


# Identity



Our self is what we are born with, our gender, our physical characteristics; our **identity** is created by the development of the **“self”** (our self-concept), in spurs, through communication over a long period of time. We have not merely one identity but multiple identities, which are influenced by society and are dynamic. And the way identities develop depends on one's cultural background.

People can identify with a multiple of groups based on such things as gender, age and ethnicity, occupational interests, sports (as spectators or participants), leisure activities and special abilities.

# Six aspects of Identity

- Identities are created through Communication
- Identities are created in spurts
- Identities are multiple
- Identities are influenced by Society
- Identities are Dynamic
- Identities are developed in different ways in different cultures

# Plan of the lecture

- 1. Gender Identity**
- 2. Sexual Identity**
- 3. Age Identity**
- 4. Racial and Ethnic Identity**
- 5. Religious Identity**
- 6. Class Identity**
- 7. National Identity**
- 8. Regional Identity**
- 9. Personal Identity**

# Gender identity. Sexual identity

As a culture changes, so do notions of what is masculine or feminine. Gender means different things in different cultures.

Our **sexual** identities should not be confused with our **gender** identities. Many cultures have different definitions of sexualities. As you encounter people from around the world, do not assume that your framework for sexual categories is universal. Nor should you assume that the ways that sexuality is handled in public is the same as in your hometown.

# Age Identity

As we age, we tap into cultural notions of how someone our age should act, look, and behave; that is, we establish in **Age Identity**. Recent data show that the **millennium generation (or Gen Y, those born 1982-2001)** are more diverse and globally oriented and are more knowledgeable about computers and technology than any preceding generation. They are more optimistic, more committed to contributing to society, and more interested in life balance between work and play than **the previous Gen X group (those born 1961-1981)**. Our notions of age often change as we grow older ourselves. Age identity, however, is not simply about how you feel about your age. It is also about how others treat you based on your age.

# Theory of Generation

- Generation Theory was created in 1991 by American scientists Neil Howe and William Strauss. They both independently decided to examine in detail such a thing as a "generation."
- Generation Theory appeared in the U.S. and has been adapted to the post-Soviet space. This adaptation is very important because in America and the ex-Soviet Union on the formation of generational outlook, ideology and values influenced completely different events.

# 4 types of generations

- Were born approximately in 1943 (baby-boomers)
- X-generation (1961-1981)
- Y-generation (1982-2001)
- Z-generation (modern babies)

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stated Associate Director of Marketing,  
"Procter & Gamble Central Asia" Sayer Aiupova.



# Racial and Ethnic Identity

Most scientists now agree that there are more physical similarities than differences among so-called races and have abandoned a strict biological basis for classifying racial groups. By contrast, Brazil recognizes a wide variety of intermediate racial categories in addition to white and Black. This indicates a cultural, rather than a biological, basis for racial classification. Racial identities to some extent are based on physical characteristics, but they are also constructed in fluid social contexts. The important thing to remember is that the way people construct these identities and think about race influences how they communicate with others.

# Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity means having a sense of belonging to a particular group and knowing something about the shared experiences of group members. It includes: self-identification & knowledge about the ethnic culture (traditions, customs, values, behaviors).

# Physical Identity

We all have a **physical ability identity** because we all have varying degrees of physical capabilities. We are all disabled in one way or another and we all need to work to overcome these conditions.

About 10% of the world's population, or 650 million people, live with disabilities (2007).  
“TAB” –temporarily able-bodied

# Religious Identity

What are the criteria for being a member of a particular religion? Some religions are defined by **national boundaries**; however, most religions are defined by “**culture**” where anyone can join if they accept the beliefs.

Religion traditionally is considered a **private issue**, and there is a stated separation of church and state.

# **Class Identity**

**Class plays an important role in shaping our reaction to and interpretations of culture.**


**Language and communication style also reflect class statue.**

**The lack of understanding about class differences and the stereotypes perpetuated in the media often make meaningful communication between classes difficult.**



## **Minority Identity Development**

Minority groups tend to develop a stronger sense of racial and ethnic identity than do majority group members. Four stages of minority identity development: **unexamined identity, conformity, resistance and separatism and integration.**



**Unexamined identity** In this stage, their ideas about identity may come from parents or friends – if they have any interest in ethnicity.

**Conformity.** In this stage, individuals may have a strong desire to assimilate into the dominant culture and so internalize the values and norms of the dominant group.

**Resistance and Separatism.** Sometimes, a growing awareness that not all the values of the dominant group are beneficial to minorities may lead to this stage.

The person may reject the values and norms associated with the dominant group.


**Integration.** People who reach this stage have a strong sense of their own group identity (based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and so on) and an appreciation for other cultural groups. The end result is a confident and secure identity for a person who wants to eliminate all forms of injustice, not just oppression aimed at his or her group.





**Majority Identity Development**  
**Unexamined identity, acceptance,**  
**resistance and redefinition and**  
**reintegration.**

**Unexamined identity.**  
Communication (and relationships) at  
this stage is not based on racial  
differences.



**Acceptance.** The second stage represents the internalization and acceptance of the basic racial inequities in society. This acceptance is largely unconscious and individuals have no conscious identification with the dominant culture.

Communication with minorities is either avoided or patronizing – or both.

**Resistance.** This stage represents a major shift, from blaming minority members for their conditions to blaming the social system as the source of racial or ethnic problems.



## **Redefinition & Reintegration.**

People begin to refocus their energy and are finally able to integrate. They not only recognize their own identity but also appreciate other groups.

# Assignment

Talk about identities with your friends.

- Which identities are most important to them?
- Which identities do they resist?
- Which identities do they affirm?