

# Chapter 4 reaction paper



CHAPTER DISCUSSION This chapter provided me with a great deal of food for thought. I considered my own position in the world in a very different way after reading this chapter. The ideas it provided still percolate in my brain. The truth is that our identities are more malleable than we think. They are shaped by concerns larger than ourselves. One of those is culture, another is language. All of the ideas made this chapter fascinating reading. I really liked this chapter. The information and ideas contained it are very pertinent to my life. I have often thought of these kinds of philosophical issues before, but this chapter really provided some structure to those thoughts. So many of the things around us are constructed by our own preconceptions, but it is harder to understand how we too are a product of things beyond our control. Our roles and identities are shaped by those around us, where we come from, and we are going. All of this made the chapter an excellent and sustaining read. This reading made me very introspective. It led me to reconsider my own life and my own multiple identities. I began to try to unwind some of the strands of my personality which had led me to see myself in a certain, stable way. I began to think about how much I had changed over the years and in what direction. I have always felt that I had a lot of control over my own life and that I was master of my own destiny. But now, having read this chapter, I realize how much of everyone's lives are in flux. It is a very useful point to consider how much differences can get in the way of us recognizing how truly different some people are. The point about the French girl's uniqueness struck a chord with me. She was so different in the small community that people had a hard time getting to know her as an individual. We must be careful not to overlook such things. One thing that I disagree with somewhat is the idea expressed in the chapter that many

white people do not consider themselves to have any ethnic identity. This might be true for some people, but many whites will identify as Irish or Scottish, etc. Their ancestry does play a role in their identity. The main point, I believe, is that they rarely identify themselves in opposition to another group because in most American states they are the majority. Nevertheless, this was only a minor quibble. Overall, I agreed with virtually everything the book claimed. Overall, this chapter covered a lot of ground. It provided me with a lot to think about. Because it was so comprehensive, I was left without any real questions about the material. Of course, the main question I wanted to know the answer to was how does one take control of one's identity? This seems to be an important issue: how you can claim more self-control and self-direction. But there is most likely no definitive answer to this.