

## **Beau Shaw**

### Dissertation Abstract

My dissertation, "Authenticity and Death in *Being and Time*," gives a critique of Martin Heidegger's concept of authenticity in *Being and Time*. According to Heidegger, authenticity involves a person relating to her own death in an transparent way: she understands that, by virtue of her death, she is unable to be. At the same time, this relation to death allows a person to become an individual: she is able to project herself onto her own possibilities, and to do so autonomously, that is, not inauthentically or under the guidance of "*das Man*," "the one." I argue that this conception of authenticity is incoherent. In fact, such a transparent relation to death makes it impossible for a person to be an individual. In fact, Heidegger's concept of authenticity entails inauthenticity, and a more radical inauthenticity than the one by which he understands a person's guidance by *das Man*. On this basis, I argue that a coherent concept of authenticity must be separated from a person's explicit relation to her own death. Finally, I show how this critique of authenticity differs from, but complements, the more traditional critiques of authenticity, which focus primarily on its ethical and political shortcomings.