**This paper should be roughly three to five typed pages (12 point font). Include a cover sheet with your name, class section, and the title of the writing assignment.**

**Assignment #4A: The Self Across the Life Span**

We have argued that one of the fundamental propositions of sociology, as well as psychology, is that human beings are all shaped and molded by their experiences. If so, we must realize that men and women do not experience the world the same way. Nor do old people and young people, wealthy people and poor people, light skinned people in the United States and those with a darker complexion have the same experiences.

With this in mind, how does our sense of self develop and change over the course of the life span?  Are there predictable patterns of change in this “sense of self” that may be explained by certain psychological theories such as Piaget’s cognitive developmental theory, Erickson’s psychsocial theory, Bandura’s social learning theory?

In developing a very limited source of data that you will reference in your essay, please ask **two** individuals from each life span period (early childhood, late childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, and late adulthood) who are NOT matched with regard to race, or socioeconomic status, or culture, etc. the following two questions:

1.  “Tell me who you are.”
2.  “Please tell me what you believe to be the important factors that shaped and molded you into the person you are today.”

Record responses verbatim and include these responses in your paper. In addition, **please make reference to those particular perspectives that you find most useful in this analysis of identity formation**.

**Assignment #4B: A "Social-Psychologically” Informed Biography**

Interview one of your parents or grandparents and write a “social-psychological” biographical essay that focuses on his or her life.  You will use as an interview guide and apply at least 5 of the following concepts (for example, socialization, looking-glass self, significant others, generalized others, role-model, subculture, primary group, secondary group, reference group, prejudice, racism, prejudice, discrimination, master status, status-conflict – to be defined and included in a glossary at the end of the essay – in a discussion about how your subject has been shaped by the social world(s) he or she inhabits.

Use these concepts to discuss both his or her early and later socialization experiences, with particular emphasis on the impact of social groups and the mass media.

Last, indicate how their access – or lack of access – to opportunities (life-chances) due to their race, religion, ethnicity or social class have affected their acquisition of later positions in their life.