

# Identifiers

Slide 1

# Agenda

- Announcements
- Follow-up to Subjects and Objects
- Learning Outcomes
- Identity
- Break
- Avatars

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Slide 2

# Announcements

- Startup Bus
  - Application deadline is February 15
  - <http://northamerica.startupbus.com/buses/canada-2014/>
- Open Data Day
  - Events in Toronto February 21-23
  - Hackathon on February 22
  - <http://wiki.opendataday.org/Toronto>

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Slide 3

# Subjects and Objects Recap

- Subjects have autonomy. Objects don't.
- Our own autonomy is precious to us.
  - But the autonomy of others is less precious to us.
  - Our autonomy can be constrained by both people and technological artifacts.

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Slide 4

# Subjects and Objects Recap

- Word processor users have autonomy so far as they are authoring text.
  - But they are authored by the software and software designers.
- Software designers have autonomy so far as they are authoring software and users.
  - But they are authored by their software and other software designers.
- Even software designers are driven by personas of hoped-for users.

# Today's Learning Outcomes

- Understand that identity is socially defined.
- Understand that identities can vary according to social situation.
- Understand the strengths and limitations of technological orders and artifacts in rendering representations of identity.
- Apply the power, privilege, and autonomy lenses to identity.

# Identifiers

- Today's topic, identifiers, is about how identity is rendered in technological orders and artifacts
- Identifiers in Software
  - Class, variable, and method names
  - Primary keys
  - Account ids
  - Login and password
- Others?
  - Twitter stream, Facebook status, avatars
- But this is not the totality of who we are.

# Who are you?

## What is identity?

- Intuitively, identity is the answer to the question “Who are you?”
  - Unfortunately, people tend to answer this question with nouns.
- Historically, identity has been viewed as the relatively long lived aspects of personality.
  - Aspects that are resistant to change
- In modern treatments, identity is viewed as socially constructed, context dependent, and constrained.
  - So, what are the implications for technology?

## Mead on The Self

- Who are we talking to when we talk to ourselves?

## Aside: Why long writings?

- The topic is large.
- The argument is complex.
- There are many parts to the argument.
- Evidence is being presented.
- The evidence is complex.
- Counter-arguments are being refuted.
- The writing is part of an ongoing academic debate.
  
- The author is wordy.
- The author is lazy.
- The author needs a good editor.

## Mead on The Self

1. Subjective experience of the self means that there is a “me.”
  - Physical and communication of gestures
2. Language is needed for abstraction, e.g. roles, norms.
3. The creation of “the generalized other” representing community attitudes is an important part of the development of the self.
4. Self-consciousness is the recognition of the self (“me”) as an object.
5. “I” is the subject and agent of action.
6. The self is a social process and will adjust to the community.
7. The “me” is normative. The “I” is novel.
8. The “I” is dominant over the “me.”

# Reflections on Mead

- Is there only one community?
- If there are multiple communities, are there multiple selves?
- Is there a 1-1 relationship between gestures and self?
  
- How does someone decide what identity to enact?
- Where do gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation come in?

# Identity and Technology

- Technology offers additional contexts for enacting identity
  - Channels: in person, on phone, text message
  - Also: email, Facebook, LinkedIn, blog, skype, games
- Turkle's interviewees found this exhausting
  - Some channels were stressful, because social demands were greater.

# Avatars

- Creative self-representation is important in societies using digital media.
  - Self expression and autonomy
- Inflexible avatars lead to further marginalization.
- Artistically and technologically possible-- and interesting!

# Dimensions of Avatar-Based Identities

- Everyday vs. Extraordinary graphical appearance
- Mirror (1st person) vs. Character (3rd person) ontologic status
  - Ontology: Basic categories and relations
- Instrumental vs. Playful use

# Panel: Multiple Digital Identifiers

## Panel

- What electronic identity (or identities) do you have?
  - One? Or more? How many?
- Are some kinds of identifiers easier to create using some technologies?
  - What motivates the creation of the identity?
  - What do you use them for?
- Why do people behave badly when they are anonymous?