

# Chapter 1

## Identity Work

**Jenice L. View**

*George Mason University, USA)*

**Elizabeth K. DeMulder**

*George Mason University, USA*

**Stacia M. Stribling**

*George Mason University, USA*

**Laura L. Dallman**

*George Mason University, USA*

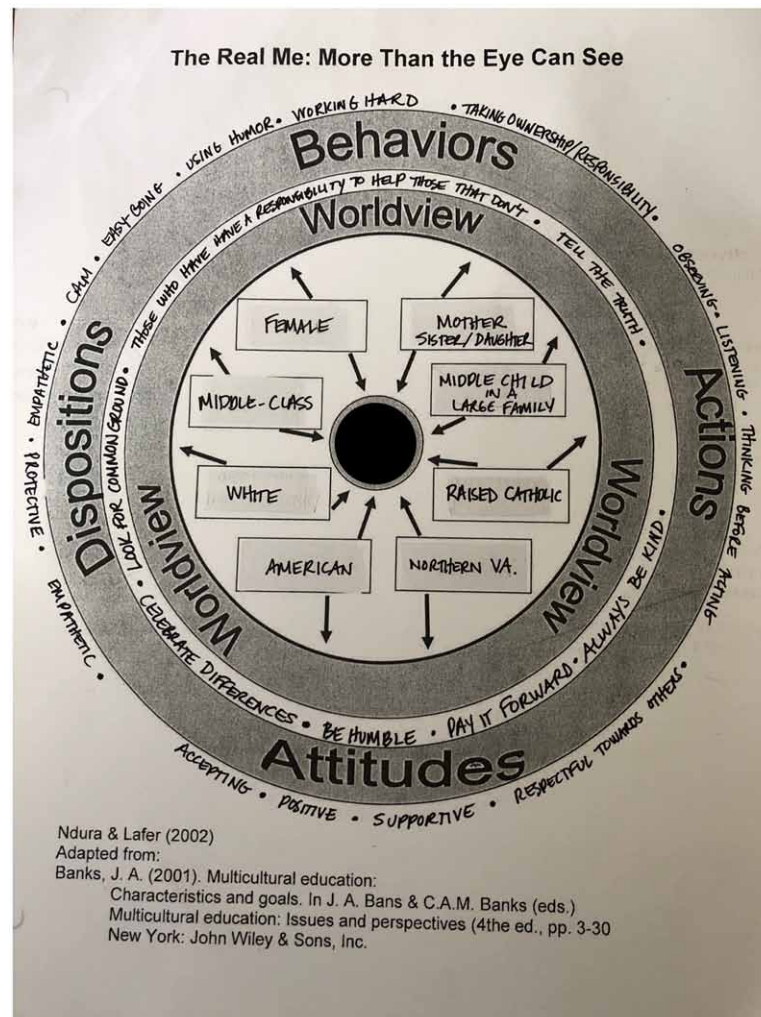
### **ABSTRACT**

*The authors describe the first crucial step in antiracist teacher professional development – developing a deep understanding of one’s identity. After providing the theoretical framework behind this approach and sharing their own stories of their identity development as antiracist educators, the authors describe the curricular approaches they used to engage teachers in exploring the self. They also share the outcomes of these efforts and the tensions and dilemmas that arise when supporting teachers to examine their identities in the process of becoming antiracist educators.*

As Kendi (2019) reminds us, “...racist and antiracist are not fixed identities. We can be racist one minute and an antiracist the next” (p. 10). In other words, the work is on-going and requires constant reflection on the self. We need to be aware of the identities we claim related to race, gender, ethnicity, language, etc. and how these complex interconnected identities drive our worldviews, dispositions, behaviors, attitudes, and actions (see example identity web in Figure 1). Furthermore, it is imperative that we deepen our understanding of the role our experiences play in shaping these identities and ultimately how these identities we bring to our classroom then impact students’ learning. Through deep reflection, we can become more aware of the ways in which our actions in the classroom are (or are not) “supporting an antiracist policy...or expressing an antiracist idea” (Kendi, 2019, p. 13).

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-4507-5.ch001

Figure 1. Example Identity Web



Scholars (e.g., Brookfield, 2012; Eryaman, 2007; Mezirow, 1990; Schön, 1983; Wink, 2011) have become ready references for practicing classroom teachers (both P-12 and higher education teachers) seeking to develop their reflective practice. Teacher professional development programs that expand the spaces for teachers to engage in critical reflection, including on issues of identity (their own and that of their students), support teachers in discovering the power of their own voices and in re-envisioning their roles as critical educators who empower their own students (Howard, 2003; Milner, 2003; View, De-Mulder, Stribling & Kayler, 2009). There is substantial evidence that interpersonal relationships provide support for individual development and learning. In particular, the adults in a child’s life influence the extent to which that child thrives in a learning environment (Briggs, 2012; Mendes, 2003; Heick, 2015; Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2016; Townsend, 2012). We wanted teachers to understand the importance of relationships in their lives and then make connections with their own students. We also wanted teachers to recognize through their own practice the importance of interpersonal connections for supporting students’ development and learning.

22 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

[www.igi-global.com/chapter/identity-work/296932](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/identity-work/296932)

## Related Content

---

### Harnessing the Demographic Dividend in Africa Through Lessons From East Asia's Experience

Ehizuelen Michael Mitchell Omoruyi (2021). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-38).

[www.irma-international.org/article/harnessing-the-demographic-dividend-in-africa-through-lessons-from-east-asias-experience/279130](http://www.irma-international.org/article/harnessing-the-demographic-dividend-in-africa-through-lessons-from-east-asias-experience/279130)

### Recreating Tokelau: Distilling the Essence of Place in a Community Center

Jacqueline McIntosh, Philippe Campaysand Dr. Fabricio Chicca (2015). *Cases on Grassroots Campaigns for Community Empowerment and Social Change* (pp. 75-103).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/recreating-tokelau/129652](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/recreating-tokelau/129652)

### Trends in e-Strategic Management: How do Governments Transform their Policies?

Leonidas Anthopoulosand Panos Fitsilis (2016). *Politics and Social Activism: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1263-1287).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/trends-in-e-strategic-management/140027](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/trends-in-e-strategic-management/140027)

### Movement Control Order (MCO) - A Viable Legal Mechanism in the Management of COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysia?

Suzana Muhamad Said, Aini Aman, Mohd Rohaizat Hassanand Omkar Dastane (2022). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-15).

[www.irma-international.org/article/movement-control-order-mco---a-viable-legal-mechanism-in-the-management-of-covid-19-pandemic-in-malaysia/315650](http://www.irma-international.org/article/movement-control-order-mco---a-viable-legal-mechanism-in-the-management-of-covid-19-pandemic-in-malaysia/315650)

### Bilateral Trade Between China and Other Countries: Role of "One Belt, One Road"

Liwen Ma, Ali Mohsinand Haseeb Muhammad (2022). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-15).

[www.irma-international.org/article/bilateral-trade-between-china-and-other-countries/303675](http://www.irma-international.org/article/bilateral-trade-between-china-and-other-countries/303675)