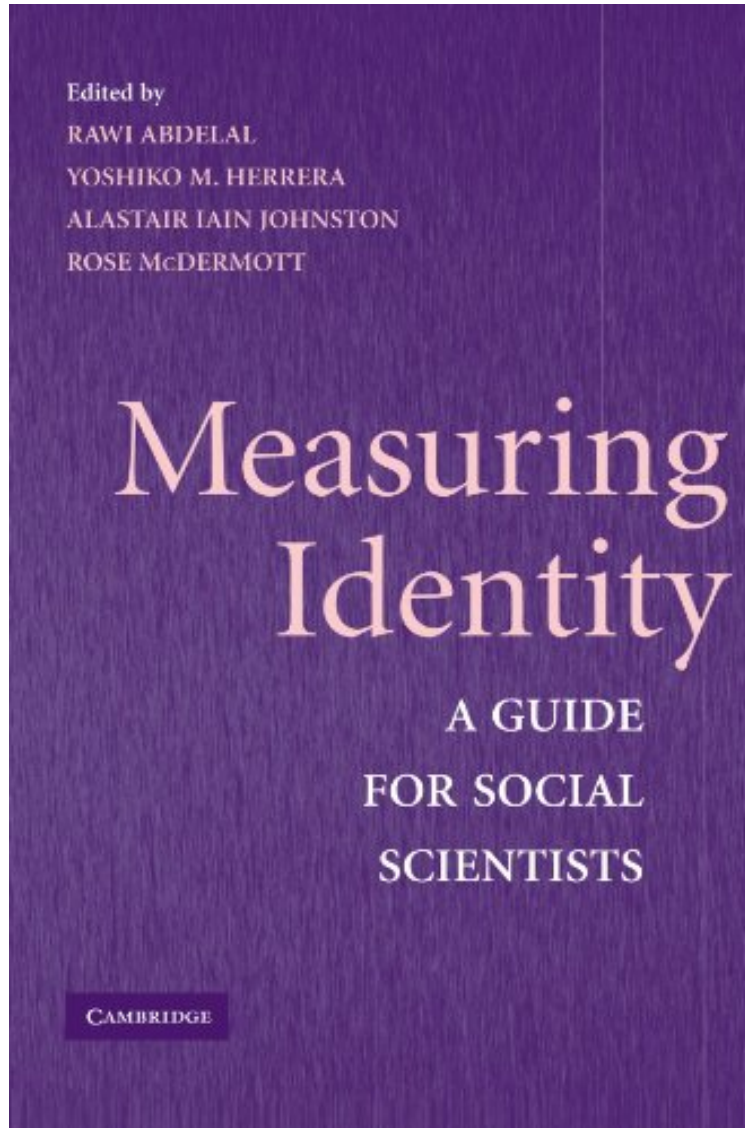


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Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists

From Rawi Abdelal

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From Rawi Abdelal : Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Who Are They and How Do We Know? By John M. Ford This book of contributed chapters explores the concept of social identity as defined and measured in political discourse. The editors intend it as a resource for political scientists who otherwise might reinvent methods already in use by their colleagues. They hope it will encourage a common language and similar methods so that the comparability of individual research studies will increase. The unifying approach in this book differs in at least three ways from

previous identity research. First, it examines identity as defined by multiple communities, rather than as a private concept created and applied by individuals. Second, it examines identities firmly held by adults, rather than focusing more narrowly on the development of identity in adolescents. Finally, it does not restrict the realm of identity to ethnic and cultural groups, but explores identity based on gender, religion and socioeconomic class. The methods used by contributing authors to study identity are diverse. The book's twelve studies are based on surveys, content analysis, discourse analysis, ethnography, cognitive mapping, and structured experiments. The two studies I found most interesting were:- Kimberly Neuendorf and Paul Skalski's "Quantitative Content Analysis and the Measurement of Collective Identity" describes the relative strengths of three kinds of content analysis applied to three different types of identity-related content. The methods are: Human coders using predefined categories; content analysis software using predefined categories; and software discovering emergent categories. The types of content are messages produced in response to a question, naturally-occurring messages, and messages which must be extracted from a larger body of data. Examples of each of the nine strategy by content combinations are reviewed.- Kanchan Chandra's "A Constructivist Dataset on Ethnicity and Institutions" describes a database of cultural identity information from 100 countries designed to facilitate the comparability of identity studies across countries. The chapter describes the development of this database and the hierarchy of definitions it contains. It reviews several studies which used the database and describes the influence of constructivist philosophy on its design and possible applications. This is a useful set of readings. The collection's diversity in method makes it unlikely any reader will find all articles useful. Chapters should be read selectively by students and researchers in political science, social psychology, and related disciplines. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Expert Book on Identity By Jake Beniflah If you're looking for a thorough book on identity, this is the book. It is written with an academic voice and addresses how identity is formed and how it changes. The theoretical models help the reader understand the process of identity formation and change. I liked this book for its content. I have a stronger understanding to the questions of what is identity and how it changes. For those lacking a basic background in identity, this book may end up being a slow read. I recommend it to all audiences.

The concept of identity has become increasingly prominent in the social sciences and humanities. Analysis of the development of social identities is an important focus of scholarly research, and scholars using social identities as the building blocks of social, political, and economic life have attempted to account for a number of discrete outcomes by treating identities as causal factors. The dominant implication of the vast literature on identity is that social identities are among the most important social facts of the world in which we live. Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, and McDermott have brought together leading scholars from a variety of disciplines to consider the conceptual and methodological challenges associated with treating identity as a variable, offer a synthetic theoretical framework, and demonstrate the possibilities offered by various methods of measurement. The book represents a collection of empirically-grounded theoretical discussions of a range of methodological techniques for the study of identities.

"With its momentous theoretical, methodological, and empirical sweep, this tour de force in constructivist political science shows how to do studies that are both context-sensitive and generalizable across contexts. Here one learns about measures of social separation and graded ethnicity; incongruence analysis of identity structures in leader statements; constructivist datasets on ethnicity and institutions, textual analysis for identifying dominant identity discourses within a country-and much more. A must read for students of identity in politics and society as well as for policy analysts who seek rigorous methods to make sense of political and social discourses decisively affecting key domestic and international issues." -Mikhail A. Alexseev, San Diego State University "Legions of social scientists working in many fields of the social sciences are grappling with the intricate problems of translating the theoretical insights of identity theories into empirically rigorous research programs. Measuring Identity provides an indispensable service to all scholars. It introduces the reader to state-of-the-art overviews and assessments of the most relevant methods. Leading scholars in identity research offer expert treatments of survey methods, content analysis, cognitive mapping, discourse analysis, ethnography and experimental methods. As a research guide and teaching tool, social scientists will want to have this book close at hand." -Peter J. Katzenstein, Cornell University About the Author Rawi Abdelal is Professor at Harvard Business School. He is the author of *National Purpose in the World Economy: Post-Soviet States in Comparative Perspective* (2001) and *Capital Rules: The Construction of Global Finance* (2007). Yoshiko M. Herrera received her BA from Dartmouth College (1992), and MA (1994) and PhD (1999) from the University of Chicago. From 1999-2007 she taught at Harvard University, as an Assistant Professor and then as John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences in the Department of Government. Since 2007 she has been Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Her research interests include identity and ethnic politics, political economy, bureaucratic reform, qualitative methods, public health, and the states of the Former Soviet Union. Alastair Iain Johnston is the Laine Professor of China in World Affairs in the Government Department at Harvard University. He is the author of *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (1995) and *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980-2000* (2008),

and co-editor of *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* (1999), *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy* (2006), and *Crafting Cooperation: Regional Institutions in Comparative Perspective* (2007). Rose McDermott is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is the author of *Risk Taking in International Relations* (1998), *Political Psychology in International Relations* (2004), and *Presidential Leadership, Illness, and Decision Making* (2008).