Empirical evaluation of knowledge organization (KO) systems, and of the tools and techniques that are used to build systems, is a key component of the system design process: our success in building better systems depends at least partly on our ability to measure the goodness of current systems, and to recognize the factors that affect system performance. The basic evaluative question might be expressed quite simply: How good are the representations or models — models of the world, of our knowledge of the world, and/or of expressions of our knowledge of the world — that are produced by our usage of particular KO methods? The straightforwardness of this question is offset by a preliminary need to address metaphysical issues of various kinds, consideration of which can lead us into a quagmire of methodological, epistemological, and ethical problems. What, in this context, is “goodness”? What is the fundamental nature of the kinds of things to be represented? What are the conditions that must be satisfied for a single individual thing to retain its identity over time, and for two individual things to be instances of “the same” kind of thing? Where are the boundaries to be drawn between one thing (or kind of thing) and another? Where does one thing (or kind of thing) stop and another start? How can we come to know the answers to questions about identity, and how we can know when we know? How have we answered questions about identity in different ways at different times and in different places? How ought we to answer questions about identity, and what justifications can we provide in support of our normative claims? As is indicated by the conference organizers’ choice of theme for ISKO 2008, designers and evaluators of KO schemes contend on an ongoing basis with issues relating to identity, and a philosophically-informed engagement with such issues is an essential preliminary to understanding evaluation criteria for KO activity. In this talk, the utility for KO of philosophical theories of identity is examined, and motivation is provided for the additional use of such a philosophical framework in evaluating the extent to which KO schemes successfully reflect the cultural identities of their users.