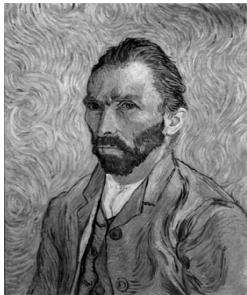


PHIL 255  
**Week 11: Self and Identity**  
 Paul Thagard

Self  
 Personal identity  
 Please turn off and put away all electronics.



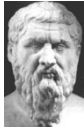
## The Transcendental Self

The self is a supernatural entity (soul).


Plato, Aquinas, Kant.

50% of Canadians, 80% of Americans.

Problem: lack of evidence.



Plato




Kant

2


## The Deflationary (No-) Self

David Hume: The self is just a bundle of perceptions.



Hume

Daniel Dennett: The self is a "center of narrative gravity".



Dennett

Thomas Metzinger: The self is a myth.

Problem: The self is an important psychological concept.

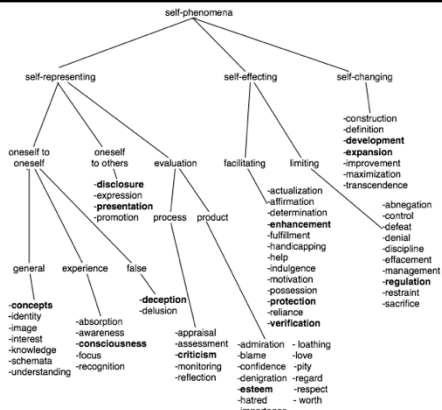
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## The Self in Social Psychology

SELF-PHENOMENA

- SELF-REPRESENTING  
E.G. SELF-CONCEPTS, SELF-IDENTITY
- SELF-EFFECTING  
E.G. SELF-HELP, SELF-REGULATION
- SELF-CHANGING  
E.G. SELF-IMPROVEMENT, SELF-DESTRUCTION


4



5

## Multilevel Systems

A system (mechanism) consists of:  
 Environment  
 Parts  
 Interconnections  
 Changes



A multilevel system has mechanisms at several levels:  
 <E<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>1</sub>, I<sub>1</sub>, C<sub>1</sub>>  
 <E<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, I<sub>2</sub>, C<sub>2</sub>>, etc.

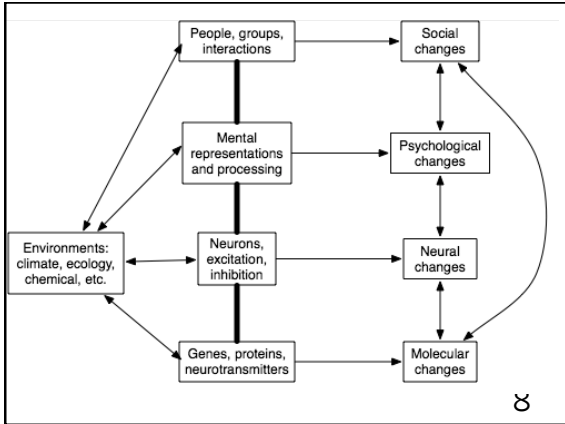
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## The Multilevel Self

Social self: Parts are people.  
 Psychological self: Parts are mental representations.  
 Neural self: Parts are neurons.  
 Molecular self: Parts are chemicals.

Note: these are not four selves, but all components of one complex system.

7



## Personal Identity

Persistence problem: What makes you the same person you were yesterday?

Supernatural: same soul.  
 Psychological: same memories.  
 Somatic: same body.  
 No-self: nothing persists.  
 Multilevel: persistence of molecular, neural, psychological, and social mechanisms.

9

## Discussion Question

Who are you? What makes you yourself?

10