

## **Goffman and the Production of Personas**

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The sociologist Erving Goffman had a close relationship with the business of performance in his personal life. His acquaintance with the world of theatre as well as his biographical experiences of having to maintain varying impressions influenced his academic interest in personas. The sessional will require students to acquaint themselves with the works of Erving Goffman in order to see how they influenced the concept of personas in Sociology. It will begin with close readings of his texts – “*The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*” and “*Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity*”. Students will then choose from his various texts and probe how they can be read in relation to his more well-known conceptualizations of “self-presentation”/personas/impressions/ fronts. In the final instance, students will read selected works from contemporary sociology, which interact with Goffman’s writings and those which address related questions like habitus or performance, critically reflecting on his conceptualization of persona and how it is produced.

Students will be continuously evaluated. They will be expected to write two primary assignments: a critical review of one book and a paper on any question about “personas” and their production drawing from the prescribed and chosen readings.

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