is a solidarity, but having a Jewish ancestor – even a Jewish mother, to allude to one of the classic criteria for being counted as a Jew – is not. The Chinese American community is a solidarity for many Americans of Chinese ancestry, but not every American of Chinese ancestry is equally invested in it and some may be altogether indifferent to it. We will miss the character and scope of the problem of solidarity if we conflate solidarity with the mere possession of a set of traits or antecedents or confinements. On the other hand, the problem of solidarity is real when there is at least some opportunity for choice, when people can exercise some influence over just what 'we' they help to constitute.

The problem of solidarity is thus at hand whenever people are capable of actually asking, who are 'we'? This 'we' question is not new, but it now arises with some urgency in an imposing range of settings. The 'we' question does not press itself upon individuals who are supremely confident about the groups to which they belong, and to which they are the most deeply committed. Such people know their basic 'identity,' even if only because they have been told repeatedly what it is. They may never have had cause to question it, and may never have been allowed any choice in the matter. Uncontested ascription has always been a powerful adhesive, and still is. But for millions in many parts of the globe today, a multitude of events, some world-historical in scope, has challenged this confidence.

Prominent among the events that enable us to recognize the problem of solidarity is the accelerating integration of the global capitalist economy and its accompanying communications systems. New affiliations are created, while old ones are dissolved. "All that is solid melts into air," Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels observed even of the capitalism of their era. Capitalism has its own sources of stability, but capitalism has little respect for any affiliations that it cannot turn to its own purposes. Demographic migration, often attendant upon the dynamics of the world capitalist economy, is another major phenomenon threatening inherited associations. The movement of masses of people is nothing new, but now we see it in huge proportions, creating diasporas in the older industrial centers of Europe and North America, and creating sprawling megacities like Lagos and São Paolo, which our demographers tell us will be the chief social settings of population growth in the next half century. This physical mobility affects both migrants and the peoples into whose company they move: the migrants and their offspring may be divided between diasporic consciousness and new national or regional identities, while groups with a proprietary relation to a land and its institutions – such as the British and the Dutch and many other classically European peoples now coming to grips with

the reality of immigration – wonder if the newcomers alter the character of their 'we.'

As the example of Europeans uncertain about immigration illustrates, staying at home is not necessarily an escape from the problem of solidarity. Other disruptive events can come to you, even if you do not stir. Regime changes and the decline of empires, as well as immigration, can prompt the 'we' question for people who stay put. A host of post-Soviet states in Central Asia and Eastern Europe affirm their own peoplehood against the Soviet identity of the recent past. Ethnic Russians in the Baltic states and elsewhere in once-Soviet lands find themselves outsiders. In Africa and Asia an even larger number of postimperial nations negotiate their state authority with a diversity of descent communities whose relations to one another were heavily structured by the European conquerors who drew the boundaries of the states now trying to maintain themselves. Meanwhile, in the uniquely conspicuous space of Western Europe, affiliation as 'European' now rivals Dutch, German, Italian, and other national identities to an extent unprecedented since the rise of the nation-state as the basic unit of political organization.

In the realm of learned discourse countless intellectuals explain ever and ever more earnestly that all population groups, even those once called 'races,' are historically contingent constructions. This truth is especially hard to evade in the United States, where marriage, cohabitation, and reproduction across 'racial' lines have increased rapidly. Of course, the invidious process of racializing the varieties of nonwhite Americans continues, yet never in the history of the Republic has this process been more energetically contested and never has the very concept of race been

more persistently attacked. But well beyond the United States the fact of physical as well as cultural mixing confounds ascribed identities. This mixing prompts the 'we' question and leads many individuals, especially in democratic countries, to think – no doubt naively in many cases – that they can answer this question for themselves.

The point of alluding to these recent events is not to insist that the challenge these events generate is altogether unprecedented. Historians more confident than I of their own knowledge of the entire past of our species can quarrel about the uniqueness of our time if they wish. My point here is more modest: these recent events make it plausible to suppose that among the greatest issues of the twenty-first century is the problem of solidarity, the problem of willed affiliation.

I suggest this without doubting for an instant the enduring value for the twenty-first century of Du Bois's classic formulation: "The problem of the Twentieth Century," said Du Bois in 1903, "is the problem of the color-line." But the lines between colors are not as sharp today as they were a century ago, or even fifty years ago. When Du Bois died in Africa in 1963, marriage across the color line was still prohibited by law in most of the states with large black populations, and black Americans were still without the protections of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. The significance of color itself, moreover, is today more vigorously contested than at any time in memory, thanks in large part to twentieth-century men and women whose actions vindicated Du Bois's prophecy.

The more we come to see the color-coded 'races' as artifacts, as contingent results of human action rather than primordial causes of it, the more the color

line takes its place among other social distinctions that may or may not be the basis for the assigning or choosing of affiliations. To be sure, poetic license is implicit in any assertion that any single problem defines a century. I invoke and emulate Du Bois's prescient hyperbole only to convey what I take to be the range and depth of the problem of solidarity.

If Du Bois were with us today, he would probably be among the first to warn that it is easy to exaggerate the degree of choice opened up by the world-historical transformations to which I have alluded. The problem of solidarity is inevitably located within one or another set of historical constraints, including the way in which power is distributed in any particular social setting. Some people have much more authority over their own affiliations than others do, and color continues to play a major role in these determinations. The scholars who have reminded us of the decidedly artifactual status of even the population groups long considered primordial have also understood, for the most part, that artifacts can be deeply entrenched. Contingency does not imply easy rearrangement. Yet only when the sources of social cohesion are not absolutely fixed is solidarity worth talking about as a 'problem' rather than simply as a condition.

And in the absence of fixity, a tension develops that gives the problem of solidarity its social-psychological structure. The tension is between the needs for 1) a deep feeling of social belonging, enabling intimacy and promoting effective exchange, and 2) a broad alliance, enabling mutual defense and facilitating a greater range of social and cultural experience. This tension between the impulse for concentration (hold onto your familiar ground; stick with your own kind; consolidate the richness of your heritage) and the impulse for incorporation (expand your horizons; take on as much of the world as you can; try to locate the source of your dilemmas, however remote) is heightened as economic and communications systems allow ostensibly distant forces to impinge on one's 'home.'

Global warming is a convenient example of a threat to everyone that is difficult to engage from the point of view of any solidarity smaller than the species. But any solidarity capacious enough to act effectively on problems located in a large arena is poorly suited to satisfy the human need for belonging. And any solidarity tight enough to serve the need for belonging cannot be expected to respond effectively to challenges common to a larger and more heterogeneous population. To be sure, one can have multiple affiliations, many 'we's,' some more capacious than others. That we all have multiple identities (national, ethnoracial, religious, sexual, geographical, ideological, professional, generational, etc.) and are capable of several solidarities is widely understood. But the energies and resources and affections of individuals are not infinite in supply. There are priorities to be set.

Hence the problem of solidarity has a political-economic structure as well as a social-psychological one. We can speak of a 'political economy of solidarity' because solidarity is a scarce commodity distributed by authority. Whether identity is understood as monolithic or multiple, enduring or contingent, it has a political economy that is all too often neglected by theorists who distinguish sharply between 'the politics of recognition' and 'the politics of distribution.' The former, which owes its popularity to Charles Taylor, is commonly thought to entail recognizing the psychocultural

claims of personhood and its sustaining intimacies, especially as entangled with an inheritance of neglect and mistreatment.[6] In contrast to this variety of politics is the more conventional kind, understood to be about the distribution of a society's commodities. But identity, when understood as performative, is also a commodity of sorts. On just whose affections, resources, and energies can one make a special claim, and who has a special claim on one's own supply? Central to the history of nationalism, after all, has been the use of state power to establish national 'identities,' understood as performative, and thus creating social cohesion on certain terms rather than others.

The example of nationalism can remind us of the role of state power in the political economy of solidarity. States commonly exercise great authority in persuading people that their chief 'identity' is with the nation, ostensibly represented by the state. But a state can also exercise great authority over subgroup affiliations through the systems of classification it adopts, often in the form of a census. The debates over the categories of the federal census of the United States offer a revealing window on the political economy of solidarity. Although religious affiliations are of great importance to many Americans, especially in the years since 9/11 heightened awareness of the significance of Muslim identity, the census does not count people by religion. Efforts to put religion in the census have been repeatedly rejected, most recently at the time of the 1960 census.[7] The primary categories for sub-

group affiliation in the United States have always been, and remain, those of physically marked descent. Although the state's purpose in collecting information by race and ethnicity has changed over the decades, and is now keyed by anti-discrimination remedies, the census categories are popularly considered natural kinds rather than political artifacts, and thus powerfully affect the dynamics of affiliation. The most important 'identity groups,' then, are ethnoracial, and the authority by which individuals are assigned to these groups is supposedly their own when in fact it is not.

Individual respondents to the census are expected to identify themselves according to color-coded population groups. The de facto authority in the political economy of solidarity is thus physical characteristics, especially skin pigmentation and facial shape, even though the de jure authority is the will of the individual being classified. Officials in the United States are no longer comfortable with the formal and legal assigning of individuals to groups according to an official's assessment of an individual's physical characteristics. That would smack too much of the practices of the governments of Nazi Germany and pre-Mandela South Africa. So the United States allows individuals to identify themselves. But virtually every governmental and private agency that cares at all about ethnoracial classifications fully expects the individual to voluntarily choose the same identity that an official would ascribe to them on the basis of their physical appearance. The census asks the individual to register a decision

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6 Charles Taylor et al., *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition"* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

7 For a fresh study of the volatile controversy of the late 1950s over the issue of adding reli-

gion to the census, see Kevin M. Schultz, "Religion as Identity in Postwar America: The Last Serious Attempt to Put a Question on Religion in the United States Census," *Journal of American History* XCIII (September 2006): 359–384.

someone else has already made about who they are.

The census is only one major flashpoint for the 'identity debates' of the United States of recent decades.[8] These debates have been largely driven by a concern to *distribute the energies that make solidarities*. Nationalists of various persuasions press the value of national solidarity, arguing that 'we Americans' are all in it together, and should invest more of our energies in the nation rather than in economically, religiously, or ethnoracially defined interests. Advocates of this or that 'identity group' hope, with good reason, that positive identification with one's community of descent is to transform that community into a solidarity capable of advancing the interests attributed to the community. The movement to create a single 'Latino' or 'Hispanic' identity/solidarity out of populations derived from migration sources as different as Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Argentina, and Spain is perhaps the most visible example at the present time. But the dynamic is also apparent in relation to groups defined by gender, sexual orientation, religion, locality, and other social circumstances. And in the white supremacist past of the United States, to identify as white was of course to be part of a solidarity of white people ready to join together to exercise power over nonwhites.

The masking of mere solidarity by the quasi-mystical notion of identity can promote the violence Amartya Sen laments in his recent, important book, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Des-*

tiny.[9] To understand that identity is primarily about the down-to-earth process of affiliation is to demystify identity and to diminish the presumption that the dynamics of affiliation are programmed by descent as registered by physical characteristics. The more we recognize the historical contingency of the process of identity/solidarity formation, the more civic value we might attribute to open debates about it, and the more respect we might develop for individual volition in deciding what one's 'identity' is, which is to say, in deciding just where one 'belongs.' Today's most persistent defenders of 'identity politics' continue to argue that identities are largely unchosen – more discovered than manufactured. Identities "are visibly marked on the body itself," insists Linda Martin Alcoff, "guiding if not determining the way we perceive and judge others and are perceived and judged by them." In this view, the process of experiencing what Alcoff calls "identity as an epistemologically salient and ontologically real entity" – however complex that process may be – is still controlled by physical characteristics and the traditional responses, often prejudicial, that these characteristics have generated.[10]

8 For critical discussions of census policy today, see the Winter 2005 issue of *Dædalus*, especially the essay by Kenneth Prewitt, "Racial Classifications in America: Where Do We Go From Here?" 5 – 17.

9 Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006).

10 Linda Martin Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5. This ambitious theoretical treatise is weakened by Alcoff's determination to bring ethnoracial identities into a single frame of analysis with gender identities, whose connection to a physical binary creates somewhat different challenges for analysis than do identities related to the species-wide spectrum of blending colors and morphological traits. Alcoff's arguments could be translated into the vocabulary of solidarity, and thus construed as pleas for solidarities that can diminish the mis-

Alcoff and others who have tried to 're-claim identity' from critics like Sen are no less eager than he for allegiances that will promote a more just and peaceful world, but for them 'identity' implicitly directs solidarity formation along decidedly predetermined lines, and resists the search for, and scrupulous assessment of, bases for belonging less rooted in blood and history.[11]

But the turn from identity to solidarity is manifest in a flurry of recent treatises. A formidable cohort of philosophers, sociologists, historians, and political scientists appreciate descent-defined affiliations not as natural consequences of human differences, but in their capacity as chosen and ultimately disposable instruments for political action and social support. The postethnic principle of "affiliation by revocable consent" encourages individuals to join forces with other people with whom they 'identify,' but to choose for themselves just how much of their energies they want to commit to this or that solidarity, including one founded on common ancestry.[12] Prominent in marking this new turn are recent, ambitious books by Kwame Anthony Appiah, Seyla Benhabib, Rogers Brubaker, Amy Gutmann, John Lie, and

Rogers Smith.[13] A great virtue of all of these works is that each recognizes the need to confront the 'we' question in a world of increasingly global dynamics.

No single formula will apply in every situation where the allocation of energies amid a variety of overlapping and sometimes competing affiliations is at stake. The problem of solidarity has to be addressed differently depending on the specific constitutional and cultural circumstances in which it arises. Our historical situation obviously demands wide solidarities, but universalist projects neglect at their peril the demands for belonging and intimacy that fuel particularist movements. A determination to balance the wide and the narrow lies behind the prodigious flowering of programs and proposals recently advanced as 'cosmopolitan,' all of which can be construed as a family of responses to the problem of solidarity.[14] Many cosmopolitan initiatives warn against the premature jettisoning of the nation-state.

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treatment of people on account of their sex and color. But Alcoff herself returns repeatedly to the historic ordinance of physical characteristics, and thus sharply confines the domain within which identity/solidarity formation can be expected to take place.

11 See, for example, most of the contributions to Paula M. L. Moya and Michael R. Hames-Garcia, eds., *Reclaiming Identity : Realist Theory and the Predicament of Postmodernism* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 2000).

12 I have developed this principle in *Postethnic America : Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York : Basic Books, 2006).

13 Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2005) ; Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture : Equality and Diversity in the Global Era* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2002) ; Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2004) ; Amy Gutmann, *Identity in Democracy* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2003) ; John Lie, *Modern Peoplehood* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2004) ; Rogers M. Smith, *Stories of Peoplehood : The Politics and Morals of Political Membership* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003).

14 A convenient compendium of the initiatives recently offered in the name of cosmopolitanism is Steve Vertovec and Robin Cohen, eds., *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism : Theory, Context, and Practice* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2002). For a vigorous, popular manifesto, see Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism : Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York : W. W. Norton, 2006).

In an epoch of increasing migration with attendant cultural diversification, there is much to be said for the secular, civic nation as a central solidarity, capable of ensuring at least basic human rights and welfare for members of demographically heterogeneous societies. Such a solidarity promises to mediate between the species and the varieties of humankind more creatively and concretely than do universalist and particularist programs. The examples of Canada, France, India, and the United States can remind us how extensive is the spectrum of possibilities for such national solidarities, ranging from the French reluctance to recognize affiliations smaller than the nation to India's refined system of subgroup recognition.

But my purpose here is not to pretend to have solved the problem of solidarity, only to register its profundity and ubiquity, and to suggest that our errors in dealing with it are more often on the particularist than on the universalist side. There are fewer and fewer places to hide from forces that operate in a global arena. "There's no hiding place down there," warned an old gospel song. Nor is there a hiding place 'up here.' If we do not take on as much of the world as we can, the world will come to us, and on terms over which we will have even less control than we do now.

Courtney Jung

Why liberals should value 'identity politics'

Interviewed on the fortieth anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington, civil-rights activist Eleanor Holmes Norton was asked why the only woman to take the podium on the day of the protest was Mahalia Jackson, who sang "The Star Spangled Banner." Not a single woman, among the many people who spoke that day, was solicited to address the audience of protestors who had come to Washington to demand voting rights for African Americans. From the vantage point of 2003, the interviewer was curious how the organizers of a civil-rights march could have overlooked such obvious sexism in the midst of their fight against racism. Norton replied, "Well, shame on us! This was before the women's rights movement, and we didn't even realize, we did not even recognize, this injustice that was being done. We did not even think about it at that time, although as soon as three years later we were certainly aware of that type of thing."[1]

As Norton's remark reveals, a political identity does not arise spontaneously. Instead, by using categories of race, gender, and class to define an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, liberal democratic societies compel some of their members to identify with others of a similar ethnic, sexual, or economic character. In general, only those group definitions that have been used to restrict access to power will become self-conscious and gain salience, in the act of contesting – or protecting – the exclusions that constitute them.

Thus, movements form around issues of gender, race, or class, not because people feel a need to express a primary commitment to such shared identities, but rather because these categories have regulated the distribution of the goods of a liberal society. The emergence of new political identities therefore signals some shortcoming of the democratic system. We should think of such mobi-

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1 Eleanor Holmes Norton, interviewed by Tavis Smiley, *The Tavis Smiley Show*, National Public Radio, August 25, 2003.

lizations, as Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres suggest, as a miner's canary, warning us of the poisonous gases of entrenched power threatening the health of our democracy.[2]

In this essay I explore the implications of constructivist theories of identity formation for liberal democratic politics. These theories pay particular attention to the origins and characteristics of political identities, and therefore imply a particular set of obligations and opportunities for liberal democratic societies. On one hand, democrats are obliged to engage in democratic deliberation with so-called identity groups. Because of the way the state itself is implicated in forging such groups, through its exclusions, the public sphere must be open to challenges and contestations that have the potential to expand or transform the scope of the public sphere itself. This cycle creates opportunities for democratic legitimation and holds out the promise of democratic renewal.

Identity is not only a possible ground of politics; it is also an effect of politics.

People are attached to their race, gender, and ethnicity to the extent that the state has inscribed certain referents – such as skin color, language, beliefs, and practices – as important markers of differential access to resources. Therefore, we can no longer be content to treat categories like race and ethnicity as exogenous to the political process – the spontaneous result of a universal, but not readily analyzable, need for group membership. Instead, we should delve into the role institutions, discourses, and policies play in producing the terms of political contestation.[3]

Constructivist theorists of identity formation focus on how institutions, in particular, structure incentives and lived experience in ways that make some affiliations seem more natural, useful, or significant than others. Take, for example, 'the English working class.' E. P. Thompson, a constructivist ahead of his time, argued that working-class consciousness did not arise simply from the fact that millions of people were suddenly working together on the factory floor. Rather, working-class identity developed in tension with the limits of nineteenth-century British democracy, which used class as a boundary of citizenship.[4]

Contemporary constructivists largely follow Thompson's model, for example,

2 Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres, *The Miner's Canary : Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002). Not all politically salient identities are emancipatory, progressive, or sympathetic to democrats. Not all people are seeking simply inclusion for a group that has been marginalized. Many Afrikaners in South Africa, for example, have a highly developed Afrikaner political identity that was organized, in the apartheid era, around maintaining privilege and the boundaries of existing exclusions. This example corroborates the underlying premise, however, that it is political contestation over exclusions and inclusions that produce political identities. Democracy implies that Afrikaners have as much right to try to maintain their privilege as others have to contest it. Critical liberalism insists on providing the grounds that will enable the others to contest it.

3 Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation : A Comparison of the United States, South Africa and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Mahmoud Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Courtney Jung, *Then I was Black* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000); Courtney Jung, "The Politics of Indigenous Identity: Neoliberalism, Cultural Rights, and the Mexican Zapatistas," *Social Research* 70 (2) (Summer 2003): 433 – 462.

4 E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., and Random House, Inc., 1963).

when H. Leroy Vail describes the development of tribalism in southern Africa, or when Mahmoud Mamdani explains the role of colonialism in creating ethnic identities, or when Anthony Marx underscores the impact of state formation on the mobilization of racial identity.[5] Whereas essentialists construe identity as an effect of a group's internal attributes – it is a particular set of traditions that makes Zulus Zulu and not Shangaan – constructivists look to external conditions – the colonial strategy of indirect rule or the apartheid-era establishment of ethnic homelands – to explain the boundaries between Zulu and Shangaan. Here, the strength of constructivism lies in the fact that it can account for change as well as persistence – not to mention degrees of variation, to which essentialist theories are virtually blind.[6]

Another, less often noted strength of constructivism is its capacity to explain not only the rise and fall of one particular identity, like Zuluness, but also the move from one to another, like from a peasant to an indigenous identity. Because individuals are potentially members of a variety of groups, including but not restricted to those defined by ethnicity, race, gender, and class, they have some choice – limited, more or less, by the rigidity of the structures they are operating within – in how they identify politically. Different groups afford distinct alliances, strategies, and arguments – and personal or tactical reasons may orient them toward one identity over another. In the 1990s, for instance, people in many parts of the world who had identified primarily as peasants through

most of the twentieth century became 'indigenous people.' The shedding of class identities in favor of ethnic identities resulted primarily because the peasant identity had lost political ground.

In recent decades, democratization has had a distinctly neoliberal edge, with important implications for the alignment of political cleavages in new democracies. The neoliberal commitment to bolstering free markets has undercut the redistributive politics of class, prompting activists to develop political identities based on culture instead. Because even as neoliberal states disavow their obligation to provide the social and economic benefits of citizenship, thus shrinking the leverage of class-based demands for land, agricultural subsidies, or a living wage, some have begun to extend new cultural rights to previously marginalized populations.

This contemporary movement toward cultural identity illustrates what is actually at stake: political legitimacy, and the ability therefore to make credible claims on the state and in the international community. This view of claim making, as intensely political, differs significantly from liberal accounts. John Rawls argues, for example, that the right to make claims inheres in citizenship in a liberal society, that citizens can "regard themselves as self-originating sources of valid claims."[7] Only slaves "are not counted as sources of claims" because they are not free.[8]

What liberals imagine as prepolitical and automatic, however, is in fact deeply political. What qualifies as a language of

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5 Leroy Vail, *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*; Marx, *Making Race and Nation*.

6 Jung, *Then I was Black*.

7 John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political Not Metaphysical," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 14 (3) (Summer 1985): 242.

8 Ibid., 243.

claim making is hotly contested precisely because new languages constitute new political actors in ways that may threaten old ones and challenge the very terms of the existing political debate. Citizenship alone is not a sufficient source of claims.

The politics of identity is a struggle to achieve a political voice. Building political identity is an important precondition of democratic political engagement. One's ability to get oneself heard in a democratic system crucially depends on whether one can claim membership in a group with preexisting political weight, or forge a group identity with new political weight. In contemporary politics, race, gender, and ethnicity have developed such a weight.

In short, all politics is identity politics. Social categories develop political salience to the extent that they have been used to mark the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Markers like race and class are politicized in the struggle to challenge, or to protect, such boundaries. Not only are political identities constructed, but they are formed through interaction and negotiation with the state, developing resonance in particular historical and social contexts. Governments have a direct hand in shaping the contours of political contestation and in generating the terms of political deliberation.

In the main however, democrats take a dim view of so-called identity politics. Liberal democrats worry about the extent to which democracies can accommodate competing cultural claims, and they worry about their obligations to do so. In particular, they are concerned because they believe that cultural claims represent a fundamental demand for the recognition of human identity, therefore engaging a deeper level of commitment

than other claims. As such they impose greater obligations on the democratic state, and should be protected from democratic politics. For others, they appear to pose a greater threat, as democratic institutions struggle to process and accommodate the deeply held but incompatible cultural commitments of their citizens.[9]

Some theorists of radical democracy, like Wendy Brown, believe the focus of identity groups on their own injuries prevents the formation of a positive political agenda with transformative potential.[10] Social democrats are concerned that identity groups fracture opposition, thwarting the creation of an alliance around issues of redistribution. For Todd Gitlin, identity politics portends the twilight of common dreams. Deliberative democrats, like Seyla Benhabib, are concerned that making claims from the standpoint of a particular perspective undermines the drive to consensus and "enlarged mentality" that should be the basis of genuine deliberation.[11]

There is an interesting convergence among these theorists on class as the privileged interlocutor of politics. Shunning arguments made from other perspectives such as ethnicity and religion,

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9 John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (London : Oxford University Press, 1971) ; Stephen Macedo, "Liberal Civic Education and Religious Fundamentalism : The Case of God Versus John Rawls ?" in John Elster and Rune Slagstad, eds., *Constitutionalism and Democracy* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1988) ; Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality : An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2001).

10 Wendy Brown, *States of Injury : Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1995).

11 Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture : Equality and Diversity in the Global Era* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2002).

liberals allow those for redistribution to enter the public sphere of deliberation. Rawls, for example, favors class because the just allocation of resources can be the topic of reasonable discourse, subject to principles that all could agree to behind the veil of ignorance, which affords individuals a universal perspective. Social democrats like Gitlin believe class is the fundamental social and political cleavage off of which others are read. To organize on the basis of race or gender, following Marx, is not much more than false consciousness. Others seem to privilege class for more pragmatic reasons: Perhaps class is a broader church or can marshal a more trenchant critique. Class is not necessarily better; it simply works better.

Such theorists misunderstand, or perhaps fail to take into account altogether, the methodological implications of constructivist theories of identity formation. Class, like race, ethnicity, and gender, originates in the ways that states organize access to power. While so-called identity politics is often juxtaposed in contradistinction to class, the politics of race and ethnicity act instead as a strategically distinct but structurally analogous way to make political claims.

For this reason it is dangerous to reify the terms of debate around a single category, such as class, while closing off other points of potential contestation, such as race, gender, sex, and ethnicity. Each of these forms of identity stands in a particular relation to power and contests distinct forms of oppression. Each offers different discursive and organizational strategies and points of political access. Yet they all challenge the boundaries of liberal democracies, forcing us to confront the arbitrary and often violent ways we police the cozy precincts of belonging.

Taking these implications seriously leads toward what I call 'critical liberalism' – a theory of liberalism that pays attention to the importance of identity as a condition of political voice, the difficulties inherent in achieving identity, the emancipatory potential of rights, and the role of identity proliferation in renewing the promise of democratic governance.

Critical liberalism starts from the premise that borders around democratic citizenship have been erected and maintained in ways that are not democratic.[12] What is more, democratic states have failed to locate any principle that can sustainably legitimate the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Attempts to do so on the basis of class (property ownership), gender, and race have been exposed as arbitrary and pernicious by movements that formed around these identities – the working class, feminists, the Black Consciousness Movement. By challenging the conditions of citizenship, people marked by class, gender, and race have revealed the illegitimate edges of democratic government and forced democratic societies to renew their commitments to participation and deliberation.

Ethnic groups have also begun to challenge the legitimacy of culture as a boundary of democratic statehood. They do so by demanding representation and citizenship, local self-government, bilingual education, and cultural recognition. Although it takes different forms in different countries, the politics of indigenous rights is mainly about inclusion. From the perspective of critical liberalism, the demands of Turkish guest work-

12 Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordón, eds., *Democracy's Edges* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

ers in Germany and Muslims in France push in the same direction and have the potential to extend, and relegitimate, the boundaries of citizenship and deliberation in those countries.

At the same time, ethnic groups have also deployed the idea of cultural self-determination to push in the other direction, toward autonomy from the states that have excluded them. While this may be a valid move from a historical perspective – some groups may have suffered such state-sanctioned oppression that they have no hope of achieving parity or pursuing happiness within the existing state – no principle renders culture a more legitimate boundary of democracy than race, gender, or class. Thus, demands for cultural self-determination are destined to reproduce the arbitrary boundaries that critical liberalism challenges.

Nevertheless, many contemporary normative theorists, like Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor, and William Galston, anchor their theories for the just adjudication of cultural claims in the assumption that people feel a strong attachment to their cultural groups. This assumption is problematic because it is simultaneously too flimsy and too strong to determine the responsibility of democratic states toward these groups. On the one hand, we simply do not know if human identity is more deeply constituted by culture or by, say, motherhood. Not only do we not know but such questions are also in some sense deeply unknowable, as Akeel Bilgrami has argued.

On the other hand, the assumption is too strong. If states should protect cultural attachments, why should we stop there? Intense preferences are everywhere. Even if we concede that culture is distinct in how it constitutes human identity, the attachment standard still gives us no grounds to distinguish

among cultural claims and claimants.[13] Its logic grants all cultural groups the right to make demands regardless of their histories of marginalization or privilege – to Serbs as it does to Roma, to Italian Americans as it does to Cherokee Indians.

It is precisely this fact – that a single marker, such as culture, can privilege one group and marginalize another – that makes critical liberalism suspicious of the drive to create universal principles of justice. All of the ways states organize access to power, delineate citizenship, and distribute resources rely ultimately on the formation of boundaries that are arbitrary and pernicious. Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we have recognized first property ownership, then gender, and finally race as illegitimate criteria for inclusion and exclusion. Critical liberalism adds culture to this list, knowing that this catalog does not exhaust the forms that exclusions can, and will, take. It would be shortsighted to imagine that this pattern will not continue, or that we could devise a system of justice that anticipates the scope of future injustices.

Stepping behind the claims of culture, to examine the politics that have generated recent demands for cultural recognition, changes the debate over how democratic states should respond to such demands. Once we reframe the question to concentrate on the origin

13 This is one of the problems Will Kymlicka runs into when he tries to discriminate among what democratic societies owe to immigrants and aboriginals. Having established that the state has a responsibility to protect cultural groups because individuals cannot process meaning without them, Kymlicka undercuts his subsequent claim that the state has different obligations toward different cultural groups. Will Kymlicka, ed., *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

of political identities in the exclusions and inclusions set in place by the democratic state, it becomes clear that democratic institutions should engage the claims of culture in such a way that both the culture and the public sphere are open to challenge and transformation. To this end, normative political theorists should harness the critical potential of rights.

It is not easy to join the dialogue of an existing political order. People struggling to forge new political identities – to make visible the invisible boundaries that have excluded them – need tools. Over the course of the twentieth century, the language of rights has most often provided such leverage. Rights extend a promise. They behave as a formal acknowledgement that the present configuration of power and interests is harming some particular category of people – children, women, workers, or indigenous peoples – who are thus deserving of special protection. As a result, the language of rights constitutes the terms of struggle.

This is not to deny that rights are a double-edged sword that has long been available to those interested in maintaining the status quo, and have also played a role in shutting down political deliberation. However, this should not blind us to the possibilities of using the same weapon in pursuit of a transformative, and even subversive, agenda. After all, rights open up politics to the extent that they act as a promise, not as a guarantee. The United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, for instance, hardly ensures the future well-being of aboriginal populations. But the existence of an international indigenous-rights framework enables indigenous political mobilization, both domestically and across borders. The failure of governments to comply

with these obligations makes them vulnerable to opprobrium, possibly even sanction. While not always sufficient to secure state compliance, rights can clear a space in which groups can form and exercise a political voice.

Theorists such as Cass Sunstein and Stephen Holmes are wary of the way that rights remove issues that ought to be contested politically to the courts.[14] While courts may not be a democratic space, in the sense that judges and juries are not normally elected and do not necessarily represent the majority opinion, it is naïve to think that the courts are not a political space. Decisions like *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Roe v. Wade* have motivated civil-rights politics for the last forty years. In 2002, the Mexican Supreme Court reviewed 330 legal petitions asking it to reject the 2001 Indigenous Law. Although the Court ultimately declared itself incompetent to overturn the constitutional amendment, arguing that only Congress could change the Constitution, working through the legal system represented an important milestone in Mexican oppositional politics – a new strategy to focus attention on indigenous issues. The unsuccessful outcome does not detract from the fact that the courts provided an alternative rallying point for indigenous activism for over a year.

As the liberal-rights regime expands to include ever more categories of excluded people, it stretches the boundaries of political engagement, producing new political actors. These actors open our eyes to naturalized, and heretofore invisible, hierarchies. In doing so, they transform the terms of debate and introduce new strategies and alliances to the politics of

14 Stephen Holmes and Cass Sunstein, *The Cost of Rights: Why Liberty Depends on Taxes* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999).

opposition. Thus, through the provision of rights, liberalism sets, and has the capacity to extend, the terms of democratic contestation. If pushed, this critical leverage uncovers the emancipatory potential of liberalism and highlights the crucial role of contingency in democratic transformation.

Democratic legitimation relies in a fundamental way on the renewal of politics that occurs when people challenge existing boundaries. Liberal democracies should not be immune from political challenge. A focus on political identities offers liberals both a normative justification and a strategy for contesting the borders of democratic politics. Seen in a certain light, liberalism itself enables identity formation, since claiming rights is a strategy of political intervention.

Critical liberalism is critical, then, in two senses. First, like other critical theories, it is rooted in an account of the ways in which institutionally and socially embedded power relations structure reality, in this case, identity. Critical liberalism owes a conceptual debt to critical legal studies and critical race theory and insists that political identities arise in a particular historical and social context, not from a universal human need for recognition.

Second, critical liberalism focuses attention on the currently unfulfilled promise of liberal rights. By providing the terms of struggle, rights offer the possibility of democratic renewal through the formation of new political identities. Democratic political institutions have a responsibility to engage with the political identities that arise to challenge, or to protect, existing patterns of access and distribution. Because liberalism can never be neutral, it must instead be contestable.

Sydney Shoemaker

Identity & identities

In its primary meaning, the noun 'identity' refers to the relation each thing has to itself and to no other thing. In the language of the logicians, this relation is transitive (if A is identical to B and B is identical to C, then A is identical C), symmetrical (if A is identical to B, B is identical to A), and reflexive (everything is identical to itself). In addition, it is governed by Leibniz's Law, the principle that says that if A is identical to B, whatever is true of A is true of B. In ordinary speech, the relation is expressed by the terms 'identical' and 'same.' But in addition to being used to express 'numerical' identity, the relation that here concerns us, these terms are also used to express 'qualitative' identity, i.e., exact similarity. The phrase, 'one and the same,' on the other hand, always expresses numerical identity. When philosophers talk about identity, they are usually referring to identity in this sense.

Nonphilosophers, when offered a discussion of identity, are often puzzled and disappointed to find that it is identity in this 'logical' sense that is under consideration. They wonder how identity as the relation everything has to itself and to no other thing can be of any interest, and how, if at all, it is related to what they regard as clearly of interest, namely, the notion that figures in such expressions as 'quest for identity,' 'identity crisis,' 'loss of identity,' and (most recently) 'identity theft.'

But the 'logical' conception of identity – numerical identity – is far from foreign to ordinary folk; on the contrary, it is pervasive in everyday discourse. It is one of the notions expressed by the word 'is': it is in play whenever anyone judges that a car in the parking lot is hers, or that someone she now sees is the person she was introduced to yesterday. The adjectives 'same' and 'identical' are regularly used to communicate this concept. What is foreign to many is the use of the noun 'identity' to express it. The noun has been appropriated to articulate a different, though undoubtedly related, notion.

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I will have a good deal to say about identity in – to steal a phrase from Bishop Butler – the "strict and philosophical sense."[1] (I will sometimes shorten this to 'strict.') But first I should say something about its relation to what the noun 'identity' is, these days, often used to talk about – identities as entities possessed, and sometimes lost, by individuals, usually persons.

In the latter sense, one can speak of identities in the plural, and of an identity. One might suppose that the identity of a thing is just whatever it is that makes that thing the thing it is. Then the relation between identity in this sense and identity in the strict sense would be very close. Each thing would have its own identity, and things A and B would be identical just in case the identity of A is the same as the identity of B. It is a matter of debate whether there are identities in this sense – individual essences, as they are sometimes called. But if there are, they are not things that can be lost or stolen. If someone loses his identity, the person after the loss is the same as – is numerically identical with – the person who was there before; so what is lost cannot be what makes the person the person he is.

Instead of thinking of an identity as an individual essence, we might do better to think of it as something, perhaps a set of traits, capacities, attitudes, etc., that an individual normally retains over a considerable period of time and that

normally distinguishes that individual from other individuals. Identities in this sense can be lost and, to a certain extent, stolen (as when someone else gets control of one's bank accounts, credit card numbers, etc.). There is still a connection with identity in the strict sense. What makes a set of traits an identity is its being such that, normally, numerically different individuals have different sets of traits of this sort, and, normally, an individual retains the set of traits over time – where this means that numerical identity between an individual existing at a certain time and an individual at a later time goes, normally, with the individual having (more or less) the same set of traits at both times.

Of course, more is involved in the notion of an identity. It is usually persons, rather than objects, who are said to have identities, and the traits involved are usually psychological. Moreover, a person's identity is usually understood as in some crucial way involving the person's self-conception, which includes a structure of aims and values.

There is a colloquial use of 'same person' with which one can say that as the result of a religious conversion, a course of therapy, or the like, someone is not the same person she was before. On pain of contradiction, this cannot be a literal use of 'same' to express numerical identity – for it is one and the same person who is said to be not the same person at a later time as at an earlier time. This use of 'same person,' however, goes naturally with the notion of identities as things persons have. And it perhaps gives us a sense in which a person's identity is what makes her the person she is. As noted earlier, if identities can be acquired or lost, they cannot be individual essences. But perhaps we can say that the retention of a per-

1 Butler uses this phrase, contrasting identity in the "strict and philosophical sense" with identity in a "loose and popular sense," in his "Of Personal Identity," the first appendix to his *The Analogy of Religion*, first published in 1736. His own requirements for identity in the strict sense seem unacceptably strict – he thought that the change of composition of a tree over time disqualifies the later tree from being strictly identical with the earlier one.

son's identity over time is what makes her the same person over time in this colloquial sense, though not in the strict sense.

I will say more later about how identity in this sense – in which there are identities in the plural, and each thing (or at least each person) has one – is related to identity in the strict and philosophical sense. But now let's consider what sorts of issues surround the latter.

Discussions of strict identity are not generally about the nature of this relation as such. There is not much to say about that beyond what I said in my opening paragraph. What is discussed, and what there are substantive disagreements about, is the identity of particular sorts of things – the identity of persons being far and away the most contested topic. An inquiry into the nature of the identity of so-and-so's (persons, rivers, sets, or whatever) will be an inquiry into the identity conditions for so-and-so's, i.e., the truth conditions for statements of identity about so-and-so's.

There is a good case for saying that such an inquiry is really an inquiry into the nature of so-and-so's, e.g., sets or persons. The philosopher W. V. Quine famously said, "No entity without identity," which we can take to mean that each kind of entities has a distinctive set of identity conditions. And he pointed out that our grasp of the nature of a kind of things is at least partly a grasp of what counts as being the same thing of that kind.[2] To use his example, we understand what sets are only if we understand that sets are identical just in case they have the same members. And

we know what a river is only if we know what counts as being the same river – e.g., what makes portions of water parts of the same river. John Perry has illustrated this point with the example of baseball games.[3] A baseball game is a series of baseball events – pitches, hits, runs, etc. – and someone knows what a baseball game is only if he has tacit knowledge of the relations among such events, what Perry calls the unity relations, that make them parts of a single game. One must have such knowledge to distinguish a single game from a doubleheader, and to distinguish different games being played simultaneously on adjacent fields.

The identity judgments that have attracted the most attention in inquiries about the identity conditions for particular sorts of things are transtemporal identity judgments: those saying that something existing at one time is the same as something existing at another time. Some have thought that all informative judgments of identity are of this sort – thus Hume: "We cannot, in any propriety of speech, say, that an object is the same with itself, unless we mean, that the object existent at one time is the same with itself existent at another time."[4] This is not true – it can be informative to be told that the building with the imposing stone pillars in the front is the same as the one with the rusty fire escape in the rear, and here there is no mention of different times. Nonetheless, it is judgments of transtemporal identity that have most often been found puzzling.

2 See his "Identity, Ostension, and Hypostasis" in W. V. Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, 2nd ed. rev. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

3 See his "The Problem of Personal Identity" in John Perry, ed., *Personal Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

4 David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1.4.2.

In part, the puzzlement over the phenomenon of change, of the same thing having different properties at different times, stems from confusing numerical identity with qualitative identity (exact similarity), for of course the state of the thing after the change will not be qualitatively the same as its state prior to the change. Change will also seem baffling, indeed impossible, if one misunderstands Leibniz's Law as implying that a thing A existing at one time is identical with a thing B existing at another only if A's properties at the one time are the same as B's properties at the other (what it does imply is that if A has certain properties at a time, B has those same properties at that time).

But these confusions aside, it is in many cases problematic just what constitutes the identity of something existing at one time with something existing at a different time; indeed, it can seem unclear how *anything* could constitute it, which has led some to think that transtemporal identity is something simple and not analyzable. And nowhere has transtemporal identity been more problematic than in the case of persons.

Discussion of the topic of personal identity as currently conceived began with the seminal discussion of "Identity and Diversity" in John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Locke had much to say, some of it puzzling, about the identity of persons, but what influenced subsequent discussion as much as anything else was his striking example in which the soul of a Prince, "carrying with it the consciousness of the Prince's past life," is transferred to the body of a cobbler.[5] Locke says that after this soul-transfer the person with the cobbler's body would be the same person with the (former) Prince – and not because he has his soul (thought of as an immaterial substance) but because he has his memories.

In more recent versions of the example, brain transplants replace soul transfers.[6] Such examples are taken to show that personal identity over time consists in something psychological. Locke called it "sameness of consciousness," which has been taken to consist in memory continuity in the case of transtemporal identity. Later versions of the view hold it to consist in 'psychological continuity': roughly, the existence of a series of mental states whose later members grow out of its earlier ones in certain ways, a central instance of this being the production by mental states of memories of themselves. Thus, the 'persistence conditions' of persons are psychological. According to one version of the view (mine), the psychological continuity that constitutes identity over time consists in the various mental states playing out over time their causal or functional roles – generating the successor states and behaviors that is the nature of states of their kind to produce.

In Locke's time the chief competitor to the psychological view was the view that personal identity consists in the identity of an immaterial substance, of the sort Descartes held each of us to be. In recent discussion its chief competitor has been the view that personal identity consists in the identity of a human body or human organism. The latter view, especially the 'animalist' version of it that says persons (of our sort) are just human animals, has a good claim to be the com-

5 John Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* ed. P. H. Nidditch (Cambridge : Oxford University Press, 1975), 340.

6 See Sydney Shoemaker, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity* (Ithaca, N.Y. : Cornell University Press, 1963), 23ff.

monsense view of the matter – that we are animals (hopefully rational ones) seems a commonplace.[7]

Neo-Lockeans must say either that, contrary to what it seems natural to suppose, the persistence conditions of human animals are psychological rather than biological (allowing animals to change bodies by way of brain transplants), or that the 'is' in 'A person is an animal' is the 'is' of constitution (as in 'An army is just a collection of men') rather than the 'is' of identity.

Where the animalist view seems counterintuitive is in its denial of the 'transplant intuition' – the intuition that if the result of transplanting A's brain into B's head is that the resulting person remembers A's past life as his own, and is in all other respects psychologically continuous with A, then the resulting person is A with a new body. Animalists sometimes argue that, since the lower brain is the biological-control center of the organism, they are not committed to denying that in a transplant of the whole brain the person would go with the brain. But they are committed to denying that in a transplant of just the cerebrum (without the lower brain) the person would go with the cerebrum – even if this resulted in full psychological continuity between donor and recipient. Supposing that A's brainstem is left behind in the original body, kept alive with an artificial-support system, the animalist must hold that, after the transplant, A is that 'human vegetable,' not the person with B's body and A's cerebrum who remembers A's life 'from the inside' and passes every psychological test for being A. Neo-Lockeans find this more counterintuitive than their own denial that persons are

strictly identical with, rather than merely constituted by, biologically individuated animals.

In recent years a different aspect of the topic of personal identity has moved to the forefront of the discussion. In the case of persons identity seems to *matter* in a way it doesn't matter in the case of other things. We won't much care if a car or washing machine is replaced by a different one, as long as the replacement is as good as the original. But this replacement-indifference does not extend to family and friends. And it certainly does not apply to ourselves.

Central to virtually every person's concerns is the desire to continue in existence with a life worth living. In some important sense, survival of persons 'matters,' especially to the persons themselves. And survival seems to involve identity. Locke remarked that 'person' is a "forensic" term, because of the tie between personal identity and such matters as responsibility and compensation; and clearly the fact that the person held responsible for an action should be the person who did the action, and the person compensated for a wrong should be the person who suffered from it, is intimately related to the fact that people care about their own futures in the way they do.

But recent discussion, especially the work of Derek Parfit, has questioned whether it is really identity that matters to us when we care about our survival, or that of friends and family.[8] Consider a much-discussed variation on our brain-transplant example. Suppose that instead of the brain being transplanted as a whole to a different body, the two brain hemispheres are separately trans-

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7 See Eric T. Olson, *The Human Animal – Personal Identity Without Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

8 Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

planted to different bodies.[9] And suppose that both hemisphere recipients are, after the transplants, psychologically continuous with the original person.

We can call this 'fission.' The fission products are not identical with one another (they are in different hospital beds, and will soon go their separate ways), so it can't be that both are identical with the original person. If survival implies identity, the person does not survive as both (and, arguably, does not survive as either, since there is nothing that could make one rather than the other identical with the original person).

Yet it seems plausible that each has to the original person what 'matters' in survival. If the original person knew he was about to undergo fission, it would seem that, while he might not relish the prospect, he would not regard it as simply equivalent to death. He would care about the well-being of the fission products as he would for his own future well-being.

Supposing one agrees that this case shows that identity is not what matters in survival, this view can play out in two ways. Suppose first that one is a neo-Lockean, and holds that personal identity consists in something psychological. Allowing the possibility of fission will require one to qualify the claim that psychological continuity constitutes personal identity over time; to avoid saying that both fission products are identical with the original person one will have to say that what constitutes identity is *non-branching* psychological continuity. Then one can say that what matters in survival

is psychological continuity, which normally goes with identity (when branching does not occur) but is compatible with the absence of identity (when fission, or branching, does take place). As a result, what matters in survival is still psychological continuity, but not necessarily personal identity.

Now suppose instead that one is an animalist, and thinks that personal identity consists in biological continuity. If one believes that in the fission case there is 'what matters' in survival (even though the original individual does not survive), one will agree with the neo-Lockean that what matters is psychological continuity. And one will also agree with the neo-Lockean that in normal cases, where no branching takes place, this will go with personal identity. But as an animalist one will not agree that what matters – psychological continuity – is something that partly constitutes personal identity and guarantees it in the absence of branching.

An animalist may think, however, that he can explain the plausibility of the transplant intuition.[10] He will agree with the neo-Lockean that in the original brain-transplant (or cerebrum-transplant) case it would be reasonable to treat the recipient *as if* he were the original person – extend to him whatever attitudes, e.g., friendship, that one had toward the original person. And he will agree with the neo-Lockean that it would be reasonable for the future directed concern of the transplant donor to be directed at the transplant recipient rather than at the human vegetable left behind – although according to the animalist view it is the latter the donor will, strictly speaking, be – because it is to the transplant recipient that the transplant donor will stand in the relation that

9 This case was first presented in David Wiggins, *Identity and Spatio-temporal Continuity* (n.p.: Blackwell, 1967). As Wiggins points out, the example requires that the two hemispheres be "equipollent," instead of being specialized in the usual way (linguistic ability based in the left hemisphere, etc.).

10 See Olson, *The Human Animal*.

'matters' in survival. Because these attitudes – future concern and its third-person counterpart – are ones that normally accompany belief in identity, we would naturally think we have identity in the transplant case – thus the transplant intuition. But the animalist will hold this intuition is an illusion that stems from a failure to distinguish two things that normally go together – what matters in survival (viz, psychological continuity) and identity. On this view, unlike the neo-Lockean view, what matters in survival will not be even part of what constitutes personal identity.

Let's now return to the common use of 'identity' in which each person has (normally) an identity, and identities are things that can be sought, lost, or stolen. This is the popular conception of identity, and henceforth I will refer to it as identity$_p$. There is obviously some connection between this notion of identity and the fact that, so it initially seems, the identity over time of persons matters in a special way. To see what this connection is we need to look more closely at the notion of 'mattering' invoked here.

I oversimplified earlier when I had the neo-Lockean and the animalist agreeing that the relation that matters in survival is psychological continuity. The phrase 'the relation that matters' is ambiguous here. In one sense, there is the relation that matters between the state of person A existing at an earlier time and person B existing at a later time, if the states are so related that something's being good or bad for person B at the later time constitutes its being good or bad for person A at the earlier time. For example, if B will receive some benefit at the later time, this is good in prospect for A at the earlier time (in a way that it is not good for just any arbitrary person); and if B will experience pain or unpleasantness

at the later time, this is bad for A in prospect at the earlier time (again in a way that it is not bad for just any arbitrary person). On the supposition we have been making about the fission case, persons existing at different times can stand in this relation even if they are not identical, as long as the right sort of psychological continuity links their stages at the two times. It seems plausible that if someone knows that he is about to undergo fission he will dread any torture he knows is in store for either offshoot, and will look forward to any pleasant experiences he knows are in store for either of them.

There can be the relation that matters in the sense just sketched even if the state of the later person were so bad that the earlier person would dread it and prefer death to survival if surviving led to that state. In a different sense, this sort of case is excluded, and a relation would count as the relation that matters only if it would be reasonable for the subject of the earlier state to prefer having the later state to going out of existence. Normally the relation between different stages of a person's life is one that matters in the latter sense; or, at least, the person believes that if her present state is related to some future state by the relation that matters in the first sense, it is also related to it by the relation that matters in the second sense. But it is only in the first sense that psychological continuity can be, all by itself, the relation that matters. What matters in the second sense will be the kind of psychological continuity that occurs when someone's life goes at least reasonably well.

But what counts as a life going well? This, of course, is a question to which we should not expect a short and simple answer. But it seems that what a person regards as a good life for herself is deter-

mined at least in part by the person's identity$_p$, i.e., the person's self-conception and structure of goals, tastes, and values. As noted earlier, this will normally be relatively stable over time – so that the identity (in the strict sense) of a person over an interval of time normally goes with the person having pretty much the same identity$_p$ over that interval.

But it is possible for the identity$_p$ of a person to change radically – perhaps because of a religious conversion. Then what the person at the earlier time counts as a good life may be different from what the person at the later time counts as a good life. Thus, something that occurs at the later time that is good for the person from the vantage point of the identity$_p$ he has then may not be good for him from the vantage point of the different identity$_p$ he had earlier. Likewise, what is bad for him at the later time, given his identity$_p$ then, may not be bad for him, in prospect, at the earlier time.

We should not assume, of course, that judgments about what is good or bad for a person must always be relative to the person's identity$_p$ at a time; we are sometimes justified in regarding the values and goals that constitute a person's identity$_p$ as irrational and perverse, and his conception of what is a good life for himself as misguided. Still, our judgments about what is good or bad for a person cannot be independent of what we take to be the person's goals, aspirations, tastes, and values. And in the case where a person's identity$_p$ undergoes a radical change, we may not have the relation that matters in survival between different phases of the person's life, even though we have psychological continuity and clearly have the same person at the different times. So while psychological continuity is a necessary part of the relation that matters for survival, it is not

the whole of it. What is also required is enough stability in the person's identity$_p$ over the interval to have substantial agreement at the two times about what is good or bad for the person.

Different persons can have the same identity$_p$ – or at any rate, there can be as much similarity between the identities$_p$ of different persons as there is between the identities$_p$ of the same person at different times. So having the same identity$_p$ is not sufficient for being the same person. If we can have the relation that matters in survival in the fission case between the original person and the fission products, then even sameness of identity$_p$, together with psychological continuity, is not sufficient for strict identity over time. And sameness of identity$_p$ is not necessary for strict identity, since a person can survive changes in his identity$_p$. But sameness of identity$_p$, or at least an approximation to this, does seem necessary to have the strict identity of persons over time that 'matters' in the special way that concerns us here (which is perhaps equivalent to being the same person in the colloquial sense). And in combination with psychological continuity it is sufficient for having the relation that matters in survival.

But given the possibility of the fission case, this combination is not sufficient for having the sort of strict identity over time that matters, even assuming the neo-Lockean view – for in that case there can be psychological continuity and sameness of identity$_p$ between a prefission person stage and stages of the fission offshoots. And on the animalist view it is not sufficient for strict identity even if the psychological continuity is nonbranching – for the animalist denies that we have strict identity in the cerebrum-transplant case, even though the donor and recipient share the same iden-

tity$_p$ and are related by nonbranching psychological continuity.

Although the notion of identity$_p$ frequently figures in discussions of moral philosophy, the metaphysics of identity$_p$ has not been much discussed by philosophers. What I have said about it here is much oversimplified. For one thing, I have not addressed the distinction between a change in a person's identity and a change in how that person conceives his or her identity, the latter occurring when a person realizes (or at least comes to believe) that the identity he has been presenting to the world, and to himself, is something imposed by his parents or peer group, and is not his 'real self.' Also, I have not addressed the fact that the reference of 'identity,' when it expresses identity$_p$, seems to be context-relative, so that what in one context counts as a change of identity may in another context count as a change in a person's conception of what his identity is. And I have ignored the fact that the same person is sometimes said to have not one identity but several – ethnic, religious, professional, and so forth – where each of these identities is one the person shares with other persons.

I doubt if the uses of 'identity' (as a noun admitting of a plural) admit of a neat codification; what we have here may be what Wittgenstein called a "family resemblance concept." My aim has not been to produce such a codification, but simply to clarify the distinction between, and some of the relations between, identity in this sense and identity in the "strict and philosophical sense."

Carol Rovane

Why do individuals matter?

There is an unresolved and generally unnoticed contradiction in a conception of the person often associated with the Enlightenment. The conception incorporates two commitments that, while they seem to support each other, can serve only to undermine each other. The first is a commitment to the moral importance of the individual human being. The second is a commitment to the moral importance of rationality.

It does seem that these two commitments should stand and fall together. In fact, they may seem barely distinct from one another. When we consider the first and ask what sets individual human beings apart as having a kind of moral importance not shared by other animals (or mere things), the most salient answer seems to be that only human beings are persons. What sets them apart as persons is their capacity to engage one another in distinctively interpersonal ways, such as conversation, argument, criticism, moral evaluation, and exchanging promises and contracting with one another. Since this obviously requires rational capacities, it does seem that the second commitment, to the moral importance of rationality, follows upon the first. And the converse would seem to hold as well. If rationality is morally important then so is the human being. For human beings are the only things known to possess the rational capacities required for personhood. (I am simply going to set aside the contested cases of God, angels, and rational automata.)

Why, then, are these two commitments incompatible? The source of the difficulty lies in an implicit assumption about the nature of the *individual*. Key Enlightenment thinkers – Kant prominently among them – took for granted that personhood is a unique property of individual human beings. But it isn't so. A number of human beings may together constitute a single 'group person,' and an individual human being may be the site of multiple persons.

Although it may be said that these possibilities have never been realized in fact,

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they have certainly been contemplated in philosophy and literature. For example, the group person bears a resemblance to Rousseau's *moi commun*, while Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde are the most famous fictional case of multiple persons. And it is easy to imagine such cases because they are closely related to some real-life phenomena. Whenever human beings engage in joint endeavors, they achieve in degree the kind of unity characteristic of the individual person. And when human beings suffer from certain dissociative disorders, they may manifest multiple centers of such unity.

Still, my claim that there could literally be group and multiple persons will strike many as counterintuitive, if not downright false. Unfortunately, I cannot fully defend it here, or even fully convey its meaning. I shall only say just enough to get across why someone might take it seriously, and then consider some of its ethical implications.[1]

Here is one disturbing implication. If group and multiple persons ever did come into existence, they would exist in the place of the human-size persons who would have existed instead. In other words, if joint endeavors ever did give rise to group persons, there would no longer be any individual persons of human size who could separately be held responsible for those endeavors. It also means that if dissociation ever did give rise to multiple persons, there would no

longer be an underlying self of human size for a therapist to treat. To put the point somewhat flamboyantly: if group agents and alter personalities really were persons, then disbanding the one and curing the other would be a species of murder; correlatively, if we human-size persons ever chose to integrate into group persons or fragment into multiple persons, we would be committing a kind of suicide.

One might wonder whether the possibility of group and multiple persons is really very damaging to the Enlightenment conception of the person. Why not simply correct its mistaken metaphysical assumption about individuality and revise it accordingly? This strategy of response would aim to leave the second commitment, to the moral importance of rationality, just as it is, keeping the tie between rationality and personhood in place; and then it would recast the first commitment, to the moral importance of individual human beings, as a commitment to the moral importance of all rational individuals regardless of their size.

However, we shall see that matters are not quite so straightforward. There are ways in which we currently conceive the moral importance of individual human beings – ways that we have inherited more or less directly from the Enlightenment – that do not carry over to the group and multiple cases. This is not because we don't think rationality is morally important. It is rather because our mistaken metaphysics of the individual informs our understanding of its importance. As a result, the difficulty presented by the cases of group and multiple personhood goes beyond the respects in which they seem counterintuitive; the larger difficulty is that they deprive us of deep-seated metaphysical and moral intuitions about the human case as well.

1 For a book-length treatment of the metaphysical issue, see Carol Rovane, *The Bounds of Agency: An Essay in Revisionary Metaphysics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998). For shorter introductions to the central ideas of the book, see Carol Rovane, "From a Rational Point of View," *Philosophical Topics* 30 (1) (Spring 2002), and Carol Rovane, "A Non-naturalist Account of Personal Identity," in *Naturalism in Question*, ed. Mario De Caro and David Macarthur (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004).

The argument for the possibility of group and multiple persons proceeds from the following premise: something *is* a person just in case it can be treated *as* a person, that is, just in case it is a rational being capable of distinctively interpersonal forms of engagement.

This premise might give offense to some. For it deliberately excludes many human beings from the class of persons, in particular, fetuses, infants, and those who are severely insane, senile, or brain-damaged in some other incapacitating way. Yet, in making this exclusion, the premise does not really depart from the Enlightenment conception of the person. It merely emphasizes its second commitment, to the moral importance of rationality – a commitment that we have not really given up, despite our inclination to count all human beings as persons. It is not as though we believe that there would be room for the concept of a person in a world in which nothing had the capacity for interpersonal forms of engagement. That conceptual tie is very much in place. But we also take for granted what the proponents of the Enlightenment conception of the person took for granted, which is a close tie between rationality and personhood on the one hand, and humanity on the other. We share their mistaken metaphysical assumption that individual human beings are the only things that can qualify as persons.

Along with this assumption comes the belief that rationality is the normal state for a human being. That is why we are prepared to extend the status of personhood to all human beings, even those who lack the capacity for interpersonal forms of engagement. It is either because they have the potential to be persons (fetuses and infants), or once were persons (the senile), or ought to have been persons in the normal course of things (those who are incapacitated in one way or another). This would have been a perfectly sensible attitude to take toward all human beings if the mistaken metaphysical assumption had been correct. Thus, I want to emphasize that it is not my initial premise that excludes this attitude but rather the metaphysics of individuality.

In any case, the really surprising aspect of the premise is not what it excludes from the class of persons. We have always understood that the concept of a person does not fit certain human beings very well, which explains why in the law we have need for categories like legal majority and legal competence. The real surprise is what the premise includes.

At any rate, let's begin by exploring what follows from the premise – what follows once we assume that something *is* a person just in case it can be treated *as* a person, in the sense that involves a capacity to engage in such distinctively interpersonal forms of interaction as conversation, argument, negotiation, making promises, etc.

The first thing to note is that all these forms of interaction aim at rational response. This presupposes that persons are, in some minimal way, responsive to the normative requirements of rationality. I won't try to give an exhaustive specification of these normative requirements. I'll make do with a few examples and an observation about their common goal.

The most general normative requirement that rationality imposes on a person is that the person should arrive at and act upon all-things-considered judgments about what would be best for it to do in the light of all of its beliefs, desires, and other attitudes. Such judgments presuppose a variety of rational activities that together comprise a person's delib-

erations, such as the following: resolving contradictions among one's beliefs, working out the implications of one's beliefs and other attitudes, ranking one's preferences in a transitive ordering, etc. Each of these rational activities is directed at meeting a specific normative requirement of rationality – consistency, closure, and transitivity of preferences, respectively. Of course, deliberation involves many more rational activities, each of which is similarly aimed at meeting some specific normative requirement of rationality. But it doesn't matter for my argument here what they might happen to be. What matters is that all of these rational activities have a common purpose, which is to contribute to the overarching rational goal of arriving at and acting upon all-things-considered judgments.

I'm going to call the state that would be achieved if a person were to succeed in this endeavor, of arriving at and acting upon all-things-considered judgments, the state of *overall rational unity*. And I'm going to suppose that there is one overarching normative requirement of rationality on persons that incorporates all of the other, more specific requirements like consistency, closure, etc., namely, the normative requirement to achieve overall rational unity.

This overarching normative requirement of rationality is important because it *defines* what it is for an *individual* person to be fully or ideally rational. This is evident in the fact that there is no failure of rationality when a group of persons fails to meet this ideal, only when an individual fails to meet it. So, for example, if I have inconsistent beliefs, then I am guilty of rational failure; but my beliefs may be inconsistent with yours without any rational failure on either of our parts. Thus, *an individual person in the sense at issue is something which is subject to a*

normative requirement to achieve overall rational unity within itself.

A person must also be *committed* to satisfying this requirement. Otherwise, it could not be engaged in distinctively interpersonal ways. For, as I've said, such engagement aims at rational response, and so it must appeal, however implicitly, to a person's commitment to being rational.

It is not immediately obvious why these considerations should undermine the assumption that individual persons must always coincide with individual human beings. On the contrary, they seem to encourage it. The rational capacities required for personhood certainly do belong to human nature (at least in the normal case). And we have just seen that the exercise of these capacities is always directed at satisfying a normative requirement of rationality, which defines what it is for an individual person to be rational. The mistaken assumption would seem to follow fairly directly. It would seem that whenever a human being exercises its naturally given rational capacities, it will be functioning precisely as an individual person.

However, this doesn't follow. Although the human rational capacities must always be directed at achieving rational unity *somewhere*, it needn't be achieved within the biological boundaries by which nature marks one human being off from another. Human beings can exercise their rational capacities together so as to achieve rational unity within groups that are larger than a single human being, and they can also exercise their rational capacities in more restricted ways so as to achieve rational unity within parts that are smaller than a single human being. When this happens, it is not individual human beings but, rather, groups and parts of them that can be treated specifically *as persons*.

The full argument for these claims would take much more than the space of a single essay. But here is a sketch of the central lines of the argument.

I'll start with the case of group persons. When human beings engage in group activities, their joint efforts can take on the characteristics of individual rationality. Think, for example, of marital partners who deliberate together about how to manage their homes, families, and other joint concerns. They may in the course of such joint deliberations do as a pair all of the things that individuals characteristically do in order to be rational: pool their information, resolve conflicts between them, rank their preferences together, and, even, arrive at all-things-considered judgments together about what they should together think and do – where the 'all' in question comprises all of their pooled deliberative considerations. The same can also happen in a less thoroughgoing way when colleagues coauthor papers, or when teams of scientists design and run experiments together, or when corporations set up and follow corporate plans.

We tend to assume that such joint endeavors leave human beings intact as individual persons in their own rights. Insofar as that is so, it should be possible to engage those human beings separately in conversation, argument, and other distinctively interpersonal relations. But, sometimes, this is not possible. Sometimes, marital partners won't speak for themselves. Their commitment to deliberating together is so complete and so effective that everything they say and do reflects their joint deliberations and never their separate points of view. The same can happen to coauthors, team members, and bureaucrats. The kind of case I have in mind is not one in which human participants sim-

ply wish to give voice to the larger viewpoint of the groups to which they belong. Instead, I have in mind the case in which the human constituents of the group are not committed to having separate viewpoints of their own. That is, they are not committed to achieving overall rational unity separately within their individual human lives. Yet it is not because they lack rational capacities. It is because those rational capacities are directed in a different way, so as to help fulfill a larger commitment on the part of a whole group to achieve overall rational unity within it.

One might object that this commitment on the part of a group would still leave the individual human beings who constitute it intact as persons in their own rights. In response to this objection, it is admittedly difficult to describe the process by which separate human beings come to constitute a group person without giving the impression that the unity of a group would always have to be actively maintained through *individual* commitments on the part of its human members. And this impression is, precisely, the impression that those human members would necessarily remain individual persons in their own rights, even as they constitute the unity of a group. However, this impression is mistaken.

What is true is that a group person may *initially* be brought into existence through the individual decisions and actions of smaller persons, typically of human size. But if these initial efforts have been successful, then a group person has been brought into existence. And, thereafter, at least some of the intentional episodes that occur within the human organisms involved will be episodes in the life of a group person rather than in the separate lives of human-size persons.

Here it is important not to confuse a *phenomenological* point of view with a *rational* point of view. The former is necessary for consciousness, and it is possessed by any animal capable of sentience. The latter is necessary for distinctively interpersonal forms of engagement, and it is possessed only by those things that reflectively embrace a commitment to achieving rational unity within themselves.

In the example under discussion, the separate phenomenological points of view of the human members of the marriage do not possess separate rational points of view in this sense. They together constitute a site of rational activity aimed at achieving rational unity within the larger boundaries of the marriage. When this happens, the human members of the marriage can no longer be engaged as individual persons in their own rights. And the fact that they remain intact as individual animals with separate phenomenological points of view does not suffice to show that they also remain individual persons, as the objection alleges.

I turn now to the case of multiple persons coexisting within an individual human animal. The considerations that support the possibility of this case are really generalizations from the group case. In fact, I propose to model *all* cases of rational unity on the unity of a group. My claim is that rational unity doesn't *just happen* as the inevitable product of some natural process, such as the biological development of a human being. Rational unity is something that is *deliberately achieved* for the sake of some *further end*. A group of human beings can do things as a unified person that no human-size person can do on its own. And that may constitute a *reason* why human-size persons might initially decide to

pool their efforts in a joint endeavor. If they implement their decision, they no longer maintain separate rational points of view. So what perpetuates the group person once it has been brought into existence is not separate commitments on the part of its human constituents; it is up to the group itself to maintain its existence by continuing to strive for overall rational unity within it.

When we view the unity of a human-size person along these lines, we must see it as deliberately achieved for the sake of some further end that couldn't be accomplished without it. The appropriate contrast here is with an impulsive human being who doesn't strive for rational unity – who doesn't deliberate at all but simply follows current desires unreflectively and uncritically. Since the capacity to deliberate belongs to human nature, perhaps it is fair to say that such a human being is acting against its nature. But that doesn't harm my point, which is that when human beings do exercise their rational capacities, they are *generating* rational unity through their intentional efforts. And it is part of this same point that these capacities can be directed at the achievement of rational unity within different boundaries. An initially impulsive human being might come to strive for rational unity within each day, week, month, year, or even a whole lifetime. The last goal was celebrated by Plato as part of the just life and by Aristotle as part of the virtuous life.

In a less high-minded way, we now typically pursue the project of living a unified human life for the sake of other, more specific projects, such as lifelong personal relationships (friendships, marriages, families) and, also, careers. But I want to emphasize that these are *projects* – and they are *optional*. It is possible for human beings to strive for much *less*

rational unity than these projects require and still be striving for rational unity. And, sometimes, the result may be relatively independent spheres of rational unity with a significant degree of segregation. Such segregation is evident in degree in the lives of many human beings whom we find it possible to treat for the most part as roughly human-size persons.

We may find, for example, that, when we visit the corporation, our friend 'becomes' a bureaucrat who cannot recognize the demands of friendship at all. This shows that our friend's life actually takes up a bit less than the whole human being we are faced with, the rest of which literally belongs to the life of the corporation. According to this account of personal identity, 'role playing' would not aptly characterize this phenomenon. It would be better characterized as a fragmentation of the human being into relatively independent spheres of rational activity, so as to generate separate rational points of view that can be separately engaged.

Of course, group endeavors do not necessarily result in such fragmentation. In principle, they can completely absorb the human lives that they involve (as in the armed forces and certain very intense marriages). But when a group endeavor does not completely absorb the human lives it involves, there is a consequent split in those lives. I propose to conceive multiple persons along precisely these lines.

The only difference is that the separate rational points of view of multiple persons need not be imposed by involvements in group projects but, rather, by involvements in other sorts of projects that are impossible for a single human being to pursue in a wholehearted and unified way. When a human being's projects are numerous, and when they

have nothing to do with one another, this may make it pointless to strive to achieve overall rational unity within that human life. And it may be a rational response to let go of the commitment to achieve such overall rational unity within that human life and to strive instead for as many pockets of rational unity as are required for the pursuit of those relatively independent projects.

So, just as a group person may dissolve itself for the sake of human-size projects that would otherwise have to be forsaken for the sake of the group's overall unity, a human-size person may dissolve itself for the sake of even smaller projects that would otherwise have to be forsaken for the sake of the human being's overall unity. In such conditions, we will find the emergence of multiple persons within that human being, each of whom can be treated as a person in its own right.

I don't want to suggest that this is typically how persons come into existence, through the breakdown of some larger unity. I think it usually occurs in the reverse direction, when there is something worth doing for the sake of which more unity needs to be achieved. That is certainly how group persons would typically come to be. And I'm suggesting the same holds for human-size persons. That is why multiple persons are also possible.

Thus, it is not human nature, but intentional activity and the undertaking of appropriate projects, that yields the commitment to rational unity characteristic of the individual person, and that sometimes transforms a human being into a person of human size. There is no law of nature that precludes a less ambitious transformation into multiple persons instead. To a certain extent, this happens when human-size persons give over portions of their lives to group en-

deavors. And, to a certain extent, this happens in all human lives.

In my introductory remarks, I warned that it is not a straightforward matter how proponents of the Enlightenment conception of the person should respond to the possibilities of group and multiple persons. I next want to explore some of the ways in which our thinking about the moral importance of both humanity and rationality are hard to transfer to the group and multiple cases. Because Enlightenment assumptions run deep in our moral intuitions, they tend to promote a certain reserve and even skepticism about group and multiple persons. But I believe the more appropriate response is to turn a critical eye on the intuitions they offend.

Consider the following intuitive way of describing the moral importance of the individual human being. Each human being possesses a kind of intrinsic worth that cannot be compared or measured against anything else; therefore, it merits an *entirely separate moral regard*. This idea of an entirely separate moral regard is embodied in our ordinary conceptions of individual rights. It is also the central theme of Kant's moral philosophy. According to Kant, each individual human being is an *end in itself*; as such, its worth is not only intrinsic, but absolute and unconditional. This means we must never think of the worth of a given human life as instrumental to some greater or higher good – or as determined by its character, its actions, or even its well-being. It is simply good in itself in a sense that precludes all comparative evaluation. And the whole point of Kant's categorical imperative is to specify a kind of respect that is due to each individual human being by virtue of its absolute and unconditional worth.

It seems to me that we can't fully grasp the content of any moral attitude without gaining a sense of what justifies it. And so it is with our attitude concerning the moral importance of the individual human being. If we really want to comprehend what it means to view human beings as having the kind of unconditional worth that merits separate moral regard – as loci of rights and objects of respect – we need to consider what would justify our viewing them in these ways.

One justification derives from a rationalist approach to the foundations of value that is more or less inspired by Kant. The approach starts from a fairly compelling idea. If anything has any value at all, it is only because there are things with points of view from which value can be apprehended. In the last section, I distinguished two kinds of point of view: the phenomenological point of view of consciousness, and the rational point of view of deliberation and action. Animals, who are merely sentient but not rational, have the first kind but not the second. That is, they have phenomenological points of view from which there is something it is like for them to undergo their sensory experiences, but they don't have rational points of view from which to reflect on what they have reason to think and do. Perhaps it is right to say that sentient animals implicitly care how their experiences go, insofar as their experiences can be more or less pleasant. But, all the same, they cannot apprehend any value in their experiences. That would require them to have a critical perspective on their own caring responses. They would have to be able to reflect on whether and why they ought to care in the ways that they do care, where such critical reflection would involve identifying reasons why anyone ought to care in these ways.

This obviously requires the exercise of rational capacities from a rational point of view. And so it follows, on this general approach to the foundations of value, there could be no value at all unless there were rational beings capable of the sort of critical reflection by which value can be apprehended. Given the mistaken metaphysical assumption that human beings are the only rational beings, it follows that human beings are the ultimate precondition of all other values. Because they are the precondition of all other values, their value cannot be measured or compared against those other values. Rather, their worth is absolute and unconditional.

Although I don't think we ought to embrace this Kantian line of thought, I do think that many of our intuitions about the moral importance of individual human beings are implicitly committed to it. This becomes apparent as soon as we consider the ways in which it is challenged by the arguments for group and multiple persons.

Group and multiple persons are not ends in themselves. They exist for the sake of other ends, which their existence makes it possible to pursue. It follows that their existence is not something of absolute or unconditional worth, which cannot be measured against other things. Their worth is bound up with the worth of their projects. And, in consequence, it is entirely appropriate for them to ask whether they ought to exist as the size persons they are, or whether there are other projects that would be more worth pursuing than theirs, for the sake of which they ought to integrate into group persons or fragment into multiple persons.

These forms of self-assessment need not push them into the utiltiarians' conception of the moral good, as the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

One notorious difficulty with such an aggregative conception of the moral good is that it may require us to sacrifice some individuals for the greater good of a greater number – thereby contradicting our intuitions about the moral importance of each individual. I'm saying that group and multiple persons may raise and answer questions about the relative merits of their own existence, as opposed to the other possible persons they could help to bring into existence, without being forced into this aggregative way of thinking about the moral good. What they can't do, however, is resist the utilitarian position by attributing to themselves the kind of worth that Kant attributed to individual human beings. For, to repeat, their value is not incomparable, immeasurable, absolute, or unconditional – and they are not ends in themselves.

Thus, multiple and group persons cannot play the foundational role that Kant ascribed to the individual human being. But, if I am right, neither can the individual human being. The only thing that could possibly play that foundational role is a *rational individual*. And the burden of my argument is that all rational individuals are emergent beings who exist for the sake of other ends. As such, they cannot serve as the ultimate precondition for all other value. If this is why individual persons are supposed to have the kind of unconditional worth that merits separate moral regard, then none of them do – not group persons, not multiple persons, and not even persons of human size.

Despite all I have said, it may still seem that human beings must be morally important in some way that I have not registered. Moreover, they must be important qua individuals and not just qua raw material from which persons may emerge.

This may be so. But if it is so, it is not because human beings are persons in the sense that goes together with the Enlightenment emphasis on rationality. It is rather because they are animals.

There is room to argue that each sentient animal merits a kind of separate moral regard. As I've noted, sentience requires the possession of a phenomenological point of view from which there is something it is like to undergo sensory experiences. And such a point of view is, in some ways, like a world unto itself in which all that matters is how things are there. This suggests a moral reading of Wittgenstein's line in the *Tractatus*, that what the solipsist means is quite correct: when a sentient animal suffers, its whole world is bad; and when we relieve its suffering, we thereby ameliorate a whole world. I don't know if it follows that we are obliged to show separate moral regard to each sentient animal. But we often do so in fact, as shown by our capacity to take moral satisfaction in relieving the suffering of just one, without giving any thought to the plight of the rest (as a utilitarian would think we should).

Undoubtedly some of our moral responses to individual human beings are along these lines. But this is a far cry from displaying the sort of moral respect that Kant thought we owe to human beings. And it is certainly no way to try to save the Enlightenment conception of the person to which he gave such powerful and moving expression. If it saves the first commitment of that conception, to the moral importance of the individual human being, it does so only by letting go entirely of the second, to the moral importance of rationality.

It does seem to me that the Enlightenment conception of the person got this much right: our sense that human beings hold a distinctive moral importance is bound up with our sense that rationality is morally important, and this in turn is bound up with our sense that human beings are persons. However, once we recognize the possibilities of group and multiple persons, we must concede that no persons – not even persons of human size – can have exactly the sort of moral importance human beings would have had if they had been the unique case of personhood.

I cannot resist pointing out that virtually all critics of the Enlightenment have shared the mistaken assumption about individuality that informs the Enlightenment conception of the person. This includes the critics who have come closest to recognizing the possibilities of group and multiple personhood. I have in mind two lines of criticism in particular, both of which take issue with the way in which the Enlightenment portrays the human individual.

One standard complaint about Enlightenment politics and morals is that it considers the individual human being in abstraction from its affiliations with others, as something whose existence and identity is completely separate from others. The complaint is that this overlooks the ways in which a human being's primary identity typically derives from its membership in a particular religious, national, ethnic, economic, or other group. And this has led to much theorizing of 'group identity.' However, it is never suggested in discussions of group identity, as I am suggesting, that the human constituents of a group might fail to be persons in their own rights due to the existence of a group person. The possessors of group identity are always portrayed as individual human beings. They are assumed to be the only real – and, indeed, the only possible – persons. (This comes through very clearly in connection with group rights. When rights are

claimed on behalf of groups, the rights
are not conceived as attaching to the
group itself, as if the group were a per-
son in its own right. The real claimants
to group rights are a group's human con-
stituents.) Thus, the critics who take is-
sue with the Enlightenment emphasis on
the separateness of persons nevertheless
share the mistaken assumption that per-
sons are always of human size.

Just as Enlightenment thinkers con-
ceived of individual human beings as be-
ing separate from one another, they also
thought of them as possessing the sort of
internal unity mandated by the norma-
tive requirements of rationality. Another
important line of criticism recommends
that human beings forsake this norma-
tive ideal of rational unity in favor of
more 'multiple' ways of being. This may
sound like a call to bring multiple per-
sons into existence. But if it were really
that, it would have to be intended as a
call to suicide. For if any multiple per-
sons were ever brought into existence,
they would take the place of the human-
size persons who had formerly existed in
their stead. As far as I can see, this is not
how the call to multiplicity is generally
intended. It is simply a recommendation
that human beings pursue less rational
forms of life. And this leaves in place the
mistaken assumption that the only indi-
viduals who could possibly pursue any
form of life – rationally unified or not –
are persons of human size.

I don't think it is a failure of nerve that
has kept critics of the Enlightenment
from acknowledging the twin possibili-
ties of group and multiple persons. Rath-
er it is an implicit allegiance to the two
commitments that make up the Enlight-
enment conception of the person, which
is still governed, as it has always been, by
a bundle of moral intuitions that require
the mistaken metaphysics of the individ-
ual.

Wendy Doniger

Many masks, many selves

In both real life and mythology, people set out to become other people but, through a kind of triple cross[1] or double-back, end up as themselves, masquerading as other people who turn out to be masquerading as them. Sometimes entire ethnicities indulge in this self-imitation. The inhabitants of places known for their ethnic charm, where tourism has become a major industry, consciously exaggerate their own stereotypes to please the visitors: the British lay on the 'ye olde' with a shovel, the Irish their blarney, the Parisians their disdain for tourists. The politics of colonialism produced another, more serious sort of self-parody, in this case perhaps unconscious: Edward Said wrote of "the paradox of an Arab regarding himself as an 'Arab' of the sort put out by Hollywood. The modern Orient, in short, participates in its own Orientalizing."[2] Orientalism, like other forms of political domination, has also inspired what James Scott has taught us to recognize as the arts of resistance, the weapons of the weak,[3] which include a kind of apparent self-mockery that actually mocks the mockers. There are so many examples, but in this essay I will consider just those in two broad categories: politics and gender.

Individuals are often driven to self-impersonation through the pressure of public expectations. The sorts of public figures who are nowadays called icons are often famous for nothing but being famous. Politicians, in particular, are

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1 The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'triple cross' thus: "The act of betraying one party in a transaction by pretending to betray the other, or of betraying a person who has betrayed another." I am paying the word a bit extra, as Humpty Dumpty would say, to extend its meaning to the act of masquerading as a person who has masqueraded as another person.

2 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 325.

3 James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1990).

great self-imitators. Hillary Rodham Clinton once reported: "Suddenly a woman came up to me. 'You sure look like Hillary Clinton,' she said. 'So I'm told,' I answered."[4] And when an actor actually becomes a politician the felonies are compounded. Consider the self-imitation of film actors who play the parts of politicians who then become actors.

When Ronald Reagan auditioned for the role of the president of the United States in the 1960 Broadway production of Gore Vidal's play "The Best Man," about a presidential election, Vidal turned him down because he didn't think Reagan would be believable as the president. When asked about this in 2002, Vidal said, "Reagan was a first-rate actor as a President."[5]

Indeed he was. Lou Cannon, in his aptly named biography, *President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime*, tells how, at the June 6, 1984, celebrations on Omaha Beach, commemorating the Normandy invasion, Reagan, who had never been outside of the United States during World War II, "gave the impression of returning to Normandy," to the utter mystification of the other world leaders, including Queen Elizabeth II of Britain, Queen Beatrix I of the Netherlands, and Francois Mitterand, who had actually been captured by the Germans and escaped from a POW camp. (In fact, more recent evidence of Mitterand's connection with Vichy in the early days of World War II indicates that he, too, could turn and turn about.)

Reagan had conjured up this imaginary war record, the film actor playing the part of a real actor in history. Cannon explains how it happened:

> Films are real to Reagan. His performance in Normandy recalled the experiences of Captain Reagan – an actor who wore his uniform to work in Culver City, played the lead role in *This Is the Army* and participated in a top-secret project used to train U.S. bombing crews for their destructive raids on Tokyo. As Reagan tells the story, "Our special effects men – Hollywood geniuses in uniform – built a complete miniature of Tokyo"[6] on a sound stage, above which they rigged a crane and camera mount. They then photographed the miniature, showing the targets as they would look from planes flying at different altitudes and speeds under varying weather conditions. Reagan was the narrator, guiding pilots onto their targets.[7]

This war game, the antecedent of the computer games that children play, enabled pilots, real pilots, to practice their bomb runs on Tokyo – real bomb runs that Hollywood would then reenact in fictionalized films like *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* (1944). Thus, as Garry Wills argued, Reagan's war service was "based on the principled defense of faking things."[8]

This was Reagan's war. As he told Landon Parvin, "Maybe I had seen too many war movies, the heroics of which I some-

4 Hillary Rodham Clinton's first newspaper column, copied in the *New York Times*, July 24, 1995, A10.

5 Interview in *Cape Cod Times*, July 13, 2002, C2. More precisely, in 2002, Vidal said, "Yes, I turned him down on the grounds that he was not right for an Adlai Stevenson-style politician while Melvyn Douglas was. The joke has been refashioned over the years."

6 Ronald Reagan and Richard G. Hubler, *Where's the Rest of Me? The Autobiography of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Karz Publishers, 1981), 137.

7 Lou Cannon, *President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 485–486.

8 Garry Wills, *Reagan's America* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), 164.

times confused with real life."[9] When Oliver North was exposed and put on trial, Reagan's comment was, "It's going to make a great movie."[10] As an actor, he had helped real fighter pilots bomb a fake Tokyo; as an actor pretending to be a president, walking on a real battlefield with a real war veteran who had become president of France, Reagan could not distinguish his performance in films about World War II from his (nonexistent) performance in World War II. He was narrating the plot of a war film he'd starred in, which – like so much of what passed for his memory – was more real to him than reality, so much simpler, so much more flattering to his vanity.[11]

Vidal always referred to Reagan as "our acting President,"[12] which became the title of a book about Reagan in which the following anecdote appears: "His entry into politics inspired a famous utterance by his former studio boss Jack Warner. When told that Reagan was running for governor of California, Warner, always quick to recognize a casting blunder, protested, 'No, no! Jimmy Stewart for governor, Ronald Reagan for best friend.'"[13]

But something even more invidious was accomplished by Reagan's impersonation of a president. The masking and unmasking went in both directions, finally exposing not just Reagan but the part he was playing. Because of Reagan, as David Thompson put it, "The fraudulence of the Presidency was revealed so that the office could never quite be honored again." In retrospect, we saw that other glamorous presidents, like Kennedy, had also been impersonating presidents. And F.D.R.? And Lincoln? Why was the character in *The Truman Show* (about a person whose life is entirely encased within a television serial that he mistakes for real life) named after a president – indeed, a president famous for his blunt honesty and lack of pretensions?

Arnold Schwarzenegger, governor of California, has been well trained for the part: he starred in three self-imitation movies (*Total Recall*, *True Lies*, and *The Sixth Day*). Many have sighed in relief at the knowledge that, born in Austria, he can't be president. But here's an alarming bit of trivia. In the film *Demolition Man* (1993), John Spartan (Sylvester Stallone), who is frozen in a coma in 1996 and thawed out in 2032 (when the movie is set), discovers the Schwarzenegger Presidential Library. He expresses astonishment (perhaps because it is not the Stallone Presidential Library?) that "the actor" could have been president. His colleague (Sandra Bullock) then explains that, even though Schwarzenegger was

9 Cannon, *President Reagan*, 486.

10 John Shelton Lawrence and Robert Jewett, *The Myth of the American Superhero* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 338.

11 Still more bizarre, but less amusing, is the report that Reagan had told Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, during his November 29, 1983, visit to the White House, and Simon Wiesenthal, on a February 16, 1984, visit, that he had photographed the Nazi death camps. [Cannon, *President Reagan*, 487.] Reagan later denied this story and said merely that he had seen "secret" films of Eisenhower's visit to the town of Ohrdruf on April 12, 1945, a week after its liberation. In fact, he had seen a film that was widely viewed throughout the United States at that time.

12 Personal communication from Mike Macdonald, September 2002. But Norman Mailer (cited by Alan Brinkley in 1960 – the year that Vidal turned down Reagan) said that Kennedy was the first actor as president.

13 Bob Schieffer and Gary Paul Gates, *The Acting President* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1989), 167.

not born in this country, he was so popular at the time that people passed a "61st Amendment, which states that …" – Stallone interrupts her by saying, "I don't wanna know."

Out of the mouths of hunks: since Schwarzenegger's election as governor, there has been a movement to ratify an amendment to the Constitution so that he can run for president, and Schwarzenegger himself has publicly expressed his belief that immigrants should be allowed to run for president. Moreover, in a move eerily reminiscent of Reagan's old unsuccessful bid for the role of president in Gore Vidal's play, Schwarzenegger almost failed to be cast in his greatest role, the Terminator, in 1984 because the director, James Cameron, had O. J. Simpson in mind for the part; Simpson lost it to Schwarzenegger, however, because, as Cameron told *Esquire*, "People wouldn't have believed a nice guy like O. J. playing the part of a ruthless killer."[14]

The implications of this comparative judgment are chilling. So is the further distancing from reality implied in the belief that Schwarzenegger is imitating Reagan (imitating a president): the title of a *New York Times* article about Schwarzenegger's bid for governor was "An Actor, Yes, but No Ronald Reagan."[15] This was already an imitation of a well-known joke about Jack Kennedy: The story went that a woman said of every man she slept with, "He's great, but he's no Jack Kennedy," until she finally got to sleep with Kennedy himself and reported, "Great, but no Jack Kennedy." Lloyd Bentsen may or may not

have had this story in mind in his famous rejoinder to Dan Quayle in Omaha, Nebraska, on October 5, 1988: "Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy." Uncertainty regarding the original date of the anecdote makes it unclear whether the political joke is punning on the sexual, or the sexual on the political.

Bill Clinton's great contributions to this genre, such as making it X-rated, were capped by the film *Wag the Dog* (1997), in which a president embroiled in a sex scandal deflects public attention from the scandal by selling a fictitious war film to the American people as if it were real news footage of a war against Albania. That film-within-a-film was implicitly cited after September 11 to undercut President Bush's use of the war and war footage, against first Afghanistan and then Iraq, to avert public unrest at the collapse of the stock market and the failing economy at large. In Michael Moore's documentary *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), *Afghanistan* became the title of a Western movie starring Bush and Cheney. A book about Homeland Security, reviewed under the title "Just Like in the Movies," details procedures that one reviewer said "lends itself to dramatization at a theater near you," with "a broad roster of castable characters" and a great deal of fantasy, including a 2002 counterterrorism exercise that involved "over a dozen current and former officials role-playing the president and the National Security Council."[16] Once faith is shaken, it is hard to keep it out of free fall.

14 Anthony Lane, "Metal Guru: Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines," *New Yorker*, July 14 and 21, 2003, 85 – 86.

15 Dean E. Murphy, "An Actor, Yes, but No Ronald Reagan," *New York Times*, August 10, 2003, sec. 4, 1.

16 Matthew Brzezinski, *Fortress America: On the Front Lines of Homeland Security – An Inside Look at the Coming Surveillance State* (New York: Bantam Books, 2004); reviewed by Hugh Eakin, "Just Like in the Movies," *New York Times Book Review*, November 7, 2004, 9.

People can pretend to be their own genders via other genders. A man pretending to be a woman pretending to be a man, or a woman pretending to be a man pretending to be a woman, is in double drag – or, as the *New York Times* headline reviewing the 1995 musical *Victor/Victoria* called it, "in Drag, in Drag." Literature and film abound in such characters: Rosalind pretending to be Ganymede pretending to be Rosalind, in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*; Julie Andrews playing a woman pretending to be a man pretending to be a woman, in the film *Victor/Victoria* (1982); and so many more. Let us here consider two historical figures, the Chevalier d'Eon and Casanova.

In a case from recorded eighteenth-century French history, the Chevalier d'Eon turned out to be a man who pretended to be a transvestite. This is the story:

> Once upon a time, more precisely on October 5, 1728, a child named Charles Geneviève Louis Auguste Andréa Thimothée d'Eon, also known as Charles de Beaumont, was born to a low-ranking nobleman in the town of Tonnerre in Burgundy. The child grew up to have a distinguished career as a diplomat and spy and a captain in the dragoons and was honored with the title of Chevalier for his bravery in the Seven Years' War. In 1770, rumors that he was a woman began to circulate in France and England, and in 1776 Louis XVI officially announced that d'Eon was and had always been a woman. The Chevalière, as she now became known, left France and lived the rest of her life as a woman in London. When she died, on May 21, 1810, it was discovered that she was anatomically male.[17]

17 Gary Kates, *Monsieur d'Eon is a Woman: A Tale of Political Intrigue and Sexual Masquerade* (New York: Basic Books, 1995).

After d'Eon announced that he was a woman, he insisted that he did not want to wear women's clothing but had the right to wear his dragoon's uniform. Still wearing men's clothing in France, apparently concealing but actually revealing his anatomical sex, he encouraged people to conjure up the two negatives that cancelled one another out.

That sexual triple cross explains how d'Eon got away with it. Apparently, as long as no one with any status in Paris had any knowledge of d'Eon's male anatomy (and the strange thing is that no one apparently did: he was either celibate or very, very careful), he was safe from accusations or rumors from people who had known him in the provinces. (Half of his names are women's names, but the French *do* that.) He set it up in such a way that he could not lose. He was able to project his fantasies upon the people he fooled without actually changing anything, just making other people imagine him differently.

People later remarked that he had looked more feminine in his uniform than he did later in a dress. Like the fools in the tale of the emperor's new clothes, who persuaded themselves and one another that they didn't see the emperor's nude body, the French courtiers imagined that d'Eon's 'invisible' nude body was what he told them it was (female) and discounted what they actually saw (male). A French humorist once remarked, "Somebody points at a woman and utters a horrified cry, 'Look at her, what a shame, under her clothes, she is totally naked!'"[18] It's not that 'the Chevalier has no clothes' but, rather, that 'the Chevalier is naked only beneath

18 Jacques Lacan, citing Alphonse Allais, in his 1986 seminar, "The Ethic of Psychoanalysis." Cited by Slavoj Zizek, "How Did Marx Invent the Symptom?" in *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 11–54, 28–29.

his clothes.' The Chevalier created a brazened-out social fiction that no one dared to challenge. Even when people noticed that the Chevalière (as she was now called) shaved; had a beard, a voice, and a chest like a man; and urinated standing up, still they went along with it.

One of the players in this drama was Pierre-Augustin Beaumarchais, the author of the play *The Marriage of Figaro*, in which the page Cherubino (always played by a woman in Mozart's opera version of the story) is dressed in women's clothing: a woman pretending to be a man pretending to be a woman. Beaumarchais not only thought that d'Eon was a woman but spread the rumor that he and d'Eon were in love and contemplating marriage and, later, that d'Eon was trying to marry him. Most significantly, Beaumarchais negotiated the document in which Louis XVI announced that d'Eon was a woman. But the true genre of the work of art that d'Eon made of his life was not opera buffo but myth; he created a myth of his birth and an imaginary childhood. The story he told was the widespread tale of a daughter whose impoverished parents made her dress as a son:

> [A]ccording to d'Eon, his father squandered whatever he found in his wife's dowry, and by the mid-1720's was in debt up to his ears. The way out of debt, it turned out, was to have a son. [His mother's] family will stipulated that a large inheritance of some 400 louis would go to the d'Eon family only if [she] had a son .... Although born female, the new infant was to be raised from the start as a boy .... Thus according to d'Eon, he was born female, but he never knew what it was like to exist as a girl because from the first breath his family raised him as a son.[19]

19 Kates, *Monsieur d'Eon is a Woman*, 47 – 48.

The tale of the girl raised as a boy is a story that has been told, and retold, for many centuries in many cultures, ranging from the tale of Amba/Shikhandin in the ancient Indian *Mahabharata* to the plot of the opera *Arabella* by Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal.[20] It is a myth.

The myth of the girl raised as a boy was mistaken for true history not only by d'Eon's acquaintances but also by a contemporary of his who prided himself on his sexual acuity, Giacomo Casanova (1725 – 1798). In his posthumous memoirs, Casanova describes an encounter with a person named Bellino, who was said to be a castrato and dressed as a man. This is how Casanova describes his reaction to Bellino:

> The masculine attire did not prevent my seeing a certain fullness of bosom, which put it into my head that despite the billing, this must be a girl. In this conviction, I made no resistance to the desires which he aroused in me .... His gestures, the way he moved his eyes, his gait, his bearing, his manner, his face, his voice, and above all my instinct, which I concluded could not make me feel its power for a castrato, all combined to confirm me in my idea.[21]

Because Casanova desired the castrato, he had to persuade himself that the castrato was a girl; he trusted his groin feeling. Later, however, when Casanova thought he saw a tell-tale bulge in Bellino's trousers, he became thoroughly confused. Bellino finally admitted that

20 For Amba/Shikhandin, see Wendy Doniger, *Splitting the Difference : Gender and Myth in Ancient Greece and India* (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 271 – 278, 281 – 286.

21 Casanova, *History of My Life*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York : Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), vol. 6, 2, 1.5 – 6, 15, 16.

he was not a castrato after all; he explained the trick, an elaborate sort of padding in the groin, and the reason for it: he was a girl, but his mother had thought it a good plan to continue passing him off as a man, for she hoped she could send him to Rome to sing.[22] So Casanova's instincts were right all along; Bellino really was a girl. Or was he? Was Bellino telling the truth?

We can immediately recognize the myth told by the Chevalier (or Chevalière) d'Eon and all the others. We may therefore take seriously the possibility that Bellino was lying when he said he was a girl, taking the old story and pretending that it was the story of his life; that he really was a castrato; and that, therefore, Casanova was wrong. Bellino may have been a boy pretending to be a girl pretending to be a castrato.

In Peking in the 1960s, a popular Chinese opera singer, Shi Peipu, then in his twenties, told the same cock-and-bull story to a gullible young French diplomat, Bernard Boursicot, who was stationed there.[23] As the *New York Times* reported it in 1986, "Mr. Boursicot was accused of passing information to China after he fell in love with Mr. Shi, whom he believed for 20 years to be a woman."[24] Shi, who often played women's roles in operas, dressed offstage in public as a man, and at first Boursicot thought Shi was a man. Then Shi told Boursicot that 'she' was born a girl but

her mother had pretended she was a boy in order to keep an inheritance that followed the traditional male line, or (in another version) that her mother had told this lie in order to keep her husband from divorcing her after she had produced nothing but girls. And now, Shi argued, "It is far too dangerous, in Mao's China, where men and women are supposed to be equals, to admit that one follows an old, feudal sense of values."[25] And so, even when Shi continued to dress as a man, Boursicot thought she was a woman pretending to be a man, when in fact she was a man pretending to be a woman pretending to be a man.

These are spectacular cases, the stuff that myth is made of, but also the stuff that ordinary people make out of myth. People often triple-cross-dress as their true genders. Men in drag imitate the great sex queens like Mae West, but Mae West (who never wore male drag) became, particularly as she aged, a self-parody, regarded as an imitation of a man imitating her, "the greatest female impersonator of all time."[26] When Gloria Steinem was given in 1973 an award from Harvard's Hasty Pudding (which specializes in drag shows), she remarked, "I don't mind drag – women have been female impersonators for some time." And Marjorie Garber comments that transvestism shows us that "*all* women cross-dress as women when they produce themselves as artifacts."[27]

22 Ibid., 2.1.17 – 18, 20.

23 This was the story that inspired David Henry Hwang's play, *M. Butterfly*, in 1989 (New York: Plume [Penguin], 1989); see Wendy Doniger, *The Bedtrick: Tales of Sex and Masquerade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 340 – 342, 370.

24 Richard Bernstein, "France Jails 2 in Odd Case of Espionage," *New York Times*, May 11, 1986, sec. 1, 7.

25 Joyce Wadler, "The Spy Who Fell in Love With a Shadow," *New York Times Magazine*, August 15, 1993, 30ff.

26 Marjorie Garber, *Vice Versa: The Bisexuality of Everyday Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 150; ibid., 52, citing the journalist George Davis.

27 Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), 65, 49.

It could be and has been argued that every woman since Pandora has masqueraded as herself, concealing within the deceptive superficial image of a woman the true nature of a woman. A woman who habitually dressed as a man remarked, "I suppose I could wear dresses, but then I think I would just look like a man dressed in drag .... If I dress up and put on high heels, or make-up, or things like that, they will call me madame. But I'm not going to be a transvestite to myself." And the woman who interviewed her and other women who dressed as men, comments, "One is left wondering whether these women believed that average women, in the course of their normal everyday lives, look like transvestites and prostitutes .... Sadly, their view of 'typical females' was tainted by misogyny."[28] Or, I would say, by a certain sort of mythology.

What do these stories, both historical and mythological, tell us? We assume that masquerades lie, and they often do, at least on the surface. But masquerading as ourselves often reaffirms an enduring network of selves inside us, which does not change even if our masquerades, intentional or helpless, make us look different to others. Erving Goffman speaks of "the field of public life," wherein our public self must play its part, versus a place "backstage," where the individual can relax before having to put on the theatrical persona.[29] Goffman assumes

that the private self is unmasked, that we are most genuinely ourselves when alone, an assumption I do not share. Rather, I think, we are never ourselves merely to ourselves but always in relation to others, even if only imagined others. Like Bishop Berkeley's tree in the quad, we exist only when someone sees us.

We become the person we see mirrored in the eyes of others, ideally someone we love or someone who loves us. The eponymous hero of Woody Allen's *Zelig* (1983) becomes black when he is with black people, fat when he is with fat people, and so on, because each individual calls up a response from that same aspect inside him. Zelig does, in an exaggerated form, what we all do all the time: we censor our language in one way when we talk with children, in another when we speak with more formal, older people, and so forth. But all of these really are our own ways of speaking; we simply choose the mask that matches the mask of the person we're trying to please. We need an audience to play out the self and a mask to give us that refreshed, vivid sense of self that is inspired by actively playing a role, the frisson of the masquerade. Moreover, we project what we regard as our best self to the world. Upward hypocrisy[30] can be a very good thing.

We wear a mask because we feel vulnerable and, paradoxically, want to attract the one person who will love us as we are without our mask. But this is a double bind. Instead, I think, we often fall in love with the people who love, among our many masks, the mask that we too love best, feel happiest in – the self that we prefer to pretend to be. And our touchstones may not be human be-

28 Holly Devor, *Gender Blending: Confronting the Limits of Duality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 128, 130.

29 Erving Goffman, *Behavior in Public Places* (New York: Free Press, 1963), *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959), *Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order* (New York: Basic Books, 1971).

30 This is Wayne Booth's excellent term; personal communication, June 2002.

ings: I agree with the bumper sticker that said, "I want to be the person my dog thinks I am."

The bizarre historical episodes that embody the myths of self-imitation tell us that each of us has several selves, several personae, whether or not we are aware of more than one of them. And so when, failing to be the other person we hoped to change into, we fall back to our default position, we may find a different form of our many selves awaiting us. We are imprisoned in our self, but it is a very big prison. When we put on a mask we have a choice, like Lon Chaney, of a thousand faces, and in a sense they are all our own.

Nowadays an attractive young professional woman will wear one mask when she wants to attract men and a very different one when she applies for a job in a male-dominated field, not to mention the ones that she wears with her children or with her mother. There are limits: we cannot, perhaps, choose to be Einstein or Marilyn Monroe. On the other hand, there are people who believe we can only choose to be either Jekyll or Hyde – but I think there is a little more wiggle room in there.

Some stories begin and end with the relatively simple assumption that the mask is false and the face underneath it real. Never venturing beyond this first level, these stories give us a happy ending: we find the true self, take off the mask, and all ends well – or not so well, as in the case of Oedipus. Others turn this assumption on its head and argue that the mask is what is true, the face underneath it false. In either case, the stories that assume a mere duality of selves – self versus mask – imagine pairs that are mutual referents of one another, such as two genders or nature/art, nature/culture, yin and yang. The polarized variants are fairly easy to play with: Jekyll to Hyde, Communist to anti-Communist, virgin to whore.

But even the dualistic toggle, if it happens more than once, destabilizes the dualistic paradigm, so that Rosalind plucks out one of her selves as Rosalind, then another as Rosalind-as-Ganymede, and still another as Rosalind-as-Ganymede-as-Rosalind. The copy of the copy produces an infinite regress once we break out of the simple dualism of surface and depth and acknowledge the equal authenticity of each version of the text. And some stories reject the ultimate reality of the mask or of the face beneath it and move on to more complex insights.

We see in them an implicit belief in a single self that is revealed and concealed in intricate ways, but we also see glimpses of dual and, occasionally, even multiple authentic selves. Such stories break open the theme of single identity to reveal an infinite possibility of variations, an infinite regress (*mise en abîme*, or endless displacement) implicit in any narrative in which x imitates y while y imitates x, and so forth.

Many films mock multiple identities, often through the use of a hall of mirrors. Groucho Marx encounters multiple Grouchos in the famous mirror scene in *Duck Soup* (1933). There are multiple Ginger Rogerses in *Shall We Dance?* (Mark Sandrich, 1937), multiple Rita Hayworths in the mirrors in *The Lady from Shanghai* (Orson Welles, 1947), and multiple (but different) Leslie Carons in *An American in Paris* (Vincente Minnelli, 1951), a film in which Oscar Levant (whose 1990 autobiography was entitled *Memoirs of an Amnesiac*) fantasizes that he is the pianist, the conductor, all the members of the orchestra, and all the members of the audience, all of whom are the same. In John McTiernan's 1999 remake of *The Thomas Crown*

Affair (already a double of the 1968 version with Steve McQueen), Pierce Brosnan outfoxes the police by hiding in plain sight as a man in a bowler hat straight out of a Magritte painting – surrounded by hundreds of other men wearing Magritte bowler hats. In *Being John Malkovich* (Spike Jonze, 1999), Malkovich (playing Malkovich) goes through the portal that puts him inside his own mind, and finds himself in a dining room in which everyone is wearing his face and saying only "Malkovich Malkovich Malkovich." There are also multiple doubles of Jack Nicholson in a theatrical number staged in *Something's Gotta Give* (Nancy Meyers, 2003).

Since we do have multiple masks, personae, selves within us, how foolish we are to tell lies in order to preserve the one mask that we think is really us and/or should be perceived as. Many people cling to the old dualistic model of the self and the mask. The fanatical belief that I am (only) the new I, the now I, makes it impossible to keep, let alone to cherish, so much as a hair of the head of the then I, the old I. As Oliver says of himself in *As You Like It* (4.3), "'Twas I ; but 'tis not I. I do not shame to tell you what I was, since my conversion so sweetly tastes, being the thing I am."

Disdain of the old I is common among the old Communists who became rabid anti-Communists when they were disillusioned by Stalin, and also among people who clean up some particularly messy aspect of their lives with such monomania that they hate their former partners, the people who knew them when. Such people seem to fear that they will turn into pillars of salt if they so much as glance back at their former selves. This self-loathing is shared by the sort of scholars who renounce the work, often extremely good work, they did under the influence of other scholars who later turned out to have the wrong sort of politics – the deconstructionist Paul de Man, the Indo-Europeanist Georges Dumézil, the psychologist C. G. Jung.

A very different problem is posed by people who suffer from multiple-personality (or borderline-personality) disorders, like those of the woman whose story was told in *The Three Faces of Eve* (Nunnally Johnson, 1957) or the people described in the aptly named book *Lost in the Mirror*:[31] people who have so many selves that they have no abiding sense of self, who feel hollow inside, all mask and no stable self. It is, of course, notoriously difficult to draw an objective line between healthy (rather than merely culturally accepted) and pathological fantasies. But I would venture to suggest that in the stories of pathological multiple selves, the multiplicity is experienced passively, helplessly, and with that special terror that Freud called "the uncanny" (*Unheimlich*), the feeling that one is lost in the maze of selves. Involuntary masks are also imposed by race and gender, not to mention the masks our parents bequeath to us, often simultaneously making us incapable of wearing them.

By contrast, the people who actively and knowingly accumulate all their former selves, who don't kill off their past selves, believe that all their selves are them, even though all selves are not created equal. The more cohesive the sense of perduring personal identity, the more freedom one feels to choose to don masks and delve into past selves. (This self-conscious switching of masks has the incidental advantage of allowing you to console yourself with the memory of

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31 Richard Moskovitz, *Lost in the Mirror : An Inside Look at Borderline Personality Disorder* (Dallas : Taylor Publications, 2001). The foreword is by Chris Costner Sizemore, author of *I'm Eve*, the source of *The Three Faces of Eve* ; see Doniger, *Splitting the Difference*, 79 – 84.

one self when you're not doing so well in another. When I lived in England I rode to hounds, badly, and taught Indian history, also badly. As I picked myself up out of the mud in the hunting field, watching the others soar over the fence, I would mutter to myself, "Well, I'd like to see some of *them* translate Sanskrit," and among my more erudite Indologist colleagues I'd think to myself, "Well, catch one of them doing a change of legs at the canter.")

The healthy sense of an enduring self who does not lock the other selves up can be maintained by a kind of Wittgensteinian family resemblance – a polythetic cluster of resembling selves, none of which is essential but some combination of which, a kind of critical mass or minyan, is sufficient to create an enduring sense of self. Or one might see it as a kind of Venn diagram made into a Zen diagram: intersecting rings with no single center, not an empty ring in the center, but no central ring. The multiple forms or layers of the self are all somehow alike and all somehow different.

Thomas Hobbes described this sort of composite self in his famous image of the ship:

> When a man is grown from an infant to an old man, though his matter be changed, yet he is still the same numerical man; for that identity, which cannot be attributed to the matter, ought probably be ascribed to the form ....For if, for example, that ship of Theseus, concerning the difference whereof made by continual reparation in taking out the old planks and putting in the new, the sophisters of Athens were wont to dispute, were, after all the planks were changed, the same numerical ship it were at the beginning; and if some man had kept the old planks as they were taken out, and by afterwards putting them to-

gether in the same order, had again made a ship of them, this without doubt, had also been the same numerical ship with that which was in the beginning; and so there would have been two ships numerically the same, which is absurd.[32]

So the trick is to convert the dualistic paradigm into the open-ended, multiple model by decentering the conventions of the self, which is what masquerading does. It reveals a complex subjectivity/objectivity that allows paradox to thrive, the truth that we both love and hate, both know and do not know.

There's a natural human tendency to search for a real self, a center, but I think that's the coward's way out. As we go deeper and deeper through the alternating layers of masks and faces, we never reach a monolithic core. Putting on a mask gets us closer to one self and farther from another, and so does taking off the mask. Since every lie covers up a truth, a series of masks passes through a series of lies and truths. Perhaps, then, the best bet is to wear as many as possible, realize that we are wearing them, and try to find out what each one conceals and reveals. As we strip away masks, or faces, each time, we see more in the hall of looking glasses. If we just stand there with our unconscious masks on our faces, like egg in the saying, we never learn anything about the selves.

Mary McCarthy once said, "It's absolutely useless to look for [the self], you won't find it, but it's possible in some sense to make. I don't mean ...making a mask ...but you finally begin ...to make and to choose the self you want."[33] This

32 Thomas Hobbes, *De Coropore*, in Sir William Molesworth, ed., *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, vol. 1 (London: J. Bohn, 1839), 132, 136.

33 Cited as the frontispiece to Robert J. Lifton, *The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

nice distinction between self and mask is hard to call. The stories with the double twist bring us back to the position where we don't seem to have a mask, which is where most people think they are all the time. But the memory of the double journey out and in, unsettling the assumption that we are either masked or unmasked, reminds us that we are never unmasked. The attendant who demonstrates oxygen masks on airplanes before take-off used to promise, "An attendant will tell you when it is safe to take off your mask" – but no one ever does. For most of us, it is never really safe, or true, or possible, to take off the mask. We prefer, rather, merely to glimpse the reality in the mask. We need our masks.

If we always tried to be one single self, without our masks, the world would grind to a halt. With them, the world proceeds from self to self.

Todd E. Feinberg

Our brains, our selves

There are cases in which parts of a person's own body, even portions of his mental life – his perceptions, thoughts and feelings – appear alien to him and as not belonging to his ego; there are other cases in which he ascribes to the external world things that clearly originate in his own ego and that ought to be acknowledged by it. Thus even the feeling of our own ego is subject to disturbances and the boundaries of the ego are not constant.[1]

For the past twenty years, my colleagues and I have studied patients with acquired brain damage who have undergone a transformation in the most intimate aspects of their personal identities. I call these conditions *neurological perturbations of the self*.[2]

We study these cases to discover, among other things, the neurological structures necessary for a self, and the manner in which these structures are wired together to create a unified human mind. To that end, our analysis of these patients focuses on how the self, the ego, one's personal identity, adapts in response to damage to critical neurological structures.

In these cases, I rely in large measure upon the patients' verbal descriptions of how they view themselves after a neurological injury. Although these narratives are acquired within a medical context, and the patients are expressing what they believe to be the truth in the context of a medical or neurological exam, my analysis of their reports more closely resembles a psychoanalyst's reading of a patient's dream, or a read-

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1 Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 1st American ed. (London: Hogarth Press, 1930; repr. New York: W. W. Norton, 1961), 66.

2 For reviews of this work, see Todd E. Feinberg, *Altered Egos: How the Brain Creates the Self* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); and T. E. Feinberg et al., "Right Hemisphere Pathology and the Self: Delusional Misidentification and Reduplication," in *The Lost Self: Pathologies of the Brain and Identity*, ed. Todd E. Feinberg and Julian P. Keenan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 100–130.

er's interpretation of a movie or novel. I take this approach because, while these patients are communicating what they believe are the actual facts of their circumstances, I actually find most intriguing what the patients reveal about those aspects of their self-concepts and motivations of which they are unaware.

Perhaps the best known, and certainly one of the most fascinating, neurological perturbations of the self is *asomatognosia*, a disorder in which a patient denies ownership of a part of his or her body. A patient with asomatognosia typically has damage to the nondominant, usually right, hemisphere of the brain; and the side of the body opposite the brain lesion, in this case the left, is paralyzed and has impaired sensation.

These patients also demonstrate a condition called *hemispatial neglect*, in which they ignore, as if nonexistent, the half of space opposite the brain lesion. Patients with large right-hemisphere strokes might not clothe their left sides, shave the left side of the face, eat food placed on the left side of the plate, or speak to people who address them from the left side of their hospital beds.

In order to demonstrate asomatognosia, the examiner grasps the patient's paralyzed left arm and brings it into the patient's right, non-neglected side. The patient is then asked a series of questions, such as "What is this?" "Who does this belong to?" "Do you have a name for this?" etc. Some patients with asomatognosia appear simply confused as to whose arm it is and respond that they are not sure, perhaps it belongs to the doctor. This confusion is understandable, and not terribly interesting from a neuropsychological point of view, given that the patient has profound hemispatial neglect, cannot move or feel the arm, and may have some degree of generalized confusion common after an acute stroke. Many of these patients will readily admit their error if it is pointed out to them.

But there are also those patients who exhibit a more profound disturbance in their sense of ownership of or personal relatedness to the limb. Such a patient adamantly denies the limb belongs to him even when he traces its attachment to his shoulder. He treats the arm as if it is dissociated from his self – as if it belonged to someone else or as if it were an inanimate object.

The British neurologist Macdonald Critchley pointed out the remarkable tendency of some of these patients to *personify* their paralyzed limbs as if they possessed completely independent identities. He observed that these patients would make up nicknames for their arms such as "George," "Toby," or "Silly Billy." Critchley described the striking behavior of one of his patients toward his paralyzed left arm:

> Asked to open his fist, he held it up before him, still clenched, and then began to cuddle and caress it, patting it and rubbing it, talking to it and encouraging it, e.g., "Come on, you little monkey, don't let us down. Come on, 'Monkey.' I used to call him 'Lucky.' We're doing nicely now, so we'll call him 'Lucky.' Come on, 'Lucky'" ....The nursing staff observed that at meal-times he would 'feed' the 'little monkey' with a spoon, saying, "Come on, have a bit."[3]

The first patient with asomatognosia I interviewed was Mirna, a woman in her seventies who was admitted to the Mount Sinai Hospital neurology service

3 Macdonald Critchley, "Personification of Paralyzed Limbs in Hemiplegics," *British Medical Journal* 30 (1955): 284.

with an acute stroke that destroyed large portions of the right hemisphere of her brain. Although her husband had been dead for many years, she believed that her left arm actually belonged to him:

Q: What is this about your husband's hands? Did you have your husband's hands?

A: I did.

Q: Tell me about that. What happened?

A: He left them.

Q: He left them to you?

A: He didn't want them.

Q: O.K. Well, did he leave them to you in his will?

A: He just left them like he left his clothes [tearfully].

Q: So they were in the house? Tell me about them.

A: Up until the other day. They used to fall on my chest. I said, "I got to get rid of them!"

Q: Yeah.

A: So I did.

Q: So what did you do?

A: Put them in the garbage.

Q: You put them in the garbage?

A: Yes…two days ago.

Q: Where are they now?

A: Still in the garbage…a black hand, with a plastic cover…you'll find them there. Be careful, though…the nails are very long…and very sharp. How come nails grew on dead hands?

Q: I don't know….How do you figure that?

A: I don't understand; if it's dead, it's dead. I don't know.

Q: How do you account for that?

A: I can't….Maybe they're not completely dead.

Q: What would that mean?

A: Nothing at all.

Q: Why did you get rid of them?

A: They were bothering me. They used to fall on my chest when I slept…and they're very heavy. And the nails used to scratch me.

Q: Sounds like they were alive!

A: No…they were dead, dead, dead! I tell you, you can take my word for it.

Q: How many years did you have them?

A: Maybe two. Since I was sick.

Q: Since you were sick you had them? Why did you throw them out?

A: Because I thought they were hard luck.

Q: Why did you get rid of them after all those years?

A: Because I got the stroke…and I thought maybe I'd die here like he did! [At this point she begins to cry.]

This pattern of misidentification and confabulation is common in asomatognosic patients. Nearly fifty years ago, Montague Ullman and his colleagues described a case that resembles Mirna's in many respects.[4] Their patient was a fifty-year-old Italian woman who was hospitalized at Bellevue Hospital in New York City in 1957. She had suffered a stroke in her right hemisphere that had resulted in complete paralysis of her entire left side. Her husband had died one year previously, yet she claimed that her left hand was actually her dead husband's and that he stroked her breast with it. They reported the following interviews:

4 M. Ullman et al., "Motivational and Structural Factors in Denial of Hemiplegia," *Archives of Neurology* 3 (1960): 306–318.

Q: Do you remember what you said when you first told us about your arm?

A: Yes, I imagined that it was my husband's arm because I wished so very much he could be with me.

Several weeks later, she tried to make sense of her prior confusion:

> Maybe because I was wishing so much that he would come. Someone had cut my nails short like my husband's. I keep mine long and pointed, so it looked to me like my husband's hand.

Both Mirna and Ullman's patient claimed their arms had belonged to their dead husbands. In fact, the idea that the arm is 'dead' in some sense, literally or figuratively, is common in asomatognosic patients. Shirley, a woman in her fifties who suffered from a right-hemisphere stroke and left hemiplegia, also associated death with her left arm:

A: It took a vacation without telling me it was going. It didn't ask; it just went.

Q: What did?

A: My pet rock. [She lifts her lifeless left arm with her right arm to indicate what she is talking about.]

Q: You call that your pet rock?

A: Yeah.

Q: Why do you call it your pet rock?

A: Because it doesn't do anything. It just sits there.

Q: When did you come up with that name?

A: Right after it went plop. I thought I'd give it a nice name even though it was something terrible.

Q: Do you have any other names for it?

A: Her. She belongs to me so she's a 'her.' She's mine, but I don't like her very well. She let me down.

Q: In what way?

A: Plop, plop, rock, rock, nothing. I was on my way home out the door, and then she went and did this [pointing to her left arm]. She didn't ask if she could [shaking her head back and forth]. I have to be the boss, not her.

Q: So why do you refer to it as a pet rock? What do you mean by that?

A: It lays there like a lump. It doesn't do anything. It just lays there. It's like when you're Jewish, and you go to a Jewish cemetery and put a rock on the tomb, and it just lays there. It is supposed to say, 'I was here.' It's saying I'm here. But I'm not. I'm only sort of here. I'm not really here.

Shirley, in addition to referring to her arm as a pet rock and 'her,' personified the limb in other ways. During one interview, she grasped her left hand with her right, shook it, and began to sing:

A: Wake up! Time to go home. What are we gonna to tell your mama? What are we gonna tell your papa? What are we gonna tell your friends when they say, "Ooh la la, wake up little Susie, it's time to go home"? [She holds her left hand to her cheek, hugs it, kisses it, fondles it, and pets it.] She's a good girl.

Q: What was that?

A: "Wake Up Little Susie." Remember the Everly Brothers? [She points to her left arm.] That's her; that's little Susie. She been out all night long – she has to go home. That's it; she's done. She's gotta go home, or they're gonna think she's the town whore [laughing].

Q: Why would you say that?

A: Because she's not behaving. [She wiggles her arm again, pulling on her fingers as if to rouse it.] Wake up little Susie! [She goes on to explain why she developed this idea about her left arm being

little Susie.] It's a coping mechanism. It's like laughter is the best medicine. If you can't laugh, what have you got? I thought I could bring her back with some loving-kindness. So I sang "Wake Up Little Susie," which is one of my favorite songs from the Everly Brothers.

Q: What's the theme of that song?

A: A girl and her boyfriend were out too late at night. And the entire town is gonna be talking about them, that she's being a slut. So it's a way of avoiding getting in trouble. And then he says, "What are you gonna tell your mama? What are you gonna tell your papa? What are you gonna tell your friends when then they say, 'Ooh la la, wake up little Susie. It's time to go home'?" [She lifts her left arm.] I wanna go home.

"Dead husband's arm," "pet rock," "Little Susie" – these are only a few of the terms my patients have used to describe their arms. Other patients I have examined have called their paralyzed arms "a breast," "deodorant," "nothing but a bag of bones," "stock option," "dummy," and "useless piece of machinery."

The neurologist and psychoanalyst Edwin Weinstein reasoned that the manner in which asomatognosic patients referred to their arms could be interpreted as metaphorical expressions of their feelings about the arm and themselves. He pointed out that his patients actually employed a variety of tropes, including personification, when speaking of the affected arm.

Another variety of metaphorical self-expression displayed by brain-damaged patients is the 'phantom-child delusion.' In 1956, Weinstein and his colleagues described patients with this disorder. The most common delusion was the mistaken belief that the patient was a parent of a fictitious child.[5] These astute clinicians observed a unique feature of this particular variety of delusion: patients often attributed to the 'phantom child' the same illness or disability that they themselves had.

For instance, a woman with a brain tumor that resulted in blindness claimed that she had a child who was "sick and blind." Another patient, a twenty-one-year-old soldier with a traumatic brain injury and weakness in both legs, maintained that he had a three-year-old 'daughter' who had leg paralysis as a result of polio. In other cases, the 'phantom child' embodied significant personal issues besides, or in addition to, personal illness. For example, one woman who felt that the nursing staff was mistreating her asserted that she had a "baby" that the nurses had "harmed and even killed."

These self-referential delusions and confabulations occur in a variety of clinical settings yet demonstrate particular patterns. As in asomatognosia, in which the patient may claim the affected limb is dead or belongs to a dead person, the phantom child is often said to be dead or ill. The fate of the phantom child often parallels the patient's personal medical condition.

Alan Baddeley and Barbara Wilson provided one illustrative example of this pattern. A patient 'RJ' was an Englishman who at the age of forty-two was involved in a serious car accident that resulted in intracranial hemorrhages involving both frontal lobes.[6] Despite

5 E. A. Weinstein et al., "Delusions about Children Following Brain Injury," *Journal of Hillside Hospital* 5 (1956): 290 – 298.

6 Alan Baddeley and Barbara Wilson, "Amnesia, Autobiographical Memory and Confabulation," in *Autobiographical Memory*, ed. David C.

the seriousness of his condition and the fact that he was in the hospital and in rehabilitation for many months, he repeatedly denied the seriousness of his injuries. RJ had a real brother, Martin, an adult who was still in communication with the patient. Nonetheless, RJ confabulated that he had had two brothers, both named Martin, but that one Martin had died in a car accident. RJ described a letter he had supposedly written: "I sent a letter to my great-aunt in South Wales when my younger brother was killed, saying just that."

He was able to provide detailed answers to a range of questions, including the date of his brother's death (eight years ago); how he had heard (by telephone); how his brother had been killed; and what time of day and what time of year the accident had occurred. When asked about the wording of the letter, he replied: "Dear Auntie Bertha, I am sorry to tell you that Martin has been killed in a car accident; it's all very sad and we're all terribly sorry, what can I say sort of thing, really."

Q: It must have been very painful.

A: It was, yes.

Q: Have you just got one brother?

A: I've got three now; I've got two now actually, one older and one younger.

Q: What are they called?

A: Martin and John.

Q: Which one was killed then?

A: Martin.

Q: So did you have two Martins?

A: We had actually in those days one Martin; then Mother had another one, and we called it Martin as well. I think she felt a bit...sort of morbid about it

so she called it Martin. So we had two, I suppose, yes, or what would have been two.

Weinstein, Robert Kahn, and Sidney Malitz described another case, a twenty-year-old hospital corpsman who was hospitalized at Walter Reed Hospital in June 1952 after being in an automobile accident that resulted in a severe head injury.[7] According to them, the patient

> expressed the idea that he had been killed in Korea and that his body had been returned that morning. Later he stated that his brother had been killed and that his body was in a casket under the bed, subsequently saying that it had been "moved to the morgue down the hall."

Following a visit from his mother, he announced that she had told him he had been in a car wreck and that the scars over his face, chest, and hands had been caused by penicillin injections. Subsequently, he ceased to confabulate about his own accident but fabricated a story that his brother had been injured in a car accident while coming to visit him in the hospital.

I have had the opportunity to examine several patients engaging in this fascinating form of confabulation. One of the most interesting and complex was a sixty-three-year-old man I call 'Sam.' Sam had bilateral damage to his frontal lobes, the result of a ruptured anterior cerebral-artery aneurysm. He had an array of neuropsychological impairments, including problems with attention, memory, and executive functioning (i.e., the ability to plan ahead, regulate his actions, judge, and reason). In spite of the seriousness and incapacitating nature of his cognitive difficulties, Sam denied

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Rubin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 225–252.

7 E. A. Weinstein, R. L. Kahn, and S. Malitz, "Confabulation as a Social Process," *Psychiatry* 19 (1956): 383–396.

that he had any cognitive impairment. Indeed, when asked why he was in the rehabilitation facility, he claimed he was "a guest" with the "Optimists Club" to "help out."

Sam was the biological father of three children, but the severe nature of his intellectual difficulties led to the break-up of his marriage. In spite of his separation from his wife, he claimed they were planning to adopt a child. During the course of an interview with his neuropsychologist, who was rating his performance, Sam asserted that the adopted child "has problems" and complained about the way the doctors were treating the child:

> I don't think a kid who is six or seven years old is capable of giving you the right answer....I know this kid has been in the hospital off and on for a couple of years, and they kind of rate them as far as progress goes, or things like that....I guess they must rate them when they don't hear the things they want to hear...like the kid is not accomplishing anything, which I think is very unfair to basically analyze a kid that way.

In Sam's case, 'child' served as an alter ego for 'patient.' Another one of my patients with phantom-child delusions was a sixty-five-year-old female, 'Linda.' She had a medical history similar to Sam's: a brain aneurysm had damaged her frontal lobes bilaterally, which resulted in significant memory and cognitive impairments. Also, like Sam, she tended to deny or minimize her neuropsychological deficits. She was divorced and had no children. When I inquired why she was in the hospital, she said she was there to visit her "niece" whom she described as a "child" and "a little girl." She claimed that the niece had an aneurysm, and also insisted that she had an aunt and six cousins, all with "aneurysms on top of their heads."

How do we explain these patients' behaviors? And what can they teach us about the nature of the self and identity? As John Hughlings Jackson, the father of modern neurology, pointed out many years ago, a brain lesion can have both negative and positive effects on behavior.[8] The negative effects are those things that the patient can no longer experience or do after brain injury. In the asomatognosia cases, these behavioral losses include paralysis, sensory deficits, and hemispatial neglect. They create the confusing and disorienting circumstances that make it difficult for the patient to comprehend that the arm is his or her own. The arm no longer 'feels' like it is part of the patient's self.

In the case of phantom-child syndrome, as a result of memory impairment, these patients cannot recall many of the actual circumstances of their illness and hospitalization. Although their family and physicians may repeatedly tell them what has happened to them, the immediacy and intimacy of personal recollection is lost. In addition, the presence of executive dysfunction, especially problems in judgment and abstraction, makes it difficult for these patients to understand that just because they cannot actually remember a personal experience does not mean it hasn't happened to them.

In contrast to the negative effects of a brain injury, the positive effects are new behaviors that emerge after the damage has occurred. These include delusions or behaviors that may represent an exaggeration of premorbid tendencies, such as the use of metaphorical language.

8 James Taylor, *Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson* (New York: Basic Books, 1958).

Weinstein suggested an explanation for the prominent use of metaphorical language in these cases. He posited that, under the conditions of brain damage, metaphorical language may seem more 'real' to these patients than more conventional forms of expression. Faced with the life-threatening and chaotic circumstances posed by neurological illness, the patients see metaphor, more than everyday language, as capturing the way they see themselves and their disabilities:

> The fiction imparts more of a *feeling* of truth than does the more referential account because it is an expression of relatedness and identity – because the theme provides unity and order to events that might otherwise be unpredictable, unconnected, and incompatible with expectations based on past experience.[9]

According to this account, the metaphor may make more sense and feel more true to the patient than the actual facts of their illness or altered life circumstances. My patient Mirna described her arm as both "dead" and her "husband's arm." Referring to a paralyzed arm as 'dead' may make more sense to her within the context of her premorbid experience than does a more scientific explanation invoking the neurology of stroke and brain damage. Further, by saying the arm is her husband's, she replaces the peculiar and unpleasant sensation of a lifeless limb with the more conventional feeling that it could belong to her husband.

The metaphor may serve other functions in addition to rationalizing confusing circumstances. It may simultaneously provide an adaptive, motivated, or wish-fulfilling substitute for reality. Ullman's patient explicitly depicted how her desire for the return of her husband influenced her view of her arm. For Shirley, her singing "Wake Up Little Susie" metaphorically expressed her feelings about her arm and illness and simultaneously served as an articulation of a wish. In actuality, Shirley was upset that her 'sleeping' arm would not 'wake up.' In the song, Little Susie was about to go home, reflecting my patient's wish to be discharged from the hospital. If her arm– 'Little Susie' – would just 'wake up,' Shirley would also be able to go home.

Our research into these syndromes of self and personal relatedness has indicated that the vast majority of those patients that display enduring delusions and metaphorical confabulations regarding their bodies, their relationships with loved ones, and their personal experiences has pathology of the right (nondominant) hemisphere.[10] The damage in these cases is especially prominent within the right frontal regions. What special functions essential to the creation and maintenance of the self could these areas be performing?

One possibility is that the right hemisphere, particularly the right frontal regions, is essential for the incorporation of ongoing experience into premorbid memory and identity. When confronted with life-altering experiences that require a change in the feelings about and perception of the self, an individual without a normally functioning right-frontal lobe may process information in the remaining intact brain but not appropriately incorporate it into his or her

9 Edwin A Weinstein and Olga G. Lyerly, "Confabulation Following Brain Injury," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 18 (1968): 348 – 354.

10 Feinberg, *Altered Egos*; Feinberg et al., "Right Hemisphere Pathology and the Self," 100 – 130.

identity. In other words, personally significant events may occur – of which the patient may have implicit, partial, or even full knowledge – but they are not *experienced as occurring to the self*. Under these circumstances, the relatively intact verbal left hemisphere creates the metaphor that partially reflects the patient's inability to incorporate new personally relevant experiences into his or her identity. As Weinstein proposed, the patient, without realizing it, elaborates his or her personal experiences in terms of external – real or fictitious – persons, objects, places, or events. The metaphor serves as a symbolic representation, or externalization, of the patient's feelings, which the patient does not realize are his or her own.

I detect an interesting relationship between the narratives of the patients I have described and the statements of neurologically intact individuals threatened with a loss of self or identity, or death. For most people, the notion of death is incomprehensible. At the very least, it is difficult to accommodate within one's self-image. To some extent, we must deny death in order to go on with life. Hence, when faced with the prospect of one's own death, an individual often turns to the metaphors of life beyond death provided by cultural and religious institutions. Just as the patients discussed in this essay deal with a difficult reality by creating metaphorical and wishful substitutes, we can understand our beliefs in eternal souls, angels, and deities, in part, as wish-fulfilling proxies for a reality that many of us cannot fully understand or accept.[11]

11 I wish to thank Dr. Joseph Giacino and Dr. Patrick Smith for allowing me to examine their patients, some of whom are discussed in this essay.

Ian Hacking

Genetics, biosocial groups & the future of identity

'Biosocial' is a new word, but its pedigree, although brief, is the best. Paul Rabinow, *the* anthropologist of the genome industry, wrote about 'biosociality' in 1992.[1] He invented the word partly as a joke, to counter the sociobiology that had been fashionable for some time.

When he wrote, Rabinow was interested in groups and the criteria around which they form. Of course, human beings are biosocial beings: biological animals and social animals. But the fact that many *groups* of people can be loosely characterized in both biological and social ways, and that the 'bio' and the 'social' reinforce each other, prompted his term. This phenomenon is immediately evident: what are families or extended kinship structures if not biosocial groups? Currently, the genetic imperative – the drive to find biological, but above all genetic, underpinnings

for all things human, in sickness or in health, in success or in strife – is fueling fascination with this concept.

1 Paul Rabinow, "Artificiality and Enlightenment: From Sociobiology to Biosociality," in Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter, eds., *Incorporations* (New York: Zone Books, 1992); reprinted in Paul Rabinow, *Essays on the Anthropology of Reason* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 91–111. Rabinow is an insider-outsider with whom many leading figures in the biotechnology field talk freely. They respect his wholly critical approach as good science in its own right, which means, in part, inquiry fueled by intense curiosity. This working relationship is truly uncommon in the burgeoning field of science studies. The respect is mutual. Rabinow has no doubt that geneticists are finding out how it is. Unlike most academics, he works well with the commercial, venture capital side of the industry, and is perhaps more comfortable there than in academic laboratories. See a series of his books from *Making PCR: A Story of Biotechnology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) to Paul Rabinow and Talia Dan-Cohen, *A Machine to Make a Future: Biotech Chronicles* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005). He does not restrict his work to the United States, for he is the most challenging informant about aspects of French biotechnology. Paul Rabinow, *French DNA: Trouble in Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

He has also had another role, as America's first reliable facilitator (a handy enough term) for Michel Foucault, with whom there was the same mutual respect. Hubert Dreyfus and Paul

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After an initial deterministic enthusiasm, almost everyone came to realize that everything is *not in our genes*, to cite the important polemic of Richard Lewontin, Steven Rose, and Leon Kamin.[2] One, there are not enough genes; second, it is the when and where and how of the expression of genes that counts; third, junk DNA and other primordial stuff are not as junky as they seemed; fourth, proteins are now where the action is; and so on. Nevertheless, the biological, and then the genetic, imperatives are facts of modern life. And far from increasing determinism and limiting opportunity, the life sciences are creating more choices. On the one hand, we have, in a sense, more biologies to choose from than we anticipated. On the other hand, new societies form along newly recognized (or, at any rate, newly asserted) biological or genetic lines, forging new alliances and loyalties. Forging new identities.

Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). I single out the second edition because the interview printed there is one of the most useful places to begin a philosophical discussion of Foucault's later ethical studies. Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1984). He continues to explore some of Foucault's leads. Many of the essays in his *Anthropos Today: Reflections on Modern Equipment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003) are at the intersection of Rabinow's abilities, on the one hand, to learn from Foucault and, on the other, to grasp what is happening in biotechnology. There is unlikely to be anyone else, at present, as agile with biotechnology and as adept in discussing biopower as Paul Rabinow.

2 Richard C. Lewontin, Steven Rose, and Leon Kamin, *Not in Our Genes: Biology, Ideology, and Human Nature* (New York: Pantheon, 1984). See also, for example, Richard C. Lewontin, *It Ain't Necessarily So: The Dream of the Human Genome and Other Illusions* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2000).

Some would say that Rabinow accepts too readily the self-image that life technologists would like to project. For example, when Lewontin was mounting his critical onslaught on the police's simplistic use of DNA fingerprinting, Rabinow published in 1992, the year he gave us 'biosociality,' a piece called "Galton's Regret: On Types and Individuals."[3] In it, he describes Francis Galton, the genius who, among many other accomplishments (including the invention of the silent whistle for police dogs), developed a system to identify criminals using their fingerprints. He adapted his system from the Indian Civil Service's, which was necessary because imperial administrators found it hard to recognize many of their subjects definitively. His regret was that, although a complete set of fingerprints does identify a person uniquely, it says absolutely nothing about that person's character.

In some ways, the work of Galton's rival, Alphonse Bertillon, who invented the French system of identification by ears, might well have proven more relevant for recognizing character traits. That, at any rate, was the speculation during the heyday of the criminal anthropology inspired by Cesare Lombroso. Anyone who has a green card conferring resident-alien status in the United States can check and see that the photo thereon conforms to Bertillon's demand that an ear always be shown.

But DNA fingerprinting – here perhaps I am carrying Rabinow's analysis a step too far – a method of identification intimately connecting you with a genetic profile, does indeed show a lot about who you are and who your ancestors

3 In Paul R. Billings, ed., *DNA on Trial: Genetic Identification and Criminal Justice* (Plainview, N.Y.: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 1992); reprinted in Rabinow, *Anthropology of Reason*, 112 – 128.

were. Also where you come from, that is, the neighborhood in which you live. Galton would have loved it. But not only Galton: the entire European tradition of criminal anthropology has been brought back to life, although few dare to mention it because it is thought to be as disreputable as Galton's eugenics.[4]

Lewontin's critique was invaluable. There had been an all too glib enthusiasm for DNA identification following its initial successes in the United Kingdom. In addition to technical objections based on genetics or American jurisprudence, an elementary difficulty arose at once. There is the old adage that crimes against the person are most often committed by family members or neighbors. Family members share a lot of genetic traits, and neighbors live in neighborhoods – whose members tend to clump in historical and geographical, that is, ethnic, ways. Thus, the probability of finding a DNA match should not be the probability of finding such a sequence in the world's population, or even that of the northeastern United States. There the probability may be minute. Rather, the relevant figure is the probability of having such a match within a few blocks of the crime, where it will most likely be a lot larger. Let alone when the suspects form an extended family. So the chance of a false conviction based on the early DNA probability calculations was far greater than was at first supposed.

4 For "A Bibliography for a Course of Criminal Anthropology, or Criminal Sociology, Circa 1893 – 4," see Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1990), 246 – 247. For parallels between that criminal anthropology and its 1990s facelift, see Ian Hacking, "Criminal Behavior, Degeneracy and Looping," in David T. Wasserman and R. T. Wachbroit, eds., *Genetics and Criminal Behavior* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2001), 141 – 167.

The criticisms made by Lewontin and others had impact, and in part thanks to changes that resulted, genetic fingerprinting is now considered remarkably reliable. One little-noticed effect was on the law-enforcement system. The FBI now has an enormous data bank containing DNA profiles of certain neighborhoods. If you come from a neighborhood where crime is common (in fact, as opposed to local folklore), the FBI knows an awful lot about your neighbors' genomes and, by statistical implication, perhaps your own. Hence, we can now assess DNA evidence with more relevant probabilities, or 'reference classes.'

The technique applies exactly as well in ethnically diverse neighborhoods that break into recognizable subgroups. For example, suppose DNA is left on the scene of a crime in a heterogeneous Los Angeles neighborhood, 40 percent of whose members are recent immigrants from the Republic of Armenia and 40 percent quite recent immigrants from Mexico. DNA evidence may indicate that the suspect is Armenian. Obviously, we do not then want to use the reference class of all inhabitants of the neighborhood to compute the probability of a random match between the evidence and our suspect. Instead, we want the reference class of Armenian immigrants, who may well be so genetically similar that reliable identification is very difficult. Especially if they all came from the same neighborhood in the old country.

DNA criminal identification needs innumerable cautions – some technical, some common sense. Lewontin rightly feared that poorly analyzed genetic evidence would make false convictions all too easy. At its worst, almost any member of an already targeted group could plausibly be made to fit the crime. However, in principle, if not always in prac-

tice, the new local data banks make that far more difficult. And however much DNA has made securing convictions easier, genetic fingerprinting has also helped free a significant number of individuals previously convicted on inadequate evidence.

The House on 92nd Street, a wonderful movie made in 1944, provides a point of comparison between the new fingerprints and the old. Made with the full cooperation of the FBI (apparently *before* Hiroshima, although released only after), the movie shows how the FBI caught German spies stealing atomic secrets.5 In it is a shot of a vast arena where young women searched the entire bank of fingerprints the FBI possessed in 1944 in order to identify the guilty parties. The filming took place on the real site, long since torn down. The room is auditorium-sized, but the procedure is automated, using Hollerith cards, derived in the first instance from the Jacquard cards for industrial weaving of long ago and the predecessors for the punch cards developed by IBM, which descends from Hollerith's original company.

One sees the force of the metaphor 'data bank.' It is not just a secure place to store masses of data; the endless stacks of cards are 'banks' in another sense of the word. For anyone who has trouble with gene sequencing and computers, this scene is a reliable metaphor for DNA-fingerprint searching today. The two chief differences: today's identifiers are genes, not the surfaces of fingers, and the sorting is electrical, not mechanical. And, of course, it takes

place not in a room the size of a hockey rink but in a little gray box. Police services, in many parts of the world, are just as proud of their sorting devices today as the FBI evidently was of its in 1944. And rightly so, despite the occasional misjudgments that overreliance on black-boxed technology can produce.

Rabinow's more speculative remarks about biotechnology, as opposed to his anthropological, sociological, and historical descriptions of the scientific work, tend to be prophetic. Thus, although Lewontin was absolutely right to demand stiffer criteria for DNA identification, Rabinow was right to foresee, fifteen years ago, the increasing role of genetics in life and self-conceptions. I should at once emphasize that he was not primarily interested in the use of genetics for racial identification, the current bone of contention. No, he was looking further into the future when, for example, risk markers for disease and causes of death might prompt people to identify themselves as *that* sort, the ones at risk of having Alzheimer's, an autistic child, etc.

A neighborhood is a good introduction to the idea of already existing *de facto* biosocial identities. Many Armenians, for example, emigrated to a handful of locations in the United States for all the old-fashioned biosocial reasons: family ties, a network of employment opportunities, language, lifestyles. On a Sunday morning the parks of an L.A. suburb are full of Armenians, by no means all notably fit, playing soccer. Where there are serious Angeleno hills and canyons, groups of Armenians of all ages and both sexes are taking sociable walks, complete with sticks that appear to come from their former homes. This last observation by itself is enough, from a sociologist's point of view, to set them

5 *The House on 92nd Street*, directed by Henry Hathaway, released September 1945. All the FBI agents except Lloyd Nolan are played by FBI personnel – in many cases the actual personnel involved in the historical events.

apart from almost any other recent immigrant group. In small clumps on a hill they do look somewhat alike to the outsider. And, to put it bluntly, their Hispanic neighbors hate them. Romeo and Juliet had a simple life compared to the handsome son of the Mexican immigrant in love with the beautiful daughter of Armenians. Finally, there is the bonding narrative that burns in every soul, the Armenian massacre.

The ties that form this biosocial unit are certainly more social than biological. No one in the group needs to know what the FBI data bank holds for this neighborhood to identify with each other. They probably would not want to know, for with all the centuries of marauders, pillages, and rapes that run through the history of the Caucasus and nearby regions, one would find a far more distinct phenotype (what these particular Armenians look like) than genotype (which is not so different from that of nearby peoples in their former region). Nevertheless, in the new, quite compact neighborhood within the greater Los Angeles area, the FBI would have no difficulty (yet – just wait for Romeo and Juliet to do their thing) telling an Armenian DNA sample apart from a Hispanic one.

As is so often the case with living colloquial speech, the 'hood really denotes an important entity, which tends to be both social and genetic. To say that is to hold up the red flag for accusations of racism. Good. We need to get the race stuff out in the open quickly, or we may be overtaken by new versions of race science put to its most evil uses.

We must first erase one worthy item from the former dogma of liberal attitudes: that all race science is biased balderdash, in particular, that the genetic variation between two randomly chosen members of one racial group is just as

great as that between two randomly chosen members of different races. This was commonly supported, in politically correct statements for general audiences, by saying that humans share 98 percent of their genome with pigs, or earthworms, or whatever species is obviously beneath us. So how could genes distinguish Armenians from Hispanics, if they can barely distinguish us from earthworms? We owe the scientific argument to Richard Lewontin, who put it in place over thirty years ago.[6] Editorials to this effect were still appearing in *Nature Genetics* and *Nature* as recently as 2001.[7]

Epidemiological practice has long ignored such agreeable cant, certainly since the early 1990s when racial registries for bone-marrow transplants were established.[8] Lewontin's doctrine was not as sound as it seemed. The trouble is that his theoretical argument assumed that characteristics associated with race, either stereotypically or physiologically, are statistically independent. They are not. As Hitler liked to point out, even though few whites have blue eyes and blonde hair, nearly every blue-eyed blonde has whitish skin. A. W. F. Edwards's 2003 theoretical refutation of Lewontin, attending to correlations among traits and genetic markers, is now widely judged to be correct.[9]

6 Richard Lewontin, "The Apportionment of Human Diversity," *Evolutionary Biology* 6 (1972): 381–398.

7 *Nature Genetics* 24 (2000): 97; *Nature Genetics* 29 (2001): 239; *Nature* 409 (2001): 812.

8 Ian Hacking, "Why Race Still Matters," *Dædalus* 134 (1) (Winter 2005): 102–116. I shall not repeat my four-page discussion of race-based medicine here, but it is taken for granted in what follows.

9 A. W. F. Edwards, "Human Genetic Diversity: Lewontin's Fallacy," *BioEssays* 25 (2003): 798–801. Edwards is a statistical geneticist at

Edwards's analysis is, for anyone with a modest statistical training, rather direct and 'self-evident,' and yet it had to wait thirty years before anyone thought the matter out in public. I suspect that, since Lewontin's conclusions were so 'obviously' correct, no one attended to the logic of his argument. I do not mean to imply that the issues are simple, only that what was so confidently asserted in *Nature Genetics* a few years ago is obsolete. The fall 2004 issue of the same journal was all about race and genetics. It sings to a tune altogether different from the harmonies of three years earlier.

The upshot is that stereotypical features of race are associated both with ancestral geographical origin and, to some extent, with genetic markers. On the one hand there was the experiment – I would categorize it both as acute and cute – in which samples of saliva were taken from people around the world, chosen on an essentially randomized protocol for geographical region. They were then run through fairly standard computer programs designed to sort groups of objects with lots of characteristics into small groups of distinct classes. These programs can take a midden containing pottery fragments with different designs, for example, and sort the shards into a few classes, which archaeologists conjecture come from distinct epochs. Such a program sorted DNA samples from around the world, unlabeled, into a small number of groups.

It produced five groups of people, recognized as the five races of nineteenth-century science, plus one group that did not fit well with any preconceptions.[10] The experiment does not strictly prove anything, but it is a significant anecdote.

On the other hand, interbreeding among populations of different geographical origins has been common in many parts of the world for a very long time. In such regions, skin color and the rest furnish little indication of the proportion of one's inheritance that one owes to different geographical regions. This has been most decisively established for Brazil.[11] Genetic markers cannot distinguish between affluent urban white-skinned business people in São Paolo, who deem themselves descendants of the Portuguese, and rural dark-skinned peasants, who think their forebears came from Africa.

We have yet to have a good study of a real old-time melting pot like the Silk Road from China to the West. Those who are more impressed by looking than by analysis can make a guess of what to expect from the extraordinarily powerful paintings of nomads attributed to Muhammad of the Black Pen (Muhammad Siyah Qualam) in the thirteenth century, common era.[12]

At present, plenty of anecdotal evidence points to the same effect about Americans. It is symptomatic of the old race science that 'Caucasian' is still the

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Cambridge University. For fear that his testimony be taken as *a priori* suspect, I should mention that perhaps the most vigorous lifelong proponent of the irrelevance of race for evaluating human beings is Luca Cavalli-Sforza. Edwards was for some years his collaborator and developed much of the statistical machinery on which his early population genetics depended.

10 Noah A. Rosenberg et al., "Genetic Structure of Human Populations," *Science* 298 (2002): 2981 – 2985.

11 Sérgio D. J. Pena et al., "Color and Genomic Ancestry in Brazilians," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 100 (2003): 177 – 182.

12 See, for example, the catalog of the Royal Academy Exhibition, *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years 600 – 1600* (2005).

name used in the United States for white people, who not long ago thought a single drop of alien blood could 'pollute' them, when in fact people from the Caucasus are most likely a very mixed genetic bag, just as they are on the old Silk Road. Call that idiocy, or call that an inadvertent stroke of ironic prescience, as you please.

The partial alignment of genetic markers and stereotypical racial identification rightly leaves African Americans in a quandary. Although the fact is not much publicized, quite a lot of scientific work on race-based medicine is conducted under essentially Afro-American auspices. At a quite different level, for people whom slavery, exploitation, and contempt left without family history, DNA identification furnishes a probable but unreliable way of tracking their origins.[13] In these and other ways, some genetics is welcome. However, the fear that all this DNA stuff will be put to racist purposes, including high-tech criminal profiling, is justified. But there is no hiding. And it is quite possible that white liberals want to hide more than black Americans do.

There is a whole forest of practical needs for genetic identification. For example, if a person in another continent can show the existence of kin in North America, immigration there is facilitated and in some cases guaranteed. So a host of companies is offering genetic services.[14]

Most of the nineteenth-century Canadian treaties with Indians conferred rights to the Indians at the same time as they took their territory. In present law, descendants of treaty persons have, under various complex conditions, rights and privileges different from those of other citizens. Similar laws exist in the United States. Hence, companies determining the extent of a person's aboriginal ancestry also get a lot of business.

I am taking a rather benign view of the use of genetics to trace identities. I hope the dangers are evident. It will be tempting to turn optional sources of evidence into obligatory types of proof. Another reasonable fear is that a lust for technology, and an admiration for false precision, will make genetics override community, among not only technocrats but also people in general. For example, it might become easy to reject children who grow up in a community but for whatever reason are genetic outliers.[15]

13 "Blacks Pin Hope on DNA to Fill Slavery's Gap in Family Trees," *New York Times*, July 29, 2005, A1. You can get something about your ancestors quite cheaply. Since this is a highly competitive market, prices will keep on falling, and any costs I might write today will soon be out-of-date. For an idea, try Google: for example, *Family Tree DNA*, from Family Tree Genetics Ltd., located in Houston, Texas, displays what it asserts is a competitive chart of comparisons with two major rivals, Relative Genetics (U.S.) and the Oxford Ancestors (U.K.). "FTDNA lab's scientists are world-renowned geneticists and discoverers of original markers that have been included in other lab tests." It is difficult for a layperson to figure out exactly what any such organization is selling, or even who the world-renowned paid collaborators are. *Caveat emptor*, and consult a knowledgeable person before you spend a cent.

14 Thus, Genelex says it has facilities available in seventy-two countries from Argentina to Vietnam. Unlike the firm cited in the previous note, it does offer profiles of its management and consultants. It asserts, "Genelex tests are 100 times more discriminating than the industry standard. Typical positive test results exceed 99.99%." The longer you look at that assertion the more ways you can read it. Did I say *buyer beware*?

15 Jon Elster drew my attention to debate involving legislation under consideration in Vermont. Kimberly Tallbear, "DNA, Blood and Racializing the Tribe," *Wicazo SA Review* 18 (2003): 81–107.

If the genome begins to override culture, then all citizens must rise up and insist that social bonds are what make us people. But we must also understand that knowledge of genetic 'identities' will forge social ones, creating new communities of shared recognition based on partial science. That is not intrinsically bad, but it is still a phenomenon that can be grossly abused.

And whatever use individuals want to make of genealogy kits (yes, the commercial labs send you a 'kit' to collect some of your DNA for analysis), epidemiologists will relentlessly collect new data. Today, if you go to a National Health Service clinic in Great Britain, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire in which you state what you think are your ethnic and, above all, geographical roots (you can have as many as you want). Some well-educated liberal Brits I know mock these forms or oppose them. While their fear of the all-powerful nanny-state that knows too much about you is legitimate, they also ridicule these forms out of the uninformed belief that ethnic and geographical self-identification is, among other things, worthless. Not so : it is a useful, very cheap guide to aspects of your genome.

Yes, self-identification is imperfect information. But it is cheap. It is comparable to the BMI, the Body Mass Index, which the current obesity panic has made a household phrase. Adiposity, the ratio of body fat to body mass, is the important health indicator, but it is fairly expensive to measure by any current technique – and thus comparable to a personal DNA readout. But the BMI is very cheap : stand on a scale, stand under a device that measures height, press two buttons on a calculator (or use one of the innumerable online BMI calculators), and there you have your BMI. The BMI originated in epidemiology in the 1960s

but was not so named until 1972.[16] One of its first classic uses was in a national Norwegian survey to detect seriously underweight people and note the correlation with tuberculosis.[17] A national study of adiposity would have been more informative and would have cost about a million times more. The U.K. National Health Service survey of ethnic self-identification is much the same : a large data set using cheap information rather than a minute data set using expensive information.

When it becomes clearer what one ought to be looking for in patient genetic data, and when obtaining that data becomes very cheap, epidemiologists will collect it. All British genes will go on file, unless a public outcry arises far greater than what has occurred so far. This is already being done piecemeal in quite a few parts of the world, including Quebec and the United Kingdom, but the most systematic and most publicized program is in Iceland, where a venture capital company, DeCode, and the Icelandic government have an agreement to match DNA, genealogies (which are more extensive in Iceland than anywhere else in the world), and health

16 Ancel Keys et al., "Indices of Relative Weight and Obesity," *Journal of Chronic Diseases* 25 (1972) : 329 – 343. The *ratio*, namely metric weight over height squared, is much older. But it was used not for medicine but for anthropology (anthropometry), and in perhaps the first instance for studying the rate of growth in height and weight in children – a project that goes back to Buffon.

17 Erik Bielke, "Variation in Height and Weight in the Norwegian Population," *British Journal of Preventive Medicine* 25 (1971) : 192 – 202. Much of the early BMI literature from international sources was published in British NHS-oriented medical journals. For the classic full study, see H. Th. Waaler, "Height, Weight and Mortality : The Norwegian Experience," *Acta Medica Scandinavica Supplement* 679 (1984).

records, both present and historical. The company then essentially leases the information to multinational pharmaceutical companies, who use it to prospect for links between genetic markers and disease.

Significant opposition to the Icelandic contract arose from a variety of civil liberty and 'green' spokespeople in Iceland. Some physicians objected: they were wary that their privileged access to patient information and control was being sold out from under their noses. International activists also protested. The Icelandic public, however, appeared relatively at peace with the deal. As always in such matters, local contingencies are often more effective in swaying public opinion than at first meets the eye. In this case, a large number of well-educated Icelanders reside in all parts of the industrial world. Many would like to go home if they could get a good job. Part of the deal with DeCode was that laboratory and computer work would be done in Iceland, thereby repatriating part of Iceland's greatest natural resource, her highly skilled citizens.

In prosperous parts of the world we already take for granted a great many specialized genetic searches. At the time of writing, New York State screens fetuses for forty-four different types of disease risk. It is often argued that full genetic screening is a public-health obligation, and sometimes that it is a right of the citizens covered by the system. We have not been clear about the resulting moral problems, though. Public discussions tend to emphasize how screening makes possible essential early medical services for newborns and infants. It plays down the extent to which screening prompts abortions. It is not only across-the-board opponents of abortion who worry when a test leads to killing the fetus. A vocal number of disability activists, who are in fact handicapped, also protest: "I would rather be me than unborn."

So we have plenty of things to worry about. I myself am more than perturbed about pharmaceutical companies marketing risk-oriented medications based on genetic treasure hunts. It is also troubling that preventive pharmacogenetics will be developed mostly for new drugs, whose patent writs will continue for a good time into the future. Preventive pharmacogenetics? I did not invent the noun. In the future, we will have the ability to screen patients for bad side effects of a drug, by picking out their genetic markers. Such 'tailoring,' as it tends to be called, will become standard for future drugs, but not for the large and useful pharmacopoeia of older medicines, many of which, like all potent chemicals, have awful unintended effects on some people.

In this section I have only been laboring the obvious: the intersection of medical, social, personal, and profit-making interests ensures that the avalanche of genetic information available about individuals and populations has only begun. We need informed debate from many points of view. Though we must also give blanket opposition its proper weight in the spectrum of dissent, it tends to stay of its nature long behind the cusp of what is actually and irreversibly happening.

The genetic imperative is the drive to find genetic markers in humans. It commands out of its own intrinsic strength, but it fits in neatly with our 'risk society.' Ulrich Beck was the first to use this term to describe the industrialized world.[18]

18 Ulrich Beck, *Risikogesellschaft: Auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne* (Frankfurt: Surhkamp, 1986), translated as *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (New York: Sage, 1992).

Beck was initially concerned with risks that we ourselves create by innovation, and its military and industrial applications, but the concept now applies also to risks that are not primarily of our own making, such as the risk of inherited disease or disability.

Disease genetics tends to track risks, not causes. There have certainly been unequivocal triumphs in discovering the latter, such as Jérôme Lejeune's 1959 identification of the association between an extra chromosome 21 and Down's syndrome.[19] Almost every fetus with an extra chromosome 21 will develop into a child with Down's syndrome, if it is allowed to live. This is so probable that it is unnatural to speak of risk here. The fetus is bound to develop in that way because of a programming malfunction – or so we imagine in our computer-driven era.

There we have a true success story of the genetic imperative in medicine. The genetic defect is now quite often identified with the syndrome, and this has been made part of French semantics,

19 Langdon Down contributed immensely by making the first identification of a separate developmental disability, which he called Mongolian idiocy. We blush now at the name, which was abandoned in 1960, but most of us have forgotten that his work was part of an explicitly racialist program to classify mental and physiological defects as throwbacks to other races. J. L. H. Down, "Observations on an Ethnic Classification of Idiots," *London Hospital Reports*, 1866; reprinted in *Journal of Mental Science* 13 (1867): 121 – 123. Mongolism became a standard diagnosis in the English-speaking world, thanks to W. W. Ireland, *On Idiocy and Imbecility* (London: Churchill, 1877), but was not picked up in continental Europe until the turn of the century. But the vigilant Cesare Lombroso included it in his atavistic anthropology as early as 1873, speaking of what awkwardly translates as "mongolian atavism of the cretinoid anomaly." C. Lombroso, "Sulla microcephalia e sul cretinismo," *Rivista Clinica di Bologna*, July 1873, fasc. 7.

where the syndrome is usually just called *trisomie*. (This has turned out to be a less than exact label, for triplings of certain other chromosomes produce other birth defects or disabilities, so one must now say *trisomie vingt-et-un*.) There are other success stories, for which the teams that discovered them are justly honored. But the medical-research community is now fully convinced that most further correlations between genetic information and manifest illness or disability will be 'multifactorial.' Genetic markers will not be causes but *risk factors*.

Though 'risk' implies danger, and danger implies harm, not every genetic search is a search for harm. Some children may come from a gene pool that enables them to play the violin at age four and to compose symphonies at ten. We search for genetic markers of these exceptional desirable abilities as well. The possibility of genes that protect against diseases is also spurring genetic hunts. For example, Alzheimer's disease shows up rarely or not at all among certain American Indian communities. Something genetic may confer immunity to, or delay, the advance of senility. If so, finding this protection factor will be of great importance.

A certain ambivalence, or ambiguity, also surrounds the genetic imperative. Consider the well-publicized searches for a gay gene (typically in men) and an alcoholism gene. Those who hope for an alcoholism gene believe that the discovery will prove beyond all doubt that alcoholism is a disease or, at any rate, an innate disability. Those who hope for a gay gene believe that such a discovery will prove beyond all doubt that homosexuality is not a disease or disability. Such contradictory pairings remind us that we are still in the adolescent phase of thinking about biosociality.

After taking these ambiguities into account, though, we still cannot ignore this central phenomenon: *the genetic imperative finds its natural home in the risk society*. Even a relatively abstract search, the genome project, was funded because just identifying genes was going to help locate risk factors for disease or disability. The dream was eventually to eliminate the markers and thus remove that source of risk. But instead of genetic medicine we got risk factors. We shall undoubtedly continue to be bombarded with hype about discovering the Alzheimer's gene or the schizophrenia gene – with the implication that this 'gene' *causes* this disease or that disease – but we should expect mostly indicators of risk.

Though cases where genes can predict the occurrence of a disease with virtual certainty, like trisomy 21, are rare, the probabilities can nevertheless be great, as in the *early-onset* forms of diseases such as breast cancer, colonorectal cancer, or Alzheimer's. Indeed, early-onset forms seem to show most clearly a direct causal connection between genetic markers and the appearance of the disease at a definite stage in the body's aging process. This may give us real hope in the case of schizophrenia. One form of schizophrenia, first labeled dementia praecox, is triggered specifically by maturity, surfacing mostly in males around age seventeen or eighteen. Early-onset dementia, or so it was first described.

Scientists are devoting an immense amount of research to finding genetic antecedents of two other disorders: Alzheimer's disease and autism. Who knows how all these diseases are entangled? Alzheimer's is a type of dementia produced by aging; one kind of schizophrenia is early-onset dementia; and autism was first identified as a kind of infantile schizophrenia (the noun 'autism' was originally the name of a symp-

tom of adult schizophrenics). Maybe those early guesses will have a genetic resurrection. Certainly autistic children and late-adolescent-onset schizophrenics are mostly male, suggesting a sex-linked locus for any genetic carrier.

Yet, in spite of all these tempting connections, what we should expect to see is not a gene *for* any of these disorders but many genes on numerous sites that increase the probability of the disorder appearing at some point. Some of these sites may contribute to several disorders, while each disorder may require in addition its own unique sites. Or maybe the genetic conjectures just will not pan out. In any case, we anticipate not determinism but risk factors, or worse, multifactorial risk. But for simplicity's sake, I'll refer to the gene or genes that heighten one's chances of getting a particular disorder – whether single or multiple – as a 'risk factor.'

A set of people with a risk factor is a biological, not social, group. But people at risk for the same disease will clump together for mutual support, joint advocacy, and, in many cases, activism. The emergence of these advocacy groups will be one of the most important topics for any history of medicine in late twentieth-century America.

Most advocacy groups in existence today are for people who are afflicted with a disease or disability, or have family members or friends who suffer from it. These groups often have names like 'Friends of Schizophrenia.' They are, of course, biosocial, that is, societies formed around a biological condition. And many are effective. Today, autism is on the front burner thanks to the intense advocacy of groups going back to the 1960s on behalf of children with developmental difficulties. Parents, understandably, make the fiercest activists,

but they were greatly aided by the fact that President Kennedy had a sister with special needs. We owe the ubiquity of special-needs services and programs in American schools to that concatenation of events. Until now, however, these groups have had little or no dealings with genetics, except to urge, and occasionally contribute financially to, the search for the genetic origins of their diseases. Now we step into the future. We will increasingly be able to identify families that are genetically at risk for various disorders. The advocacy groups will then consist not of those who are ill but of those who are at risk of becoming ill.

Such groups bring something rather new to the discussion of identity, a concept which Mediterranean, and then European, philosophers have debated for as long as they have waxed philosophical. Built into their conception of identity was the idea that one's essential features, not accidental characteristics, should constitute one's identity. Those words 'essential' and 'accidental' reek of high metaphysics. The metaphysics has gone underground, at least among English-language secular philosophers, ever since John Locke trashed essences over three centuries ago. Locke gave accounts of identity that are splendidly free of any waffle about essences. But those who wish to talk identities ignore the surreptitious idea of essence at their peril. And that is where genetic markers make a decisive difference.

Because no matter how much intellectuals, both humanists and scientists, may inveigh against it, people can hardly avoid thinking of their genetic inheritance as part of what constitutes them, as part of who they are, as their essence. But now comes a curious turn. We all carry an enormous mix of inheritance,

and the greater the extent to which a person's recent forebears came from geographically disparate parts of the globe, the greater the possibilities for picking out and identifying with this or that distinct strand.

Up until now this has been possible only for those whose physiognomy is sufficiently ambiguous. Life experiences exploiting ambiguity have been turned into art by novelists, most recently by Philip Roth in *The Human Stain*. A boy in a black family, who had rather olive skin, chose to identify as Jewish, and thereby hangs the tale. That is a pregenetic tale – but it emphatically revolves around one recent fruit of biotechnology. Biotech and biopharm are going to be integral to many future novels that are true-to-life in the prosperous parts of the world. Some mentions will be so banal that no one will notice. In this case, the septuagenarian hero is disgraced when he falls in love with a woman in her thirties who works as a janitor. He chooses products from the biopharmaceutical industry to rejuvenate himself, to be a younger man than his undrugged body teaches. Pfizer's Viagra turns a once-essential property, the natural limitations of age, into what scholastic philosophers would have called an accident.

The novelist Philip Roth and the sociologist Erving Goffman share the idea of theater as a metaphor for chosen identities. Drama is more generous than society. Roth seems to imply at the end of the book that his protagonist can reject any of the identities he has chosen or that have been thrust upon him. He becomes truly free in a sense that the existentialists of half a century ago would have warmed to. I suspect Goffman, a child of that time, who knew Sartre's work quite well, would reply that you cannot exist without a roster of acted identities, or else you are taken for mad. And mad-

ness itself is not a role that can be played any old how. In every generation are quite firm rules about how you should behave when you are crazy.

Soon we shall have novels about people who send in their saliva to a gene-testing company and learn that their ancestry is more tinctured than they thought – or more pure than they feared. What will be the real-life effect on the self-consciousness of individuals, of how they think of themselves, of who they take themselves to be? In the near future it is as likely to be denial as anything else. The parable of Thomas Jefferson's daughter speaks for itself: only those who want to listen to their genes will do so.

Perhaps one of the first public demonstrations will be political. Imagine a very white-looking Brazilian capitalist turned politician. He wishes to declare himself a man of the people. He sends off his spit and back comes the desired answer: he is more African than Portuguese, with a convenient dollop of Amerindian thrown in. His party blazons these facts across the nation. The opposition repeats to no effect that this hardly distinguishes him from anyone else in Brazil, that he is nothing but a playboy from São Paulo whose grandparents were smart enough to become very rich.

We are experiencing and will continue to experience another feature of this phenomenon. A common objection to the most stringent kind of identity politics is that every human being has many 'identities.' Identity politics was particularly urged on minorities wishing to obtain their due and not only repudiate but also overcome past oppression. A friend of mine, dedicated to a number of struggles, furnishes a poignant example of being a multiple minority. Yes,

she is black and a woman. More importantly, she is a Haitian, born and educated in Montreal. She was a minority even among Haitian Montréalais, for she had received an 'excellent' education at a bourgeois school and did not speak Creole at home. Then she was a francophone working in anglophone Toronto. Among Toronto Caribbeans, she had a hard time as a Haitian by a population that traces its roots mostly from Jamaica and Trinidad. Every single minority status demanded struggle, with allies on one front often not understanding her actions on another.

So much is a familiar story. It also happens that my friend was afflicted, at about age thirty, by a very nasty, little understood, and almost certainly inherited aging disorder, prevalent only among Haitians. It causes very rapid deterioration of the muscles, and not a great deal is known about it. And we are not likely to learn more about it for the simple reason that no one is willing to spend any money on a rare ailment that afflicts a small and mostly poor population. (That could change: New York, Paris, and Montreal have many well-to-do Haitian emigrés; Canada now has a Haitian-Canadian Governor-General.) Here we have a rather startling example of what may prove to be a new genetic identity, being at risk genetically for this disorder. My friend could decide that the pressing battle for her today is not the previous battles, for which she had many allies, but advocacy for those at risk for this disease.

My example may gain a specious plausibility from the fact that the disease appears to affect a subset of an already identifiable group, namely people of Haitian descent. But it is merely a dramatic way to illustrate the formation of new biosocial identities around risk factors, where those who have the fac-

tor are not markedly different in any other way. This is not an individual affair : those at risk often create organizations. And while their initial motivation might be advocacy or support, increasingly we shall have 'making up people' with a vengeance. That is, new kinds of people will come into being, people characterized by a certain risk factor, who band together to create a social group that evolves its own collective characteristics.

Thus far we have considered biology as given. It is not. By now we take for granted the biotechnology of organ transplants. The ways in which we come to regard our body parts as interchangeable is producing a curious reversal of much modern wisdom : body and mind are separating into their Cartesian habitats.[20] In the old days we used only to tattoo, pierce, and bind our body parts. These have been turned into new art forms, witness Orlan in Paris and the Australian performance artist Stelarc. They both use a lot of biotechnology, and their thoughts border on science. Sterlac, who favors extra ears, has lectured the surgeons at the Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. The fate of people who want fewer appendages also seems grotesque. Yet real subcultures of individuals who are unhappy with their legs or other body parts exist.[21] There are more

biosocial groups on earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Sex is an aspect of biology about which there are various kinds of discontent. Likewise, gender. Transsexuals have completed or are undergoing sex-change chemistry and surgery ; transgendered people adopt the lifestyle of the opposite sex without major use of chemicals or surgery. While stories of successful sex-change operations are well known, many misfortunes unfortunately go unpublicized. But these misfortunes are one of the reasons that transgendered people are becoming more common and transsexuals less prominent. There are many variations on these two themes, of which transhumanism is one of the more remarkable.

Last year, I agreed to give a talk for an adult-education series run by a good university department. Its main customers are alert retired people. The format was monthly discussions on the topic of 'the person.' My title was "People and Cyborgs." When I arrived, the organizers were astonished to see a far larger audience than usual. Many of the newcomers were not in their seventies but in their thirties – well-dressed, courteous, but, well, different. The man whose job was to keep the event running smoothly happened to be a gay friend. I thought he might know who the newcomers were. "No idea," he said quietly, "but perhaps they are from the liberal community."

No time for explanation. I began by quoting Francis Fukuyama. He was one of ten intellectuals whom *Foreign Policy*

20 Ian Hacking, "The Cartesian Vision Fulfilled : Analogue Bodies and Digital Minds," *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 30 (2005): 153–166 ; Ian Hacking, "Our Neo-Cartesian Bodies in Parts," *Critical Inquiry*, forthcoming.

21 Carl Elliott introduced amputism to the general reader in "Amputees by Choice," in *Better Than Well : American Medicine Meets the American Dream* (New York : Norton, 2003). For the in-house description of the need to be amputated, see Gregg M. Furth and Robert Smith, *Apotem-*

nophilia : Information, Questions, Answers and Recommendations about Self-Demand Amputation (New York : 1st Books, 2000). Furth is a New York Jungian analyst who does play therapy for terminally ill children. Smith is a Scottish surgeon who has done some self-demand amputations.

had asked which current idea would be most harmful to the world as we know it. He imaginatively answered, "Transhumanism."[22] He was referring to the idea that the human race should use all available technology to improve itself, an idea that has sparked a viable movement institutionalized in many organizations around the world. Fukuyama was his usual prescient self in picking something that few soothsayers would have noticed. Why is it so dangerous? Fukuyama answered in the truest, and best, conservative way. He gave Burkian reasons that one associates with von Hayek, Popper, or Oakeshot (or Fukuyama): don't make big changes; if you must change, change slowly and be sure you know what you are doing.

After quoting Fukuyama, I then asked the people in the room, "What do *you* think is the most dangerous idea around today?" I received the expected answers from people my age: genetically modified food and so forth. Then a young woman said very quietly, "The idea that we should not evolve." I would have said she was an impeccably groomed woman of about thirty, of Chinese ancestry, her accent standard Ontario well-educated. I ought to have been prepared, for I had given a more highbrow talk with a similar theme in Montreal a few weeks earlier. There, a young black man asked me very strong direct questions in standard educated French. I was later told he was an officer in the local transhumanist society.

As the discussion proceeded with various members of the audience, the penny dropped more slowly than it should have. Half the population in this audience already knew all about transhumanism. 'Cyborg' had been my unwit-

ting bait. Moreover, a fair number of them had chosen their identities – in some cases, perhaps only for the day. I, the bland permissive liberal, became more and more uncomfortable. I realized how much I depend on knowing to whom I am speaking. I had no reason to think that the respondent was female, thirty, or Chinese. Yet, I wanted to know 'who' she was – and the same for a number of others.

But they were rejecting that question. Refusing to choose a society or a biology, they were denying in every gesture the very concept of a biosocial identity.

22 "Transhumanism," *Foreign Policy* 144 (September – October 2004): 42 – 43.

Annals by Glenn C. Altschuler

The convictions of Peter Debye

At the time of his death in 1966, Peter Debye was internationally renowned for his work on molecular structure, especially dipole moments (the interaction of a collection of charged particles with an electrical field) and the diffraction of X-rays and electrons in gases. For this work, he won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1936. His name, Debye, is still used as the unit of measurement of a dipole moment.

Born in Maastricht in 1884, Debye was educated at the Aachen Institute of Technology and Munich University, where he received his Ph.D. in physics in 1908. Following appointments at Zurich University, Utrecht University, the University of Göttingen, and the University of Leipzig, Debye (in effect) replaced Albert Einstein as director of the Kaiser Wilhelm (now Max Planck) Institute for Physics in Berlin in 1934, serving until 1939. From 1937–1939, he was also president of the German Physical Society.

In 1939, he left his German positions and shortly afterwards emigrated to the United States, to join the faculty of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, where he taught until 1952. By the time he retired, he had become a colleague respected by many on the Cornell campus, and a mentor to a number of young chemists, many of them now prominent in their fields. He was also a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, elected in 1927.

Given Debye's reputation, the publication in January 2006 of *Einstein in Nederland*, by science writer Sybe Izaak Rispens, came as a shock to academic communities on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

In Chapter Five of the book – and in newspaper articles he wrote to promote it – Rispens charged that Peter Debye, "one of the greatest Dutch scientists of the twentieth century," had contributed to "Hitler's most important military re-

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search program." Acknowledging that Debye was not a member of the Nazi Party, Rispens branded him an "extreme opportunist" and "willing helper of the regime" whose "hands are dirtier than is commonly assumed."[1]

Rispens focused much of his attention on Debye's activities in Berlin. Supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation (made before the Nazis came to power), the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute boasted state-of-the-art research facilities and a staff of first-rate scientists. According to Rispens, Hermann Goering, the second most powerful man in the Third Reich, made sure Debye got all the resources he needed, especially after physicists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman discovered that a 'fission' bomb could release virtually unlimited energy. Debye received a large salary, which reached 40,000 marks in 1939, and a house in Berlin-Dahlem, where he lived with his German-born wife, Mathilde Alberer, and their two children.[2]

Debye retained his Dutch passport throughout the 1930s, Rispens asserts, because he believed that with the Nazis in power a German citizen was less likely to become a Nobel Laureate. Although he declined to formalize his German citizenship, he told physicist Max Planck that he was nonetheless a sturdy German nationalist. Debye made repeated inquiries, Rispens emphasizes,

"about what people in power expected of him."[3] Following the Kristallnacht pogrom against German Jews on November 9 and 10, 1938, he came under pressure to make the German Physical Society conform to Nazi ideology and practices by excluding all non-Aryan members. Debye might have resigned from the organization in protest, as the Dutch-born physicist Samuel Goudsmit had in 1937. Or protested to the Ministry of Education and Culture. Instead, in December, he wrote to members of the society: "Under the compelling overarching circumstances the abiding of Reich-German Jews in the German Physical Society can no longer be maintained in the sense of the Nuremberg Laws. In agreement with the Executive Committee I request all members who fall under this regulation to communicate to me their withdrawal from the Society. Heil Hitler!" Debye's letter may well have been "half-hearted," Rispens writes, but it was "nonetheless effective Aryan cleansing," with about 10 percent of the society's members excluded. And Debye, Rispens notes, often used the odious closing salutation, "Heil Hitler!" in his official correspondence.[4]

After Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, the Nazis brought the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute directly under the control of the war ministry. To remain as director, Debye was told he must become a German citizen. Intent on keeping "all options open," Debye negotiated a leave of absence. Perhaps, Rispens speculates, he thought he might be able to return in six months, after the Germans conquered Europe with their blitzkrieg. In any event, the decision hinged

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1 Sybe I. Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland : Een Intellectuelle Biografie* (Amsterdam : Ambo, 2006), 159 – 184 ; Sybe I. Rispens, "Nobelprijswinnaar met vuile handen," *Vrij Nederland*, January 21, 2006. (Translations from the Dutch by Martijna Briggs, Piet Brouwer, and my dear friend Ben Widom, who also commented incisively on this essay.)

2 Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland*, 176 ; Rispens, "Nobelprijswinnaar."

3 Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland*, 175 ; Rispens, "Nobelprijswinnaar."

4 Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland*, 180.

"least of all on his aversion to the Nazi regime." And although he did not return as director, Debye remained on the payroll of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute until 1943.[5]

Debye left Germany in January 1940, having accepted an invitation to deliver the Baker Lectures in Chemistry at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. When Einstein learned that Debye was headed to Cornell, Rispens suggests, "he did something he had not done before." Instead of arranging employment, as he had for dozens of European refugees, Einstein wrote a letter to J. G. Kirkwood, chairman of the chemistry department, and Cornell President Edmund Ezra Day, which "opened up Debye's baptismal record." A "reliable source," Einstein indicated, had revealed that Debye "maintained close contacts" with the Nazis. Einstein asked Cornell's scientists to do "their duty as American citizens." In the end, Rispens notes, "Cornell did not act against Debye," who received his tenured appointment, became chairman of the department, and retired in 1952 as emeritus professor.[6]

Nonetheless, even as the German armies "trampled over half of Europe," Rispens concludes, Debye still "longed for his research institute." On June 23, 1941, long after the invasion and occupation of the Netherlands, Debye sent a telegram to the General Consulate in Berlin, declaring that he was "always ready and willing to take upon myself again, on the basis of the old conditions, the directorship of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute." For some reason, the telegram "remained unnoticed" and Debye "waited in vain until the end of the war

for an answer to his repeated question, if and when he can return . . . ."[7]

Rispens's case against Debye produced a firestorm in the Netherlands, which, of course, was especially sensitive to the behavior of its citizens during World War II. In February, the universities at Maastricht and Utrecht took action. Maastricht announced it would no longer award a Peter Debye Prize and asked the sponsor, the Edmond Hustinx Foundation, for permission to confer it under a different name. Utrecht deleted Debye's name from its Institute of Physics and Chemistry of Nanomaterials and Interfaces.

In press releases, both universities explained that the action followed verification of Rispens's sources (though not his judgments) by the prestigious Netherlands Institute for War Documentation. Although the administration at Maastricht agreed that "there has been insufficient research to paint a full picture of Debye in Nazi Germany," officials were convinced that Debye "insufficiently resisted the limitations on academic freedom." His behavior was "difficult to reconcile with the example function connected to the naming of a scientific prize." Ludo Koks, a spokesman for Utrecht, agreed that Debye may have been forced to expel Jews from the German Physical Society. Removing his name, he noted, "had quite an emotional impact," generating debate about whether Debye should be disgraced without more definitive information. But "we had to make a decision . . . . When an institute is named after someone, this person has to have the highest reputation."[8]

5 Ibid., 181; Rispens, "Nobelprijswinnaar."

6 Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland,* 182 – 183; Rispens, "Nobelprijswinnaar."

7 Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland,* 183 – 184.

8 Links to the press releases can be found at http://www.deye.uu.nl/. See also Arthur Max, "Universities Strip Nobel Laureate's Name

As the debate raged on in the Netherlands, it reached the United States. The American Chemical Society, which presents a Peter Debye Award in Physical Chemistry, announced it was monitoring "the developing story." The spotlight landed as well on Cornell, which had established a professorship in Debye's name and displayed a bust of him near the main office of the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology. As department members began discussing what action, if any, to take, evidence had already accumulated to warrant a reconsideration of Sybe Rispens's brief against Peter Debye.[9]

Historian Mark Walker has provided an analytical framework for evaluating Debye's actions as chairman of the German Physical Society and director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Physics. The principal concerns of many scientists in Germany in the 1930s, Walker argues, were their professional scientific reputations and relative autonomy to do their work. Some "opposed limited and isolated aspects of National Socialism, supported others, and acquiesced in, or were unaware of, a great many more." Regarding themselves as apolitical, they could be – and often were – opportunistic when faced with political pressure, and often did not fully comprehend the "danger until it was too late." The motivations of these scientists, Walker believes, is less important than what they did. Judging those who neither "resisted nor joined Hitler's movement" but stayed and worked for the government often involves applying shades of gray.

Those who stayed and then left, as Debye did, constitute the hardest cases.[10]

Walker and historian Dieter Hoffmann have also provided the context in which Debye acted as chairman of the German Physical Society. With his Executive Committee demanding a purge of Jewish members, Debye complied, they acknowledge, but in a "relatively gentle and respectful way," eschewing the pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic rhetoric employed, for example, by the chairman of the German Chemical Society, and providing a mechanism for withdrawal rather than expulsion. In doing so, Hoffmann demonstrates, Debye spent some political capital. Wilhelm Othmann, an insurgent in the Society, charged that Debye's first sentence ("Under the compelling overarching circumstances I must regard . . .") "was so formulated that it could be misunderstood." Debye stood his ground by taking responsibility for the wording and asking, as if to highlight the intended ambiguity, that it "be understood in the way that it is meant." Wilhelm Schutz, another young, outspoken Nazi in the Society, claimed that Debye's treatment of "the Jewish question" proved "that for political questions the necessary understanding fails him, as is expected. I strove in vain at that time to bring about a clear statement of the Chairman and thus a definitive solution to the problem." And the news service of the Reich Lecturer Leadership lambasted the leaders of the German Physical Society, who "seem obviously to be very far behind and to hang very much on the dear Jews." Little wonder, then, Hoffmann concludes, that many in

from Honors After Discovery of Nazi Links," *Associated Press Worldstream,* March 3, 2006.

9 William Schulz, "Debye Accused of Collaboration," March 6, 2006, at http:// www. cen-online.org.

10 Mark Walker, *Nazi Science : Myth, Truth, and the German Atomic Bomb* (New York : Plenum Press, 1995), 1 – 4, 269 – 271 ; Mark Walker, *German National Socialism and the Quest for Nuclear Power, 1939 – 1949* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1 – 12, 229 – 233.

the Society sought a new chairman "who corresponded better than Debye to the political profile of the Third Reich."[11]

That Debye ended his letter to Society members with "Heil Hitler!" is not surprising to scholars of National Socialism. In 1933, the Interior Ministry issued detailed instructions about the proper use of 'Hitlergruss' – verbally, physically, and in official communications. Bureaucrats even specified alternatives for those unable to use their right arms. A school custodian, who had mocked the Fuhrer by raising his fist and shouting "Heil Moskau" and "Rotfront," lost his pension, even though he argued that he was drunk at the time. Thus, as long as they were in Germany, civil servants, including professors, used "Heil Hitler!" in work-related correspondence. Even the physicist Max von Laue, an outspoken critic of the regime, used the salutation. To do otherwise was to put one's employment at risk, at the very least.[12]

Debye's letter to the members of the Physical Society came a few months after he helped spirit Lise Meitner, a world-class physicist and an Austrian

Jew well known to the Nazis, out of Germany. After the 'Anschluss' between Germany and Austria in March 1938, Meitner's situation became untenable. She did not have valid travel documents, and Jews were forbidden from transferring funds out of Germany. Nonetheless, on June 6, Debye assured Niels Bohr that there was no great urgency for Meitner to get out.[13] By the end of the month, however, he had joined an effort to get her a position in the Netherlands or Sweden. In Berlin, only Debye, Otto Hahn, Max von Laue, and Paul Rosbaud knew about the secret plan. Debye exchanged coded messages with Dirk Coster, a Dutch physicist who had assisted German Jewish refugees since 1933, about a job for a male "assistant." In early July, Debye invited Coster to stay with his family in Berlin, and "if you were to come rather soon – as if you received an SOS – that would give my wife and me even greater pleasure." A few days later, as the tension mounted, he sent another telegram: "Without answer from Coster. Clarification urgently requested." In mid-July, after spending the night with the Debyes, Coster met Meitner and accompanied her across the border into the Netherlands.[14]

A little more than a year later, Debye negotiated his leave of absence from the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute. Then – and later – he gave as the reason his desire to retain his Dutch citizenship. Thus, Rispens's claim that he was not motivated by an "aversion to the Nazi regime"

11 Dieter Hoffmann and Mark Walker, "The German Physical Society Under National Socialism," *Physics Today* 57 (December 2004): 55; Dieter Hoffmann, "Between Autonomy and Accommodation: The German Physical Society During the Third Reich," *Physics in Perspective* 7 (2005): 302 – 306.

12 Jane Caplan, *Government Without Administration: State and Civil Service in Weimar Germany* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Mark Walker, Presentation to the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., March 23, 2006. As J. L. Heilbron has noted, Debye did cite "the fuhrer principle," which made him a virtual dictator in the laboratories under him, to justify hiring and retaining researchers for their scientific abilities rather than their politics. J. L. Heilbron, *Max Planck and the Fortunes of German Science* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 177.

13 In his treatment of the episode, Rispens underscores Debye's naiveté, obtuseness, and relative indifference to political realities. Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland*, 178 – 180.

14 Ruth Lewin Sime, *Lise Meitner: A Life in Physics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 192 – 193, 200 – 204.

is difficult to evaluate. Family matters, however, surely complicated Debye's situation – and may explain why he did not elaborate on his decision to leave Germany. In July 1939, his son Peter entered the United States on a visitor's visa. When war broke out, Peter decided to remain in the United States. Eventually, he became a student at Cornell. In 1941, Peter married Marian Morrison of Oberlin, Ohio. But Debye's wife, eighteen-year-old daughter, and sister-in-law, all German citizens, did not accompany Debye to the United States, perhaps because he had not yet secured a permanent position there. They received his salary while he was on leave and lived in the director's house.

When President Day offered Debye a tenured position, his wife used the Dutch passport she had obtained in 1939 to travel to Switzerland, where she remained from June to October 1940, waiting for a U.S. immigration visa. Day and Karl Compton, president of MIT, interceded to overcome State Department objections to aiding a German national, and she rejoined her husband in Ithaca in January 1941. The Debyes' daughter, also named Mathilde, did not accompany her. By then, she had a German boyfriend, Gerhard Saxinger, whom she married in 1942. The couple had their first child in August 1942. Family lore has it that Mrs. Debye tried without success to secure a German exit visa for Mathilde, but it is also possible that the young woman did not want to leave. She stayed in Berlin, as did her aunt, until the end of the war.[15]

An FBI investigation of Debye in 1940, initiated at the request of the National Defense Research Committee (NDRC), sheds more light on the warning Einstein sent to Cornell. According to the agent who interviewed him, Einstein indicated that he knew Debye well enough not to trust him on matters unrelated to science. Debye was extraordinarily intelligent, shrewd, versatile, and "knows what to do to obtain immediate and personal advancement." Einstein believed Debye had not helped Jewish colleagues "in securing positions elsewhere."

But then Einstein hedged. He acknowledged that "he has never heard anything wrong concerning Debye" and did not believe Debye had done work for the military in Germany. Debye "may be all right," but if his "motives are bad he is a very dangerous man." Einstein suggested that the United States government ascertain whether Debye had severed all relations with German officials before sharing military secrets with him. But "now that he knows that Debye has a son with him in the United States perhaps Debye does not intend to return to Germany."[16]

Other scientists interviewed by the FBI evinced varying degrees of confi-

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munication to Glenn Altschuler, April 14, 2006.

15 Nordulf Debye, "Peter Debye Chronology," personal communication to Glenn Altschuler, April 23, 2006. The family believes that while Mathilde was in Switzerland, the Nazis tried to lure Debye to a scientific meeting in Europe, but "sensing an attempt to recapture him," Debye demurred. Nordulf Debye, personal com-

16 Interagency Working Group of the Military Records Section, Declassified Records, Record Group 319, Army Staff, IRR Personnel Files, File X1107206, FBI Report 77–148, September 14, 1940 (in U.S. National Archives II, College Park, Md.). On June 19, 1940, Einstein wrote to Professor Kirkwood, chairman of the Chemistry Department, "I did not know what to do with that letter, throw it in the paper basket or forward it. I forwarded it." Cited in Gijs van Ginkel, "Debye and the Trustworthiness of Sybe Rispens," personal communication to Glenn Altschuler and others.

dence or skepticism about Debye. Debye defenders, including Compton, Charles Smythe of Princeton, and George Scatchard of MIT, asserted that "his family in Germany could be in liability" and that, even so, they had heard him say Germany was "the enemy." And no hard evidence against Debye surfaced. Even Samuel Goudsmit, the Dutch physicist who had triggered the NDRC inquiry by charging that Debye might be in Ithaca working on gases for the Nazis, indicated that his concern "has no basis in fact."[17]

Despite the FBI investigation, Debye's situation in the United States was relatively secure by the end of 1940. He assured Einstein that he had had no contact with any German official and had decided "that in no case do I want to return to Germany."[18] Why, then, did he send a telegram in 1941, offering to take up his post at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute? Debye's telegram, according to his defenders, has not turned up in the archives, as per Rispens's citation. Other documents refer to it, however, so, although we cannot be certain precisely what Debye said, it seems likely he communicated with the Nazis about the possibility of returning to Berlin.[19]

Debye's leave of absence was scheduled to expire at the end of April 1941. Debye may have believed that by appearing to keep open the option of returning, he could extend his leave and secure the sustenance and safety of his daughter and sister-in-law. If this was his aim, he succeeded. His request was approved. In August 1941, two months later, Debye filed official papers of his intention to become a citizen of the United States, thus beginning the mandatory five-year waiting period.[20] Other than the telegram, no evidence has surfaced that Debye considered leaving the United States at any time during the war.

Debye made substantial contributions to the Allied military effort throughout the war. In his authoritative history, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, Richard Rhodes points out that the letter sent to President Roosevelt by Einstein and fellow physicist Leo Szilard, which was the catalyst of the Manhattan Project, reviewed the state of uranium research in Germany, "about which they had learned from the physical chemist Peter Debye."[21]

In 1942 Bell Telephone Laboratories recruited Debye to assist on war-related research. Since he was still a Dutch citizen and had not received a security clearance from the Navy, Debye was accompanied by a uniformed policeman to all "sensitive areas." An expert in solid-state chemistry and materials science, with a special interest in the emerging field of polymers, Debye played an important role in the development of synthetic rubber to replace the Hevea sources of natural rubber then controlled by Japan. He designed a method

17 Interagency Working Group of the Military Records Section, Declassified Records, Record Group 319, Army Staff, IRR Personnel Files, File X1107206, FBI Report 77-148, November 23, 1940; FBI Report 62-745, October 24, 1940; FBI Report 62-1132, September 27, 1940. Most of his critics deemed Debye mercenary. According to H. B. G. Casimir, the average physicist, Debye's contemporaries joked, was paid in milli-Debyes. See H. B. G. Casimir, *Haphazard Reality: Half a Century of Science* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 197.

18 Rispens, *Einstein in Nederland*, 182.

19 Van Ginkel, "Debye and the Trustworthiness of Sybe Rispens."

20 Nordulf Debye, "Peter Debye Chronology."

21 Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986), 331–332.

to determine the precise molecular weight of the polymers, and evaluated existing theories of high elasticity and explanations of stress-strain curves for rubbery substances. Debye's understanding of the behavior of dielectrics and ferroelectrics, such as electrical-filter elements, also helped improve Allied radar systems.[22]

Debye's defenders claim that it is difficult to reconcile these actions with the man portrayed in Sybe Rispens's book. To be sure, questions about the personal convictions of Peter Debye persist. What did he really think of Nazism? Did he have qualms about serving the Third Reich – and if so, when did they surface? Why didn't he accept the offer of a professorship at the University of Amsterdam extended to him in 1938? Would he have taken a leave from the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute if it had not come under the control of the war ministry? Would he have done war-related work for the Nazis if they had allowed him to retain his Dutch citizenship?

Despite these questions, it seems clear that the convictions of Debye by the universities at Maastricht and Utrecht were premature. *Einstein in Nederland* is, at best, a flawed book, with important information omitted, taken out of context, and perhaps even distorted. Martinus Veltman, the distinguished scientist who wrote the preface for Rispens's book, has had second thoughts and asked that it be removed from new editions and translations.[23] For these reasons, "based on the information, evidence and historical record known to date," the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Cornell University decided in May 2006 that any action to dissociate Debye's name from the department was unwarranted.[24]

The case of Peter Debye, of course, is not yet closed.[25] The Dutch Institute for War Documentation has undertaken a thorough evaluation, and biographies of Debye are likely to become a cottage industry in the Netherlands, and perhaps in the United States as well. Chemists at Cornell promise to monitor all reviews and revisions closely. And so should the rest of us, for the role of scientists in the Third Reich is fascinating, disturbing, and instructive, illuminating moral and political choices in the service of the State.

24 The statement by the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology will be published in *Chemical and Engineering News*.

25 A resident of Debijeweg, a street in Rotterdam, asked that the name be changed in the wake of Rispens's book. The request was denied, according to F. Cossee-de Wijs, deputy secretary of the Rotterdam Committee of Advice Concerning Streetnames: "A basic rule in the Rotterdam way of giving street names is: once named never changed. This is to prevent decisions following 'delusions of the day.'" See F. Cossee-de Wijs, personal communication to Nordulf Debye, June 7, 2006. More importantly, the administrators at the University of Utrecht have suppressed a booklet prepared by Gijs van Ginkel, the director of the former Debye Institute at the University of Utrecht, which defends Debye and criticizes the University's decision to change the name of the Institute. Copies in circulation have been recalled. The Institute's director and the University have agreed that the parts of the booklet containing an analysis of Rispens's allegations will be published at a later date. See "New Case of Censorship in Utrecht," *De Volkskrant*, June 20, 2006; and Martin Enserink, "Blocking a Book, Dutch University Rekindles Furor Over Nobelist Debye," *Science* 312 (June 30, 2006): 1858.

22 W. O. Milligan, ed., *American Chemistry: Bicentennial*, Proceedings of the Robert A. Welch Conferences on Chemical Research, vol. 20 (Houston: Robert A. Welch Foundation, 1977), 154–200.

23 M. Veltman, personal communication to board of directors and employees of the Debye Institute of Utrecht University, May 5, 2006.

Poem by Kevin Carrizo di Camillo

Were All There
for Geoffrey Hill

The seller of used-cars, his cigar
Noisome, quasi-Cuban; the nuncio
In his scrim of pallium: didn't cough.
The neverseen neighbour (gay?)
Who stopped to say he was "sorry".
Monsignor-the-trencherman
& his Romanic subdeacons with
Collection nets on poles, horizontal
Gondoliers with monstrous patens.
The Smiths, wizards, women; Children
Cursed by the undertaker & his
Stained presence; Keeners; Common
& Collect; The old friend
With his index cards (too large)
Ready to play apologist.
The rest of it.

Kevin Carrizo di Camillo is editor at Paulist Press and former poetry editor of "Traffic East." The author of "Occasionally Yours (& Others)" (1999), a book of poetry, he has published poems in numerous publications, including the "National Poetry Review," "James Joyce Quarterly," "The Notre Dame Review," and "America," for which he was awarded the Foley Poetry Prize. He is also the co-editor of "John Paul II in the Holy Land 2000" (with Rev. Lawrence Boadt, C.S.P., 2005).

Fiction by Ariel Dorfman

Stew

"Your husband is still alive."

It was not familiar, the rasping voice of that man, not familiar at all, no matter how much I searched for something, anything, that would let me trust him, believe what the stranger on the other side of the phone was saying, that he really knew my husband was not dead. Proof, I wanted proof, wanted to ask where, when, how, friend, foe, near, far.

Instead, serenely:

"Bless you, if what you say is true."

"Of course it's true. Last night, I saw your husband just last night. We shared

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a cell together, he asked me to call you, gave me your name."

Behind me, the children began to cry. Why did they begin to cry just then? Were they warning me to be careful? Were they catching something from the strangled breathless language of my body as I held the phone too close to my ear, the slim slope of my body that he loved to touch and slender downwards with his hands, my man, my man, my body now so abruptly rigid that it scared the children? Or were they crying because they were hungry, set off by the smallest one, she who never saw her father, who does not even know there is such a thing as a father, hungry for my milk as I stifled my words into the phone, hungry for the hands of a father to soothe her when there is no milk, when the lights sputter off in the night and the bombs fall nearby and my breasts are sour.

"He is well, you are telling me that my husband is well?"

And the response was what I expected and is not, can never be what I expect, the response from that rasp, that voice that has coughed too much, perhaps from too many cigarettes, perhaps, perhaps from too many screams wrenched from that throat: "Nobody can be said

Fiction by Ariel Dorfman

to be well in that place, that wet hole out of hell – that place is so dark, so dark I don't even know what your husband's face looks like, what he is wearing, I could not describe him to you if you asked – but do not ask, do not ask. Be glad he is alive and do not ask anything else."

"All I'm asking is that he come home." And then I add, so this man on the phone doesn't get any wrong ideas, heading off this man and his rasp, just in case, just in case this time this one also has plans, I blurt out: "We need him so much, my husband. Since they came for him, we haven't had any income, not a penny, only a package every week from his old mother – " and I stress that word **old**. That word **mother**. Draw both words out, accentuate them, see if that moves this one, the man on the other side of the line, move him to pity, understand that we are like orphans, we have nothing to tender, nothing that he can squeeze out of us, out of me –

Have I made a mistake? Did I speak too soon of what we lack, of our destitution, am I frightening him away?

Because now the man interrupts me.

"I'm in a hurry," the man says, suddenly impatient, and there is a coldness in his voice that was not there before. As if he resents my implication that he expects recompense, he is angry that I am poisoning his act of kindness. "I can't talk much longer. They said if I called anyone, if I told anyone about this, anything, they would come for me again. We know you, we know where you live, we know where your brother lives, your mother, my mother is also old. So I will call you again soon. Goodbye."

Now I don't lose a second wondering what to say. Now I whisper out urgently:

"Wait, wait – "

Just that, wait, wait.

And he manages to shred out a few more words, grind them into my ears:

"I will tell you more next time," that is what he says.

"Wait, wait!"

And then the phone goes dead before I can add: "Tell me where he is, how to get him out, why they took him, I will do anything to bring him back alive."

I will do anything, anything, to bring him back alive.

What I said to the other one, the other time, the last time, when the phone rang two months ago and another voice, without a rasp that voice, like honey that voice saying my husband was alive, still alive. And then added I **will tell you more later**, asked for money, asked me to bring the money to the corner of that street and **also some of that stew you fix, your husband says you cook great stew, woman**, and how to recognize him, **you'll recognize me, I will be smoking and I am a big man, a large man, you won't have any trouble recognizing me**. And two days and ten hours later I watched him, that other man back then, count the bills under the streetlamp, lick his thumb each time to make sure he had not missed a bill and then, **it is not enough**, he said as I knew he would, **not enough, if I am to risk my life getting your husband free, bribing the guards, I will need more, much more than this**. And then he tasted the stew, I saw his fingers go into the pot and come out with a chunk of meat and **oh yes, oh yes, this is as good as I was told, but still, still not enough**. And he knew, that man under the big hulk of his shoulders, those delicate bones of his holding up the enormous weight of his flesh, he knew and I knew that this was not the end of it. I had told him that I would do anything, anything, to bring the father of my children back alive, I had made that mistake. I knew,

even when we parted later that night and he swore he would call again with his voice still like honey, I knew I would never hear from him again.

And now? What now?

Now two months later I wait with the phone in my hand and behind me the children, all three of them quiet, and it is worse than when they cried and the dead buzz of the dead phone is more familiar than the voice that just said goodbye, I already miss the recent rasp of that voice, the flash of a promise in his throat that may have screamed too much in the dark, **I will tell you more, I'll call you again**. Did he say that? **I will call you again**?

What if he's dialing my number right now? Forgot one last thing? Is ready to provide proof that my husband is really still alive? What if the other one, the man with the honey voice and the big hands under the streetlamp, is dialing my number right now?

But I don't let the phone go. As soon as I let the phone coil and snarl back to where it was before this latest call, I know that as soon as I force the receiver back into its cradle, that's it, that will be it, there will be nothing to do with my body except sit here, park my body here, and then it will be dawn and then another day and then the next week and the month after that, waiting, waiting, waiting for the next call, this man of the rasp or that man of the voice like honey or another man, another man with whatever voice his mother offered him as a gift the moonless night he was born, someone, anyone with news, anyone to ask if my husband is still wearing the same shirt he was wearing the day they took him, did they uncover his head soon, don't they realize he's asthmatic, can't breathe well under that rough dark bag they tied around his beautiful face, hid away his beautiful curly hair, someone to ask who sews his buttons, is he hungry, is he hungry for the meat I will prepare for him when he comes back, succulent and juicy and slightly sweet, does he know the child was a girl, does he know he has a daughter, someone, anyone to ask, anyone to say yes to, yes, yes, I will do anything, anything, anything to bring back alive the love of my life.

Anything, anything.

The phone is still in my hand and the baby has started to cry.

I put the receiver back, I put the receiver back again and wait for the next call.

Michael Cook

on Islam & compara-tive intellectual history

Last June I participated in a very unusual assignment at the International Institute for Asian Studies in Leiden. Our task was to compare the intellectual histories of the three major non-Western literate traditions in the early modern period – alias the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, for those who find the term 'modern' tendentious in such a context. In addition to conceiving the idea and convening the class, Sheldon Pollock, a Sanskritist at Columbia, was the primary representative of the Hindu tradition. Benjamin Elman, a historian of East Asia at Princeton, performed the same role for the Chinese tradition. My corner of the field was the Islamic world. In addition, Peter Burke was there to provide

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the perspective of a Europeanist, and several younger scholars helped us out in a number of ways.

Here is the general issue we addressed, even if we never came very close to resolving it. All three intellectual traditions were profoundly conservative, in the sense that they were strongly inclined to locate authority and virtue in the past. Yet during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries all three were exposed to the initial stages of a development very different from any they had experienced before: the emergence of the modern world, which was eventually to end the intellectual autonomy of each of these traditions. In the meantime, did these new circumstances generate any significant convergences among the three traditions?

Against this background, the theme of attitudes to intellectual innovation naturally caught our comparative interest. In this brief space, I will attempt a quick sketch of these attitudes as they appeared in the Islamic world, followed by some bold – not to say crude – comparative observations.

The Islamic world of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries had a strongly conservative orientation toward intellectual innovation. Of course, every culture has to balance innovation and conservation. Most innovations are bad because they are maladaptive; but since a few of them turn out well, absence of innovation in a culture is also maladaptive. The question is where the balance is to be struck, and in the Islamic case the answer was well toward the conservative end of the spectrum.

One illustration of this conservative attitude involves a peculiar feature of early mosques in the western Islamic world: their tendency to face south rather than toward Mecca. Nobody knows

why this is. But would you really want
to demolish these ancient mosques and
rebuild them with a Meccan orienta-
tion? This may sound like a rhetorical
question, but at one point in the middle
of the sixteenth century it threatened
to become more. An irritating Libyan
scholar, Tajuri, wrote to the ruler of the
Moroccan city of Fez, denouncing the
orientation of the local mosques and
calling on him to reconstruct them.

The scholars of Fez did not appreciate
Tajuri's meddling in their city's affairs,
and one of them wrote to refute his Lib-
yan colleague. Of his various arguments,
one of the most crushing was that the
orientation of the mosques had been
fixed in the second Islamic century, a
time of excellence and virtue. How then
could the judgment of that epoch be
challenged by that of the tenth Islamic
century, so full of evil and ignorance?
Who was this presumptuous Libyan to
say that everyone before him – those
who had fixed the orientation of the
mosques and those who had accepted
it without protest – had been in error?

The sense of easy victory that went
with this mid-sixteenth-century letter's
resoundingly conservative sentiment is
telling. Equally indicative is an example
from the middle of the eighteenth. The
Islamic world of the 1740s was riled by
the startling pronouncements of a cer-
tain Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab,
a denizen of the eastern Arabian desert
and the eponymous founder of Wah-
habism. He claimed to know something
none of his teachers had known: the
meaning of the confession, "There is no
god but God."

Denunciations of the man and his
views came thick and fast. A scholar liv-
ing in the same region of Arabia wrote to
warn his colleagues that "there has ap-
peared in our land an innovator." Once
he had labeled Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab an

"innovator," the way was open to de-
nounce him as "ignorant, misguiding,
misguided, devoid of learning or piety,"
the purveyor of "scandalous and dis-
graceful things." Likewise, an Egyptian
opponent of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, writ-
ing in 1743, asked rhetorically how it
could be permissible for someone in
this age of ignorance to discard the
views of earlier scholars and draw his
own inferences from the revealed texts.
"It is clear," he wrote, "that good – all
of it – lies in following those who went
before, and evil – all of it – lies in the in-
novations of those who come later."

In short, innovators faced an uphill
struggle against an easy and powerful
conservative rhetoric. Not that Tajuri
and Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab would have
described themselves as innovators;
in their own view they were merely re-
asserting norms that divine revelation
had established long ago.

But not all innovative thinkers were
so self-effacing. For example, the seven-
teenth-century Moroccan scholar Yusi,
in the conclusion of one of his works,
explains that the reader should not be
put off by the unfamiliarity of some
of the terms and distinctions he uses.
The reader should understand that Yu-
si is not the kind of scholar who mere-
ly stitches together what his predeces-
sors have said. In the good old days such
copycat scholars were not taken seri-
ously, but the corruption of our age has
changed that. Yusi goes on to tell us that
the scholars he competes with – those he
regards as his peers – are the great names
of earlier epochs, men like the eleventh-
century Ghazzali and the fourteenth-
century Taftazani. Even then, he empha-
sizes, he only quotes what they say when
he thinks they have it right. Yusi, then, is
quite prepared to struggle uphill, though
at the same time well aware of the pun-
ishing gradient.

Note by Michael Cook

Another example is the eighteenth-century Yemeni scholar Ibn al-Amir. His goal was to show that even in his own time a qualified scholar could judge for himself the reliability of a tradition from the Prophet based on the standing of those who had transmitted it in the early Islamic period. He argues his position nicely: the increasingly sophisticated presentation of the relevant data in the biographical literature compiled over the centuries has made it easier, not harder, for us to make such judgments than it was for our predecessors. Yet he too recognizes the gradient he faces: most scholars of the four recognized Sunni schools of legal doctrine, he tells us, have been very harsh in condemning any claim to independent judgment on the part of their colleagues.

A strong conservative default thus characterized the Islamic world's view of intellectual innovation. Nonetheless, individual scholars who were sufficiently determined could override it. Moreover, these scholars were not necessarily mavericks: both Yusi and Ibn al-Amir received ample respect from posterity.

What then of whole new movements? Here, comparison becomes intriguing and perhaps even rewarding. Let me start by noting two things that we do *not* find in the Islamic world.

The emergence of a school of 'New Logic' (Navyanyaya) is a striking, but by no means isolated, phenomenon in India during the early modern period. What interests us here is not the school's logic but its proud affirmation of its own novelty. Within the mainstream scholarly culture of Islam at this time, such a self-designation would have been tantamount to a badge of dishonor. Not surprisingly, we have no parallel to the New Logic on the Islamic side of the fence.

Turning to China in this period, we find a new and probing brand of philological research transforming the face of scholarship. Now the Muslim world does possess a long tradition of exact scholarship – the kind that accurately identifies textual minutiae and preserves them through the centuries. But the remarkable feature of Chinese philology in this period was its use of such minutiae to reach innovative and persuasive historical conclusions, in very much the same way that modern Western scholarship sometimes does. This is why even present-day students of ancient Chinese texts frequently acknowledge the research and conclusions of Chinese scholars writing well before European philological methods had begun to influence the indigenous culture. In contrast, no one cites the Muslim scholars of the early modern period in this way. The closest parallel on the Islamic side would be Wilferd Madelung's acknowledgment of the part played by the fourteenth-century Damascene scholar Ibn Taymiyya in recovering the original sense of the doctrine of the 'uncreatedness' of the Koran. But most of what Ibn Taymiyya wrote, whatever its intellectual brilliance, was not philology of this kind. So here, too, we draw a blank.

Now for what we do find. The single most arresting movement in the Islamic world of the day was undoubtedly Wahhabism. Whether or not we concede its humble pretension to be nothing but a reaffirmation of the Prophet Muhammad's monotheistic message, it represented a clear break with the immediate past: Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab claimed, after all, to know what none of his teachers had known. Moreover, the significance of Wahhabism was not just intellectual; it was also political and military, for it provided the banner under which a new state and a new order arose in eastern

Arabia. But at the end of the period that concerns us the movement was still a geographically marginal one: the scattered oases of Najd were hardly the Middle Eastern equivalent of the Gangetic plain or the Yangtze delta. And beyond the frontiers of the Saudi state, the views of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab found little favor with the scholars of the day.

Nonetheless, the rise of Wahhabism was arguably an example of a wider trend, a 'return to the sources' that was perceptible in other regions of the eighteenth-century Islamic world. The sources were the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet, in contradistinction to the doctrines of the four schools to which the Yemeni Ibn al-Amir had referred. Ibn al-Amir is in fact a good example of this trend. Another is his contemporary Shah Wali Allah of Delhi, who saw himself as laying a new foundation for Islamic jurisprudence, characterized by knowledge that no one before him had demonstrated so well (he mentions a distinguished thirteenth-century scholar as having "failed to realize even a hundredth part of this learning"). His idea was to unite the two legal schools with which he was familiar in the eastern Islamic world, and then to test their doctrines against the traditions of the Prophet, discarding anything that went against them. This was not an entirely new ambition, but it was a grand one – and unsurprisingly it went nowhere in his time.

So the period ends with a commotion in the backlands and a sprinkling of individual thinkers elsewhere. Now add the wisdom of hindsight. Over the last two centuries, as the Islamic world has come under the relentless pressure of a global culture of Western origin, the ideas of such thinkers have come to constitute the backbone of its intellectual resistance. Ultimately, the New Logic of the

Hindus contributed nothing to the Hindu revivalism of our times, and Chinese philology did more to subvert the classics than to reinstate them. Nobody in Washington has the slightest interest in either of these movements. But the return to the foundations that was stirring in eighteenth-century Islam is central to its contentious role in the world today.

Daniel G. Nocera

on the future of global energy

Energy is the greatest concern of our future. The rising living standards of a growing world population will increase global energy consumption dramatically over the next half century. The challenge for science, and particularly for the discipline of chemistry, is to meet this energy need in a secure, sustainable, and environmentally responsible way. This essay will frame the magnitude of the problem, show the insufficiency of conventional energy sources to meet these needs, and pose an alternative solution.

By 2002, the global population burned energy at a rate of 13.5 TW. (One TW equals 10^{12} watts, or 10^{12} joules per second. This unit is convenient because it

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normalizes energy use per unit of time.) In the next forty-five years, this burn rate will rise with alarming alacrity. To gain a sense of the scope of the problem, we can perform a simple but powerful analysis: we can multiply a country's TW consumption per person by the projected global population of 9 billion people for the year 2050 (see table 1). For example, if 9 billion people adopt the current standard of living for a U.S. resident (which takes 1.1361×10^{-8} TW of energy to sustain), the world will need an astronomical 102 TW of energy in 2050.

The next three entries – China, India, and Africa – are cause for concern. These countries – and, in one case, an entire continent – have very low per-capita energy use but possess the largest populations on our planet. Since energy consumption scales directly with a country's GDP, global energy use will increase drastically as China, India, and Africa modernize.

So how much energy will the world need in 2050? It depends. If everyone adopts Equatorial Guinea's current living standards, we will need 30.4 TW by 2050. Or in the case of Samoa's, we will need 35.7 TW. Both are well below what we will use if everyone in the world consumes energy at North America's (84.1 TW) or Western Europe's (45.4 TW) current rates. Conservative estimates of energy use place our global energy need at 28 – 35 TW in 2050.

Even with extreme conservation measures (maintaining a 102 TW standard of living with only 28 – 35 TW of energy available will require conservation measures that are far beyond the human experience), we will still need an additional 15 – 22 TW of energy over our current global base of 13.5 TW. If this sounds simple to achieve, then consider the total amounts of possible energy from the following sources (all figures come from

Table 1
World per-capita energy use in 2003 and projections of future energy use based on current consumption of various countries.

Country	Energy use (TW) per person	Population in 2003	Energy use by country (TW) for 2003	Projected energy need (TW) for entire global population (9 billion) in year 2050 based on individual country's energy use in 2003
United States	1.1361×10^{-8}	290,342,554	3.3	102.2
China	0.1166×10^{-8}	1,286,975,468	1.5	10.5
India	0.0440×10^{-8}	1,049,700,118	0.46	4.0
Africa	0.0524×10^{-8}	856,082,181	0.45	4.7
Malaysia	0.3167×10^{-8}	23,092,940	0.073	28.5
Poland	0.3159×10^{-8}	38,622,660	0.12	28.4
Equatorial Guinea	0.3375×10^{-8}	510,473	0.00172	30.4
Samoa	0.3971×10^{-8}	70,260	0.000279	35.7
Western Europe	0.5049×10^{-8}	483,912,045	2.44	45.4
North America	0.9349×10^{-8}	427,585,501	4.00	84.1

Note: Data taken from the U.S. Department of Energy website: www.eia.doe.gov/iea/.

the World Energy Assessment, http://www.undp.org/seed/eap/activities/wea/; a more comprehensive presentation of these numbers can be found on http://nsl.caltech.edu/energy.html):

- From *biomass*, 7–10 TW: This is the maximum amount of biomass energy available from the agricultural landmass of the planet, which excludes the area needed to house a population of 9 billion. Obtaining this quantity would require harvesting all crops exclusively for energy.

- From *nuclear*, 8 TW: Delivering this TW-value with nuclear energy would take the construction of eight thousand new nuclear-power plants. In other words, over the next forty-five years, we would have to construct one new nuclear-power plant every two days.

- From *wind*, 2.1 TW: We could only gather this amount of energy from wind by saturating all global landmass in class 3 and greater with windmills.

('Class' refers to an area's wind-energy potential: a class-3 area has winds of 5.1 meters per second at 10 meters above the ground, the minimum necessary for sustainable energy generation.)

- From *hydroelectric*, 0.7–2.0 TW: We could achieve this supply of hydroelectric energy by placing dams in all remaining rivers on the earth.

These scenarios are meant to illustrate the scale of the energy problem that confronts our global community. They assume no new advances in science and technology, e.g., the design of new reactor cores or genetically engineered biomass. And in some cases, they are restrictive, e.g., most potential wind energy is over the ocean surface and not land. The point is that, even under the untenable circumstances outlined above, we can barely attain the necessary energy supply for 2050.

The message is clear. The additional energy we need by 2050, over the current 13.5 TW base, is simply not attainable

*Note by
Daniel G.
Nocera*

from long-discussed sources – the global appetite for energy is simply too great. We could use more coal, oil, and gas. However, rising energy costs, energy security, and, perhaps most urgently, concerns for the environment, provide the drivers to take energy exploration from the oil fields to the laboratory bench. There, a carbon-neutral, renewable energy source must be discovered.

The principal environmental problem with the continued use of fossil fuels to supply the growing energy demand is the release of CO_2 into the atmosphere. Atmospheric CO_2 concentration during the last century has risen monotonically. Moreover, detailed analysis of the relative abundance of carbon isotopes confirms that this observed CO_2 increase is the result of burning fossil fuels. The current CO_2 concentration of 370 parts per million (ppm) is unparalleled in the last six hundred fifty thousand years, with CO_2 levels ranging from 210 – 300 ppm until now. Unfortunately, atmospheric CO_2 concentration will likely double, even triple, within the twenty-first century. While we cannot predict the consequences of this increase precisely, there is no question that we are perturbing the planet on an unprecedented scale. The effects of our actions on the earth are unarguably serious, but hopefully not catastrophic. It is thus imperative that the global community moves as quickly as possible to carbon-neutral energy sources.

Of the possible sustainable carbon-neutral energy sources, sunlight is pre-eminent. More solar energy strikes the Earth's surface in one hour of each day than the energy used by all human activities in one year. If we could only mimic photosynthesis outside of the leaf – i.e., an artificial photosynthesis – then we could harness the sun's energy as a fuel. Such a process would combine water and sunlight to produce hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen would then be combined with the oxygen in a fuel cell to give back water and energy. In the overall cycle, sunlight and water are converted to useful energy in the form of the fuels hydrogen and oxygen.

But there's a catch. Using water and sunlight to make a clean, sustainable fuel to power the planet is a daunting endeavor, as we must uncover large expanses of fundamental molecular science in order to enable light-based energy-conversion schemes.

To emulate photosynthesis, we must be able to capture sunlight and relay it to catalysts that then act on water to rearrange its bonds and make the chemical fuel, hydrogen, and its by-product, oxygen. In designing these hydrogen- and oxygen-producing catalysts, we must take the following into consideration: The overall water-splitting reaction is a multielectron process, involving a total of four electrons. The development of a quantitative, predictive model describing single-electron reactions was a milestone achievement in chemistry in the last half-century. A similar understanding of multielectron reactions, however, has yet to be realized. Moreover, the transfer of four protons must accompany electron transfer – so we need to learn how to manage both electrons and protons. Finally, whereas chemists know how to catalytically rearrange energy-rich (i.e., reactive) bonds, we have yet to develop efficient bond-making/breaking reactions on energy-poor (i.e., stable) substrates such as water.

Scientists are currently working in each of those areas to advance the science of renewable energy at the molecular level. Some of the latest advances include discovering guidelines for the rational design of multielectron reactions and uncovering proton-coupled

electron transfer (PCET) as a field of
study at a mechanistic level. With the
frameworks of multielectron chemistry
and PCET in place, catalysts that can pro-
duce hydrogen and oxygen have been
created. Though these are not yet ready
for practical use, this will come in time
with molecular reengineering. In any
case, the development of these catalysts
and the studies of their reactivity are re-
vealing the principles needed to simulate
photosynthesis.

The creation of solar-produced fuels
is only part, albeit a significant one, of
developing a reliable solar-based tech-
nology. A U.S. Department of Energy re-
port on a Solar Energy Utilization work-
shop (http://www.sc.doe.gov/bes/re-
ports/files/SEU_rpt.pdf) identifies a
number of other basic-science needs:
new photovoltaics to capture solar ener-
gy efficiently and relay it to the catalysts;
new materials for safe storage of hydro-
gen and other fuels; the activation of
other small molecules of energy conse-
quence such as CO_2; and an understand-
ing of reactions of energy consequence
at interfaces and at surfaces. Ultimately,
the advancement of solar-energy tech-
nology depends on the implementation
of basic-science discoveries, which re-
quire effective, responsible public-man-
agement and economic/social-science
policies throughout the entire innova-
tion cycle.

Clearly, the greatest crisis confront-
ing us in the twenty-first century is the
rapidly growing demand for energy. Be-
cause the chemical bond, and the manip-
ulation of the energy within, lies at the
heart of this endeavor, chemistry will
likely play the most central role of all the
sciences. What chemists do in the com-
ing decades will determine whether or
not we will bequeath to our planet the
gift of the sun as its source of energy.

Inside back cover: Indigenous women, in San Andrés, Chiapas, in 1995 – the sign says "Women are not animals; we also have rights and dignities to defend" – demonstrating support for the peace accord between the Mexican government and the Zapatista movement, in which the state for the first time acknowledged the 'autonomy' of indigenous peoples and their 'right to self-determination.' See Courtney Jung on *Why liberals should value 'identity politics,'* pages 32 – 39: "The emergence of new political identities should . . . be presumed to signal some shortcoming of the democratic system," functioning like a miner's canary "– a warning that the poisonous gases of entrenched power threaten the health of our democratic society." Photograph © Thomas Hoepker and Magnum Photos.

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