

## Classic Ideas Revisited Through the Modern Lens

(This exercise would be done after reading chapter one of the course text 'Who Am I? And if so, How Many?' dealing with some of the ideas of Nietzsche and the concept of the Ubermensch)

If the idea of the 'Superman' is a person who, through his own will, could dismiss the demands placed upon him by society and other forces whose 'authority' he did not recognize, is there room for this concept today? For you, in your life right now?

What are some everyday activities, responses, obligations you have that you do "because, that's just what you do," or a general social convention? Come up with at least 10. Here are two to start:

1. Reply to a text message within minutes of receiving it.
2. Eat a Kit Kat candy bar by breaking it into quarters, as opposed to just biting into it.

In small groups, share your lists. Add any from your partners' lists to your own as appropriate. Can you track down the authority behind these social conventions?

On your own again, write a brief (one page, single-spaced) informal exploratory essay about what it would be like to try to 'free yourself' from these obligations. Would you be better or worse off? Would it enhance your relationships? Make things more difficult with loved ones? Would it merely destroy structures you have and leave you with some sort of void?