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Photones of the human psyche: the fiction of personal identity.

There are two issues in the general program for this conference: 1) "Fiction has ... taken part in reflecting and shaping the cultural identity of communities, as well as the *identity of individuals*". 2) "*Fiction and its relationship to 'truth'...*". I apply the two of these to the formation of human individual identity. I use the pragmatist perspective developed by G. H. Mead, in my own extension of it. "Self" is a reflective pronoun, signifying that some content or substance should be reflected to the individual, to be perceived. However, most human rational action is based on reflective thought by consciously working on the relation between object and subjective action toward it. Social processes are a precondition of this, in that the response of the Other is the basis for the individual's construction of a meaning of the object approached. In most circumstances there is a substantial and/or material basis for the reflective processes resulting in conscious cognitive maps of the object. However, the object that seems to be nearest of all, the Self, is not possible to grasp in itself; only the other's response to actions of the individual can be observed by the individual. Thus, the identity of a specific individual is, for this individual, not constituted by his/her action, but by the response from others to this action. This places Self identity in a special category of objects: There is material basis for the Self: the individual's actions and body. But these cannot be perceived in original shape for the owner; only Other's reaction to them can. This makes the Self a principally fictitious entity, as much as the fairy tales. Still it exists objectively.