Identity

Our identity is not fixed, it changes depending on how we are dressed, who we are with and how we are perceived by others. In a sense our identity depends upon other people's perceptions of us, our peers are like a mirror that reflect back to us who we are. For this assignment we are going to break into small groups and each group will come up with a name to describe the identity of the "group". You will then create a composite photograph based upon our "group" identity and photographs that we take in class.

After the initial photography, everyone will work on their own images, so that everyone will develop their own unique interpretation of the group identity. Through this process you will learn the following skills:

- Digital photography
- Photo manipulation
- Adjustment layers
- Color correction
- Levels control
- Image masking
- Having fun with Photoshop

Basic steps

1. Take photos using controlled lighting setup
2. Import photos and fix blemishes with the Healing Brush (looks like a Band-Aid)
3. Adjust **Levels** using an **Adjustment Layer** to maximize detail
4. Color correct using **Curves** layer
5. Rename one photo (picture of self) and call it "Layers.psd", saving it as a Photoshop file
6. Crop it to an attractive vertical format (this is a good time to rotate if needed)
7. Resize Image>Image Size so that it is 6 inches tall, Don't "Resample" image, this keeps the quality higher.
8. Make sure the palette background is white and then add about 2 inches to the left using Image>Canvas Size or the Crop tool.
9. Open up the other photos, including the original one of yourself and shift-drag the marquee to copy and paste a square photo into the white edge so that you will see all 4 photos, plus the large version that you will alter.
10. Drag areas using **Lasso** or **Rectangle** marquee onto the "Layers" image
11. Feather edges using a **Layer Mask** to blend into the base photo if needed
12. Use **Adjustment Layer** or **Curves** to "match" various skin tones, you'll need to "link" this to the layer by holding the option key down and hovering over the line between the adjustment layer and the image layer
13. Continue working on the image until close to finished
14. **Save a Copy** that is **flattened** name it "Layers_002.psd"
15. Use the **Healing Brush** to retouch problem areas
16. Final Levels check, color correct as needed and flatten

At the end you should have a modified photo of a "person" that reflects the group identity and 4 small images showing what you had to work with. Save both the flattened image and an image with layers in tact.

Artists that we discussed regarding Identity or that use Photoshop in their work

Jackson Pollock
Carol Mae Weems
Nancy Burson : http://www.nancyburson.com/
Catherine Opie
Paul Smith
Gordon Studer : http://www.gordonstuder.com/
Richard Tuschmann : http://www.richardtuschman.com/
Dianne Fenster : http://www.dianefenster.com/

Follow up exercises

Experiment with unusual Curves in an adjustment layer and "masking" an adjustment layer
Look up what **Roland Barthe** meant when he described the "death of the author" and how it relates to the definition of identity