



Identity: Youth and Crisis

Erik H. Erikson

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Identity, Erikson writes, is an unfathomable as it is all-pervasive. It deals with a process that is located both in the core of the individual and in the core of the communal culture. As the culture changes, new kinds of identity questions arise—Erikson comments, for example, on issues of social protest and changing gender roles that were particular to the 1960s.

Representing two decades of groundbreaking work, the essays are not so much a systematic formulation of theory as an evolving report that is both clinical and theoretical. The subjects range from "creative confusion" in two famous lives—the dramatist George Bernard Shaw and the philosopher William James—to the connection between individual struggles and social order. "Race and the Wider Identity" and the controversial "Womanhood and the Inner Space" are included in the collection.

Identity: Youth and Crisis Details

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Lauren Lee says

Love the concept of a defining crisis in each psychosocial stage. A great read.

Paul Johnston says

I really enjoyed this book. It was the first book by Erik Erikson that I have read and I was very impressed. It was written in the US in the sixties and since it engages with what was going on at the times (youth alienation, consumption capitalism, racial issues, etc), it can seem a little old fashioned. However, I think there is a lot of wisdom in this book. Erikson explores the many dimensions of the identity issue in a deep and fascinating way. It is far from being a standard piece of psychoanalytic writing insofar as Erikson is very concerned with social, cultural and historical issues, indeed, one of the things I think he is trying to do is to link psychoanalytical insights with issues beyond the individual and the nuclear family. Having said that, there are also some interesting perspectives on psychoanalysis - I found his view on childhood and the different stages of childhood (including versions of the traditional Freudian libidinal stages) very interesting and although as a man I hesitate to say it, I thought his post-Freudian essay on Womanhood and the Inner Space was very powerful. So overall I am really glad I read this book and will definitely read some more Erikson in due course to see how his other stuff compares.

Whoof says

cool

10001010001 says

I should find the English translation to read at some point in my life. The Chinese one is horribly translated.

Melike Ilkay says

a must read for psychology majors.
