



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



Workshop: Personal Identities, their Embodiments and Environments

University of Hertfordshire, UK, 2 July 2010

Part of the AHRC project *The Construction of Personal Identities Online*

Keynote Speakers

Professor Eric Olson (Sheffield)
Professor Galen Strawson (Reading)

Organisers

Luciano Floridi (Hertfordshire/Oxford)
Dave Ward (Hertfordshire)

1st Call For Papers (deadline: 15 April 2010)

In recent years, the philosophy of mind and cognitive science has increasingly attended to the possibility that agents' interactions among themselves and with their environments might play an essential role in supporting and shaping their mental lives. It has become common to argue that capacities for experience, agency and understanding might depend constitutively on each other, on embodiment, on the embedding environment, or on some combination of these factors. This one-day workshop will investigate the relevance of these issues for philosophical work on personal identity. Special attention will be paid to the nature of the environment in which agents are embedded, including social, artificial, digital, or virtual realities.

Approaches that tie personal identity to the body, or to capacities for agency or experience have a long and distinguished history. How might such traditional approaches benefit or suffer from the various possibilities of explanatory dependence between those capacities, embodiment, and environmental interactions? And if we allow a role for environmental interactions in an account of personal identity, what is the significance of the fact that our interactions with others and our environments are becoming digitally mediated and progressively transformed as time and technology progress? In a society in which agents spend an increasing amount of time online, how is this affecting their self-understanding, the shaping of their own personal identities and the capacity to maintain coherent yet diversified individual profiles in different spaces and at different times?

We welcome proposals for papers both on classic approaches to the philosophy of personal identity and on topics dealing with artificial, virtual or digital embodiments and embeddedness. Please submit extended abstracts (between 1000 and 1500 words all included, preferably in MS Word format) for papers suitable for 40-minute presentations to Dave Ward (D.Ward2@herts.ac.uk) by **15 April 2010**.

Bursaries: a number of bursaries for graduate students presenting papers will be available, on a competitive basis, to contribute to travel and accommodation expenses.

Publication: successful submissions will be selected for a journal's special issue.

Series: the workshop is part of a series of meetings organized as part of the AHRC-funded project "The Construction of Personal Identities Online". More information about the project is available here: <http://www.philosophyofinformation.net/grants/pio/index.html>