Columbia Business School, Management Division

Perspectives on Authenticity
PhD Seminar, Spring 2017

Instructor: Sheena S. Iyengar
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Class Time:
Thurs. 9AM – 12:15PM

Course Description:

This course offers an interdisciplinary consideration of the question of authenticity; what is it? why does it matter? how is it understood in terms of the self and society? In this semester long doctorate seminar, we will meet once a week to debate and discuss readings from diverse fields such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, history, biology, and more. Students can expect to leave the course with a thorough knowledge of the literature related to the issue of authenticity and sharpened theoretical understandings of the self and other related concepts.

Course Requirements:

1. Class participation, 50%: Before each class students will be required to submit a one page response to the week’s readings. These responses should critically engage with the author’s argument, sources, and interpretive decisions, thereby establishing an agenda for our discussion. Students should also come to class with ideas and questions to spur fruitful discussions.

2. Final Paper, 50%: The final assignment (20-25 pages) calls on you to write a research or theoretical paper based on a topic related to the course.

Course Policies:

1. Attendance and Absences: Given the importance of discussion to the success of the course, it is imperative to attend each session and to arrive on time. All absences, except those due to a medical emergency, University-sponsored activity, or religious holiday, will negatively impact your participation grade, as will excessive tardiness.

2. Written Work: The essays that you submit for this course will be evaluated according to the cogency of your argument, your handling of evidence, and the quality of your writing.
Course Readings:

All books for the course are available through Columbia Course Reserves. When only certain chapters from required books are assigned, those chapters as well as any articles will be distributed electronically.

Schedule of Readings:

** = Supplementary Material. This is not required reading for each session though it is highly encouraged that you explore it independently.

Session 1:
**What is Authenticity? Introduction and Historical Perspective**

1/26


**Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity.*
**Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*
**Jacob Golomb, *In Search of Authenticity: Existentialism from Kierkegaard to Camus.*
**Marshall Bermann, *The Politics of Authenticity*

Session 2:
**The Self in Psychological Perspective**

02/02


Erik Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed*, Ch. 3

**William James, “The Energies of Men”
**Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*

Session 3:
**The Self in Psychological Perspective (Continued)**

02/09

Kennon Sheldon, “The Self Concordance Model.”

Gregory Walton, David Paunesku, Carol Dweck, “Expandable Selves.”


Session 4:
The Self in Biological Perspective
02/16

Tena Vukasovic and Denis Bratko, “Heritability of Personality: A Meta-Analysis of Behavior Genetic Studies.”
Siddhartha Mukherjee, “Same But Different.”
http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/05/02/breakthroughs-in-epigenetics
Michael Sandel, “The Case Against Perfection.”

Session 5:
The Individual in “Context”
02/23

Tory Higgins, “Shared Reality Development in Childhood.”

Session 6:
The Individual in Social Networks Perspective
03/02

Marilynn Brewer, “The Social Self: on Being the Same and Different at the Same Time.”
David Krackhardt, “The Ties that Torture: Simmelian Tie Analysis in Organizations.”
Mustafa Emirbayer and Jeff Goodwin. "Network analysis, culture, and the problem of agency."

Session 7:
Culture and Self Identity
03/23 (Due to Professor conflict, this class will rescheduled on the first day of the seminar).

Sheena Iyengar, The Art of Choosing, Ch. 2.
Michael W. Morris, Chi-yue Chiu, and Zhi Liu, “Polycultural Psychology.”
HR Markus, S Kitayama, “Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation.”
Session 8:
**Seeking Authenticity Through Narrative**
03/30

Timothy Wilson, *Redirect*. Introduction, Ch. 1, 3, & 9.
Sheena Iyengar, *The Art of Choosing*, Ch. 3.
Galen Strawson, “Against Narrativity.”
Laura Kray, Linda George, Adam Galinsky, Katie Liljenquist, and Philip Tetlock,
“From What Might Have Been to What Must Have Been: Counterfactual Thinking Creates Meaning.”

Session 9:
**Can Performance Be Authentic?**
04/06


Session 10:
**The Politics of Authenticity**
04/13

Yona Kifer, Daniel Heller, Wei Qi Elaine Perunovic, and Adam D. Galinsky, “The Good Life of the Powerful: The Experience of Power and Authenticity Enhances Subjective Well-Being.”

**Doug Rossinow, The Politics of Authenticity.**

Session 11:
**Authentic Objects and Products: An Economic Perspective**
04/20

Andrew Potter, The Authenticity Hoax, Ch. 1, 4, and 7.
Glenn R. Carroll and Dennis Ray Wheaton, “The organizational construction of authenticity: An examination of contemporary food and dining in the U.S.”

Session 12:
04/27 (Final thoughts and conclusions).