

First Year Seminar (Dr. Kille, Fall 2005)
Paper Assignment #1: Being Someone Else
*Paper is due Tuesday September 13

Writing Assignment (6% of total course grade)

What if someone could steal your identity? If Johnny May is correct, this could potentially happen if you are not careful. In reverse, what if you could steal someone else's identity - who would you want to be? In order to answer these questions, please do the following:

1. First, test your "identity quotient" using the "Are You at Risk for Identity Theft" questions list from the Utility Consumers Action Network. As an appendix to the paper, please attach the answers to these questions and indicate how many points you scored.
2. Summarize May's argument regarding what identity theft is and why someone would seek to steal someone else's identity. May presents a range of ways that identity thieves steal, explain - describing at least three ways - which ways are of most concern to you. What prevention strategies would you employ to protect yourself? Overall, how concerned are you about identity theft?
3. As part of this discussion, in the body of the paper itself, report your "Are You At Risk for Identity Theft" score, what your main areas of weakness appear to be, and whether your score surprised you.
4. Finally, in the film *Being John Malkovich*, a more extreme form of identity theft occurs as John Cusack's character is able to take over John Malkovich's body. If you were to take on someone else's identity, who would you be? You may be as general or specific as you choose. Be sure to carefully explain your selection, including how becoming this person would be different or similar to your current identity. Would you employ a more traditional approach to identity theft outlined by May or a more transcendental approach like that in *Being John Malkovich*?

The paper should be approximately 2-3 pages in length (not including the appendix of answers to "Are You at Risk for Identity Theft"). Remember that students may choose to re-write up to two short papers to improve the paper. Revised papers will be re-graded, with the final grade reflecting an average of the two grades awarded.

Writing Reminders:

- Papers should be typed, double spaced, and have margins of 1" and 12 point font.
- As indicated in the assignment, your paper should explicitly draw on the readings - in doing so be sure to incorporate quotes and references to ideas that relate to your discussion.
- Sources employed in the paper should be cited using the APA format (see Hacker pp. 465-484). However, since all sources employed in this paper are from the same text, it is not necessary to include publication dates or a bibliography/references section.
- For additional assistance in integrating sources and avoiding plagiarism, please read Hacker pp. 457-465; note in particular to avoid "dropped quotations" and instead employ a "signal phrase" when incorporating quotes (p.462). Also, while the ellipsis mark should be used in the place of removed text in a quote, you should not place an ellipsis mark at the beginning or end of a quote since it is implicit that the text is taken from a larger selection (see Hacker 462-463).
- A title page is not necessary. See sample paper on p. 448 in Hacker for structuring the opening page, although it is not necessary to include a paper title with the page number.
- Be sure to use page numbers. However, it is recommended that students not put their name with the page number.
- Do not use contractions (i.e. don't, can't, isn't), fully write out the words.
- Be sure to carefully proofread your paper, do not just rely on a word processing spellchecker.